

The Citizen

Connecting people with their community



COMMUNITY LIVING
BRITISH COLUMBIA



Open house welcomes open hearts

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Barbarah and her son Zackery have made new friends and connections in their community.

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Doug Woollard, Interim CEO

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AS WE PREPARE FOR THE HOLIDAY SEASON, IT'S THE PERFECT TIME to reflect on the past year and focus on the future. 2011 has been a year of change and transition for CLBC, yet through it all our mission remains very much the same: to respond to the needs and the goals of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families, through a person-centred approach.

In October, I became the Interim CEO of CLBC. I am honoured to have been asked by the Board of Directors to keep the organization moving forward and focused on doing the right thing for the individuals and families we serve.

In this edition, we share stories of employment and volunteerism. These stories highlight how through community service and meaningful work, individuals can broaden their personal support networks and have stronger ties in the community.

CLBC supports more than 13,000 adults with developmental disabilities to be included in community as full citizens and to be as independent as possible. We are determined to build on the progress we have made, learning from our successes and from the mistakes we have made. CLBC will move forward, recommitted to ensuring that the individuals and families we serve are our first priority.

Happy holidays to everyone and a very happy and peaceful New Year. ■

My path to self-advocacy

By Muncie Knuhtsen

Hi, my name is Muncie and to me, independence means living on my own, getting a job and doing well at what I do. It also means going out with friends when I want. Being independent makes me feel like I have control of my life.

My path to independence began at RISE, which stands for Real Integration through Supportive Employment. If it was not for the staff and friends at RISE, I might have not come this far.

We all learn life skills in RISE, and I mentioned one day that I wanted to live on my own, and support myself with my own job. Staff guided me in applying for a job experience at Little Caesars Pizza to practice my skills. It was for eight weeks and it was well worth putting the time and effort into learning more transferable skills for my next job.

The next good thing that happened in my life was when Nancy Gauvin from RISE helped me find employment. I was offered an opportunity to work at Valley Autohouse in Chilliwack. I met with the employer and had an interview. It was a success and that's when I started work on the first Saturday of the month. The fact that I was given a chance to prove my skills to my employer and to be accepted within the company made me feel great. I feel really good about myself knowing that I've got the support that is needed to get my career started.

The next step in my life was planning out meals which I wanted to try make for my friends at the program. I found that it became another success for me.

It was a pleasure to see my friends enjoy my cooking. I enjoy cooking for friends whom I admire so much. Learning to cook made me confident, and I knew I could be okay in my own place.

Looking for a place takes time and a great deal of planning and searching, but I found the right home for myself and I love living there. It feels good to have my own place, be independent, and do things on my own. I came a long way to being independent. Finding the right place is important: a place that is quiet, safe and full of good neighbors is what I wanted.

I have also joined a group called People First. We have regular meetings where we discuss having our own voice and becoming advocates for ourselves. I feel empowered by the group.

I'm very grateful to all the programs that supported and believed in me. Those people gave me my start in the next chapter in my life. My ultimate goal was to have my own place in life and I have that now and I'm proud of myself for not giving up on the idea.

It's people like the staff who made me what I am today. I've proved to myself that I can do it, so others can see that I have faith in myself and that I'm following my dreams.

To learn more about Muncie, you can read a longer version of his story in the online edition of The Citizen newsletter at www.communitylivingbc.ca under What's New > Newsletter > December 2011 Edition.



Muncie Knuhtsen has realized his goal of independence.

Real Integration through Supportive Employment (RISE) was developed in the summer of 2010 by the Chilliwack Society for Community Living as part of CLBC's Employment Initiative. ■

Inside Voice is published in each issue of *The Citizen*. If you are interested in writing for this column, please call Chris Rae at 1-877-660-2522, or email editor@communitylivingbc.ca

Open house welcomes open hearts

The following story appears in CLBC's new safeguards resource "The Power of Knowing Each Other: Stories about Informal Safeguards told by BC Families". Developed by CLBC and the Family Support Institute (FSI), the book is meant to inspire and stimulate people's thinking about informal safeguards.

