

Vancouver Foundation's
On the Table Project

Creating Community
Through Dance

What Community
Means to Seniors

transition

The Magazine of Disability Alliance BC



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editorial

by Ann Vrlak

The one thing we don't want you to take away from this Transition on Community is that a community has to be big—a huge network of people that takes a lot of time and energy to find or create.

A community can be neighbours you have coffee with once a month or something more structured like a support group. Or it can be an online group you share health tips with.

Our aim with this Transition is to talk about the importance of community to all of us and to share other people's stories about how they've found or created communities.

We hope you'll come away with some ideas of your own.

There has been a lot of social and psychological research in the past few decades that tells us just how vital community is.

When you have a community or communities that you regularly connect with, you boost your mental and physical health in tangible ways. Being connected to and supported by other people is "good for you."

Isolation is the flip side of community and it's a mental health risk for everyone—maybe even more so for some people with disabilities.

We also aren't saying that finding or creating community is always easy. A 2017 study by the Vancouver

"Small connections can make a big difference." When it comes to finding community, we don't want you to think big, we want you to think small!

Foundation, "Connect and Engage," found that most people wished they had more connections with others—and more ideas on how to make them.

You're not alone if you feel unsure or discouraged about finding a community.

But, it's also good to know that community, and people you can call on when you need an ear or a shoulder, improve your resilience. Resilience is a word that psychologists use to describe a simple but important life skill: the ability to cope with, manage or bounce back from difficulties.

We all have challenging experiences, but how well we handle them varies tremendously from person to person. If you have friends or community to support you, your resilience will be stronger and you'll weather life's storms more easily.

For people with disabilities who may have more daily challenges than people without disabilities, resilience becomes an even more valuable strength. Resilience says, "We can't and shouldn't have to do it alone."

And community has a ripple effect. Everyone benefits when more of us

engage with and connect with each other. A strong personal connection with even one person helps us to understand and care about each other more. We learn from each other and our different life experiences, and can make our larger communities a better reflection of all of us.

It sounds like a tall order, but as we say on the cover of this Transition, "Small connections can make a big difference." When it comes to finding community, we don't want you to think big, we want you to think small! At least at first.

If you don't have a community now, or would like to grow into a new community, start small. Volunteer at a local non-profit or faith group. Go to the free trivia night at your local café to have fun and meet people. Participate in a community meeting about an important issue in your neighbourhood.

Two other great places to start are your local community centre or neighbourhood house. Their whole reason for being is building community. The people there will be glad to help you.

You may be surprised at the connections you make.

ANN VRLAK IS THE EDITOR OF TRANSITION. 



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This program is funded by the Government of Canada
and the Province of British Columbia.

Creating Community Through Dance

by Harmanie Taylor

I knew very little about dance except that this community we were building was special. Not everyone who came to classes stayed, but those who did, flourished.

As a disabled dance artist, I have spent twelve years immersed in the growing worldwide community of integrated and inclusive dance, a practice involving both disabled and non-disabled folks.

Inclusion in this community, locally and internationally, has fostered my creativity, taught me skills, and supported my goals and my thirst for knowledge.

More than that, it has made me a better person, challenged my preconceptions of how the body and artistic practice relate to each other, and most importantly taught me to accept myself.

It all started twelve years ago when I wheeled into a University of Alberta dance studio for a rehearsal with Lindsay Eales as part of Orchesis' Motif 2007. I had recently transitioned to using a manual wheelchair

full time and was struggling because of the little knowledge I had of disability.

There was an opportunity for two manual wheelchair users to be in a dance piece. I thought it would be a great form of advocacy for the disability community that had been a great help and resource to me.

At that point, I really didn't think dance was for me, but I thought it was important to try.

When the choreographer's first instructions were, "Move in a way that feels good to you," the world stood still for a moment. It took time for me to process the impact of those words.

It changed the way I thought about movement and my relationship to my wheelchair. I felt as if a giant weight had been lifted from my shoulders, one that had said, "Being in a wheelchair means your life is over."

As soon as I let go of that assumption and glided freely around the dance studio, my life was full of possibilities. I found a new joy in being in my body that I had never experienced before—even before I had health complications.

I found friends who shared my new passion, I gained new skills, and I had incredible opportunities and experiences that would not have happened if I could still walk.

I was one of the founding members of the inclusive dance community in Edmonton. A few of us, some disabled and some non-disabled, wanted to share with everyone the sense of community we found through dance. We thought it was important to have a place where you could be completely yourself, free of judgement, and to move in a way that felt good to you.

I knew very little about dance except that this community we were building was special. Not everyone who came to classes stayed, but those who did, flourished. Knowing them and supporting them—and learning from them—helped me to flourish too.

When I moved to Vancouver, I joined the All Bodies Dance Project, a company made up of artists with and without disabilities that ex-

plores the choreographic possibilities of difference.

With All Bodies, I learned the value of “leading from beside,” from Marie Lopes, the coordinator of Arts and Culture for the Vancouver Park Board, who has been a leader in supporting community dance. “Leading from beside” describes what happens when facilitators (artists) cooperate with participants to make art.

The facilitator’s role is not to teach a set pattern of movements and techniques to memorize; rather, it is to create an environment where you can discover what your unique movement is, and to learn from the creativity of everyone in the room.

Together, the community builds choreography: something that only exists within that set of people. Each dancer is unique and irreplaceable.


This sense of building and creating goes beyond the studio doors. Friendships I have built through dance have led to incredible opportunities. For example, I met up for lunch with a fellow dancer, and she gave me the lead to my current