ZACKERY'S MOTHER, BARBARAH, DESCRIBES HER

20-year-old son as a lovely young man with a nice personality. He is someone who appreciates calm and peaceful surroundings. Zackery enjoys walking at the outdoor track, going swimming and taking dance lessons with his mom. When he is at home, Zackery spends time reading books, playing computer games or sitting by a living room window that overlooks the ocean. He finds pleasure in watching the tugboats move through the water. Zackery has a developmental delay and a diagnosis of Autism, but it's his extreme anxiety that presents the biggest challenge for Zackery. His anxiety can be triggered by any number of things. Sometimes it's just getting his hair cut or if there is something unexpected in his life. Little children or dogs can trigger anxiety in Zackery. When his anxiety is extreme, he will become severely agitated within just a few seconds. The anxiety can take hold of him for seconds, minutes or much longer and during this time he can harm himself or others in the vicinity. These episodes can take a long time for Zackery to get through and often end in tears. Once over, Zackery will return to being an easy going, peaceful young man.

His anxiety and the resulting behaviour make it critical to have compatible people in Zackery's life – people he can trust and who have a calming and positive influence. Zackery intuitively senses the difference between people who enter his home to work with him and those who drop by as a friend. The people who come in to work can be a trigger for Zackery's anxiety. Barbarah believes Zackery

has a negative sense of self but when he is with people who genuinely like him, he feels that he is a good person. Once people spend time with Zackery, they are able to discover his wonderful character and personality. Barbarah and Zackery live a unique life and it's been challenging for Zackery to make friends in traditional ways.

Barbarah and Zackery moved to a new community in 2007. Barbarah moved several months before her son in order to settle in and find a home for them. During this time, Barbarah immersed herself in her new community. She joined a choir, volunteered as a director of a non-profit society and attended community celebrations, events and workshops. Barbarah has a very outgoing personality and she'll strike up a conversation with anyone. She made a wonderful connection with a woman just through sitting next to her on an airplane and engaging in conversation. This woman became her best friend. After only a few months in her new community, Barbarah knew many people. When Zackery made the move, Barbarah focused on his transition to a new school. Once he settled in school, her priority became supporting Zackery to develop relationships in the community. She took a correspondence course on creating social networks offered through Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network to learn more about creating a network

Barbarah and Zackery have built a vibrant support network in their new community of Powell River.



for Zackery. Barbarah hired a network facilitator for one time only to make the initial calls inviting people to an open house gathering in her home. Zackery's social network blossomed from there.

Barbarah is very intentional about making events in her home lively and fun, as a way to draw people in and encourage them to remain in their lives. There is often music, food and a festive atmosphere. When people first started visiting their home, Zackery would choose to stay in his bedroom. Eventually he began to move closer to the activities, lingering in the doorway of his room or venturing into the hallway. Little by little, Zackery has become more comfortable in the social atmosphere. At the most recent social gathering celebrating his birthday and Christmas, Zackery spent the majority of his time sitting with people in the same room or in the adjacent room. When it came time to open his birthday gifts, Zackery sat in the circle with everyone. After carefully opening each gift, he proudly walked around the room showing the item to his guests. Barbarah says Zackery often shows his gratitude by gazing into a person's eyes and smiling. It's been several years since the first gathering and Zackery now has many friends and acquaintances in his life. Some people share their time through reading, creating art and doing crafts with Zackery, others bring over his favourite foods to share. There are friends who attend every gathering and others who come by only one time or for one specific activity. People also connect Barbarah to others. One relationship becomes a springboard to another.

Barbarah shared a beautiful story of one man, Bob, who was drawn to Zackery at the swimming pool. The pool can be a challenging environment for Zackery, but Bob made a miraculous connection with him. One day, Bob said, "Zackery, I'll teach you to swim." Bob showed up at the pool the same time as Barbarah and Zackery for several weeks. He developed a special connection with Zackery, taught him basic swimming skills, and then they didn't see him again. Even though Bob didn't stay in touch, he played a very important role for the brief time he was in Zackery's life.



At a recent event, Zackery signs copies of "The Power of Knowing Each Other", which features his story.

When Barbarah and Zackery moved to their new community, they were alone – without family or friends. Through Barbarah's persistence, wisdom and courage to open her home, other people have opened their hearts. A web of kindness, caring and support has been woven around both Zackery and Barbarah. Their home has become a special place where a diverse group of people can share and enjoy each other's gifts and contributions. Everyone's lives are richer for it.

You can learn more about Barbarah and Zackery in a new video called "Building Personal Support Networks: Barbarah and Zackery's Story".

The video can be viewed on CLBC's Youtube channel by visiting www.youtube.com/communitylivingbc. ■

International Day of Persons with Disabilities

ON SATURDAY DECEMBER 3, CLBC STAFF AND SELF-ADVOCATES CELEBRATED

International Day of Persons with Disabilities at four Safeway locations around the province. This date is recognized every year by a proclamation of the United Nations. The theme of this year's International Day was "Together for a better world for all: Including persons with disabilities in development".

In the Terrace, Vernon, Abbotsford and Maple Ridge Safeway stores, hundreds of visitors dropped by CLBC's information tables to learn about CLBC's "Start with Hi" and "I can be safe online" initiatives, as well as the importance and benefits of inclusive employment for adults with developmental disabilities.

Information was also shared about the history and significance of the UN International Day of Persons with Disabilities. Thank you to everyone who came out to support these celebrations. ■



International Day of Persons with Disabilities is celebrated at the Safeway store in Maple Ridge.

Experience of a lifetime



James visited children in Tanzania and talked about "Start with Hi".

JAMES PATTY, AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF the Mission Self Advocacy group, has been remembering a volunteer experience of a lifetime. This time last year James was in Africa giving out CLBC "Start with Hi" bracelets and pins to orphaned children in Tanzania.

James is an avid traveler and has been all over the world, including China and Europe, with his sister and brother-in-law. However, last November was especially exciting because of a week-long volunteer experience at a school in Tanzania for orphaned children affected by HIV. Before they left,

James and his family packed their bags full of pencils and erasers for the children, and his self-advocacy group also loaded him up with buttons and bracelets to share with those he would be helping on his trip.

James's sister remembers how the buttons helped to make everyone feel welcome together and were a perfect way to say "Hi" and get to know each other.

James loved the Safari, but he loved being at the school with the children even more, just saying "Hi" and "Jambo", which is how people in Tanzania say "Hello". ■

Province celebrates Community Living Month

IN OCTOBER, COMMUNITIES ACROSS BC CELEBRATED COMMUNITY LIVING MONTH.

This annual celebration is a time to recognize the achievements and contributions of self-advocates and their families to their communities. Events, recognition activities and celebrations took place across the province. CLBC staff hosted and participated in many events in partnership with local service providers, associations and groups. Celebrations around BC included:

- The official Kick off of Community Living Month on October 1 at five London Drugs locations in Victoria, Vancouver, Richmond, Kamloops and Kelowna.
- A Youth Transition Fair in Coquitlam.
- The “Spooktacular” event featuring a BBQ, information booths and entertainment in Port Coquitlam.
- A transition BBQ in Maple Ridge.
- An event at the Vancouver International Film Festival sponsored by Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion (BACI).
- A recognition celebration in Williams Lake.
- Two events in Surrey: a Youth Transition Fair (hosted by the Minister of Social Development, Hon. Stephanie Cadieux) which attracted over 500 attendees, and a floor hockey tournament including a team from Vancouver Island.
- The annual “Hope Tree” event in Dawson Creek.
- Festive community BBQs in Smithers, Richmond and Prince Rupert.
- An open house event in Courtenay.
- The annual “One Day Together” celebration in Victoria.
- A community dance with a live DJ in Nanaimo.
- A fall fashion show in Castlegar.
- A harvest festival in Nelson.
- A hockey game between local RCMP and the Fire Department, with guest players and coaches from the Alberni Valley Bulldogs, in Port Alberni.



Participants at the Nelson Farmer's Market celebrate Community Living Month on October 22.

Thank you for everyone's hard work and effort to host these celebrations of inclusion in our communities. ■

Sharing friendship

By Stephanie Frey

HI, MY NAME IS STEPHANIE FREY AND MY SON JUST TURNED 19 LAST YEAR.

During the transition process, I realized that my son would always need some support when it came to friendships. I decided to start A Social Life group and partnered with the City of New Westminster Youth Centre and CLBC's Simon Fraser Region.

We meet every second Sunday for two hours at the brand new Youth Centre complete with gaming tables, kitchen, video games, indoor basketball court and a great outdoor space. To date, we have had a great amount of interest and good turnouts. Individuals are coming from all over the Lower Mainland to hang out, be active and cook together.

Parents and caregivers stay to enjoy a coffee, share stories, chat about resource ideas and find some positive connection. Community volunteers assist with set up, activities, social time and clean up. These times together might seem simple and brief, but the support and time together is invaluable. While we are focusing on basic connection time, it is my hope that they might blossom over time to be lifelong friendships and it's exciting to think about where that might lead.

To learn about upcoming meetings of A Social Life group, please visit www.asociallife.net or e-mail asociallife@yahoo.com. ■



A Social Life group enjoys their time together at the New Westminster Youth Centre.

Learning how to help each other

By Tracy-Jo Russell & Gwen Miller-Watt, CLBC Facilitator, Kamloops

THE 2011 INTERIOR SELF-ADVOCATES CONFERENCE

"Helping Yourself and Others in the Community" was held in Kamloops on October 26 and 27. The conference, which took place at the Kamloops Conference Centre, was attended by 60 self-advocates and support staff. Attendees came from all over the Interior, some as far as eight hours away. The goal of the conference was to educate each other about rights, relationships and ways of helping others.

The conference was hosted by Tony Cuglietta and Darryl Harand, who is a CLBC Board Member. The Mayor of Kamloops, Peter Milobar, began by welcoming everyone to the city of Kamloops. Cory Johnson was the key note speaker. He talked about his challenges in life and how he has a busy life as a son, a father and a husband, an athlete, a motivational speaker, an author and even a stand up comedian. He made us laugh and cry and motivated us to set some goals for ourselves.

Cory also talked about his connection with the Aktion Club through Kiwanis. It is a club that offers people a chance to volunteer to help in the community. He introduced Lee, a member of Kiwanis and she spoke about the group. Many self-advocates were people interested in starting an Aktion Club in their area.

After a terrific meal, "Feet First," a rock and roll band from Vernon, played music while people danced. Many wore Halloween costumes for the dance and some even got to sing on stage with the band. Throughout the evening there were draws for door prizes. Money was raised by selling tickets for door prizes and the proceeds were donated to the BC Children's Hospital. This was our way of helping others in our community.

During the dance, a number of self-advocates joined Sylvie Zebroff, CLBC's Family Partnership Advisor, to take part in "Power of their Story" by telling their stories on camera.

On the second day we had four workshops. The first workshop was presented by Ryan Groth and Chantelle Hyde and was called "No Barriers". It was about the barriers people face every day and talking about solutions.

Shelley Decoste and Sylvie Zebroff talked about leadership in a workshop called "It's my Right". Shelley also talked about her dream to have "diversability" be part of our vocabulary.



The Self-Advocates Conference Organizing Committee: (back row) Tony Cuglietta, Gerry London, Cory Johnson, Linda Evans, Diane Bob, Darryl Harand, (middle row) Darcy Riise, Tracy-Jo Russell, (front row) Ted Dekker, Colleen Mosimann, Karla Warren and Liz Huisken.

Tricia Lins and Sky Hendsbee spoke about relationships of all kinds, and talked about how to make relationships work.

Karla Warren, Colleen Mossiman, Jonathon Righton, Raymond Edinger, Sheila Niediq, Janet Gowanlock, Lynetta Beingnesser and Krista Petrich used video, musical and interactive experience to talk about volunteering and helping others and ourselves.

In all of the workshops there were fun activities and many questions from the audience. It was a great way to learn something new. The best part of the conference was the opportunity to get together, share ideas, meet new people and see old friends again.

The conference was great and we couldn't have done it without the support of the Thompson Cariboo Community Council and local businesses.

This story was submitted by Tracy-Jo Russell and Gwen Miller-Watt on behalf of the Conference Organizing Committee: Darryl Harand, Gerry London, Liz Huisken, Ted Dekker, Marcella Harrington, Mandy Bremner, Diane Bob, Linda Evans, Colleen Mossiman, Karla Warren, Darcy Riise and Tony Cuglietta. ■

Bringing laughter to the lives of others



Roni Keeley is a familiar, friendly face in her community of Penticton.

FOR RONI KEELEY, GIVING HER TIME TO HELP

others comes naturally. She's a familiar face in her home community of Penticton as a volunteer at many events including Peachfest, Children's Festival and the Iron Man Triathlon. She also sits as a member of the Central and South Okanagan Community Council and for the last 22 years has volunteered her time at the Trinity Care Centre for seniors.

"If I could describe her, I'd say she's responsible, joyful and giving," says CLBC Facilitator Lois Thompson, who has been friends with Roni since 1996.

To celebrate all of Roni's contributions and selflessness, her colleagues at Trinity Care Centre recently did a home makeover on her apartment.

"She's so helpful and faithful and has been coming for so long that we wanted to do something for her. The positive reaction from all our staff was amazing. Everyone contributed in some way," says Andrea Naylor, Director of Activities and Volunteers at Trinity Care Centre.

Roni left her keys with the staff and although she knew about the plan, she was surprised to come home and find her curtains cleaned, all new bedding, new paint and wall paper on the walls, a new clock, and a new ceiling fan. "It was beautiful and it was a really great surprise," she says.

"I really do enjoy working with people. I like bringing a bit of laughter to their lives," says Roni. "I always try to treat people the way I want to be treated when I'm older. My motto is to try bring a smile to everyone." ■

"My motto is to try bring a smile to everyone."

- Roni Keeley

Power of partnership

By Meaghen Taylor-Reid, CLBC Facilitator, Port Moody

THROUGH A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN CLBC's Simon Fraser Region and the City of Burnaby Citizen Support Services, individuals supported by CLBC are volunteering to connect with seniors and people with disabilities in their community.

Citizen Support Services (CSS) has a variety of programming for seniors ranging from a telephone program to grocery shopping to outings and lunches. CSS presented their programs to our CLBC team and looked at how individuals we support could contribute.

"It was very clear from the get go that a partnership was a great idea," says CLBC Facilitator Jenny Lau.

Marko is one of the participants in the lunch program, where he spends time with seniors who may be socially isolated. "Marko attends the program each Thursday, where he assists and socializes with shut-in seniors and persons with disabilities who enjoy their weekly lunch outing," says Shauna Grant, Volunteer Program Coordinator.

"Marko has a gentle and caring way about him that truly appeals to the

clients and volunteers alike. The participants enjoy his company and his youthful outlook adds a spark of humour and energy to the group," says Executive Director Anne Weller.

Most recently we have had a self-advocate, Colleen, join in the fantastic program as a senior participant herself. "It is so very wonderful for Colleen to have this connection. It's a wonderful group of staff, terrific programs and great safeguards," says Jenny.

"I'm excited to be included in this program. I love meeting new friends and getting help with shopping. Everyone is so kind and I'm also looking forward to Christmas time with this group," says Colleen.

CLBC's Simon Fraser Region would like to extend our thanks to the Citizen Support Services team for their wonderful work and for their openness to the possibility of a partnership. ■



June Collings and Cathy Anderson enjoy spending time with Marko through the Lunch Bunch program.

Employment builds confidence



Geoff's job has helped him develop his confidence.

FOR GEOFF JOHNSON, THE MOST IMPORTANT GOALS IN LIFE ARE TO BE HAPPY, have many friends, live in his own place, to have a paying job that he enjoys, and to one day have a family.

After completing high school, Geoff took a dishwashing program in pursuit of a dishwashing job. His dishwashing career was short lived though as he was unable to fit in and keep up with the workload. Geoff's confidence was at an all time low thinking it would be difficult for him to find employment with his disability. More than 10 years passed without working before Geoff applied at C.B.I. Consultants to assist him in finding a job.

A C.B.I. employment specialist learned a lot about Geoff through completion of the Discovery process. Geoff at the time lived with his parents downstairs in semi-private suite. His place was immaculate. It was like a hotel, you could put on a white glove and wipe his whole place down and the glove would come out clean.

C.B.I.'s employment specialist presented these great cleaning skills to a home decor store to customize a position that fit Geoff's ideal conditions of employment. The home decor store thought this was a great idea. A position was created for Geoff to work two hours, twice a week cleaning the store.

Geoff was a quiet and shy individual who would work his shift then go home after saying one or two words to others during that time. Geoff's employment has helped him build up to a point where he is now assisting customers with sales and socializing with his co-workers about the weekend.

Geoff has now been employed for more than a year, works three days a week, is more confident speaking with customers and co-workers and has recently moved in to his own place with his girlfriend. Through his job, Geoff's confidence continues to grow. ■

Reaching his goals

BRAYDEN WALTERHOUSE HAS BEEN employed at a major home improvement retailer for over a year. Brayden is a hard working, dedicated young man who is excelling in his customized position. He started off working as a seasonal associate, helping keep the seasonal area clean and presentable. Over time, due to Brayden's hard work and desire to always do more, his job duties have increased. He is now responsible for a large number of tasks including assisting in the paint department, flooring department, organizing and straightening the hardware department, doing various administrative duties and cleaning the seminar room.

Brayden required a job that could be customized to his Ideal Conditions of Employment. Through the Discovery process, C.B.I. Consultants found that Brayden enjoys working independently, but around others in a social setting. He was seeking a place where he can complete structured tasks but also be given an opportunity to learn and have flexible hours.

Taking these conditions into account, a customized position was developed for Brayden with a major home improvement retailer which matched his conditions of employment and their unmet needs. Brayden has performed well in his position and has just received a raise and an increase in hours.

Brayden enjoys being challenged and succeeding in his goals. He has just moved in to a home share and is excited to be learning to cook, clean and do laundry on his own. He credits his job with teaching him proper cleaning skills, patience, confidence, motivation, and developing his independence.

Brayden's future goals include traveling across Canada and Europe and becoming an advocate for people with disabilities. With Brayden's hard work and strong desire to succeed it will only be a matter of time before he reaches those goals. ■



Brayden's hard work and dedication have led to increased job responsibilities.

Videos aim to educate



John West talks about employment in the new CLBC video “What We Do”.

TWO NEW VIDEOS SHOW EXAMPLES OF the work CLBC does, as well as the typical process when applying for eligibility and services.

In “What We Do”, CLBC Facilitators Doug Barr and Barbara Legg give an overview of CLBC and talk about different supports and services. The video includes a profile of an inclusive employment placement, highlights ways that CLBC celebrates Community Living Month, shows the work of Debbie Ramage, a CLBC Self-Advocate Liaison, and illustrates some of the ways CLBC staff

work with local service providers to promote inclusion in community.

“A Day in the Life” shows what an individual coming in to a CLBC office for the first time can expect. The video gives an overview of the process when applying for eligibility and services.

Both videos can be viewed on CLBC’s Youtube channel at www.youtube.com/communitylivingbc. ■

New Community Council resource

A NEW VIDEO TITLED “LIGHT THE WAY” HAS BEEN created to stimulate discussion about different ways to include self-advocates in the work of the Community Councils.

Produced by the South Island Community Council, the video highlights best practices gathered from interviews with self-advocates about what inclusion looks like to them. The video is intended to help Councils to build their capacity to help self-advocates access and use information, recruit self-advocates, and effectively utilize self-advocates’ skills and abilities at meetings.

Copies of the video have been distributed to CLBC Community Councils across BC and it can also be viewed on CLBC’s Youtube channel at www.youtube.com/communitylivingbc. ■



Michael Langridge and Mary Emond, who belong to the South Island Community Council, share examples of how Community Councils can include self-advocates.

CLBC welcomes new Self-Advocate Advisor

ON NOVEMBER 14, JESSICA HUMPHREY BEGAN IN HER ROLE AS CLBC'S

Self Advocate Advisor. Jessica is excited to be working with an organization that is committed to ensuring that the voices and priorities of self-advocates and families continue to be at the heart of what CLBC does. "I'm a big believer in shared policy making and really look forward to being part of a team that builds in ways to partner with those we serve," says Jessica.

Jessica comes to CLBC from her previous work with STEPS Forward and the BC Initiative for Inclusive Post Secondary Education. Jessica worked with STEPS Forward for seven years where she supported young adults with developmental disabilities to be fully included in all aspects of regular academic and campus life. "It was such an honour to walk alongside individuals who were exercising their right to follow the same life path as any young person beginning adulthood. It is through these seamless acts of self-advocacy that I have seen the world begin to change," she says.

Jessica lives in Victoria with her husband and two children aged 8 and 10. Her daughter has a label of a developmental disability. Jessica is driven both personally and professionally by values of reciprocity, interdependence and intentional community building. "It's through raising my family and being in conversation with others that I have developed my principles around authentic, lifelong inclusion for all people in our community," says Jessica.

Self-advocates, family members, community members and CLBC staff are welcome to contact CLBC's Self-Advocate Advisor, Jessica Humphrey at 778-679-2691 or by e-mail at Jessica.Humphrey@gov.bc.ca. ■



Jessica Humphrey has begun her role as CLBC's Self-Advocate Advisor.

Service ensures effective emergency response

PEOPLE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES IN BC can make any future trips with the BC Ambulance Service (BCAS) much safer and easier for themselves and for responding paramedics by informing BCAS ahead of time of their special needs. This information will be stored in the BCAS database and only used when there is a call to 911 from a registered address.

Responding paramedics will be able to provide a more effective service by having information about how to access the caller's home, their medical and physical requirements, their mobility and communication needs, any other limitations, and emergency contact numbers of family or friends.

This confidential information is only for the use of emergency call dispatchers and the paramedics as they respond to calls for assistance. Although this service has been available for many years, there is a new effort to ensure that British Columbians who would benefit are aware of it.

To take part in this service, you will need to complete a form providing your information. The form is available on the website of the BC Coalition of People with Disabilities at www.bccpd.bc.ca. You can also contact Karen Martin at 604-875-0188, toll-free at 1-800-663-1278, or by e-mail at Karen@bccpd.bc.ca to request the form be mailed to you.

The completed form should be e-mailed directly to BCASdispatch.operations@gov.bc.ca, or faxed to 604-215-2732. ■

Connect and be safe



Katrina and Jenny learn how to be safe when going online.

YOU CAN NOW CONNECT WITH CLBC'S "I CAN BE SAFE ONLINE" website on Facebook. Icanbesafeonline.com is Canada's first website dedicated to educating adults with developmental disabilities and their families on how to use the Internet safely.

The website provides tips, videos, stories, quizzes and a blog on Internet safety in simplified language to the individuals CLBC supports. The goal of www.Icanbesafeonline.com is to educate, empower, and equip people with developmental disabilities with the basic safety information so they can be safer when they are online.

To keep up with helpful information, links and discussions about online safety, you can go to www.facebook.com and search for "Safe Online CLBC". You can also stay in touch with "I can be safe online" by following [@safeonlineCLBC](https://twitter.com/safeonlineCLBC) on Twitter. ■

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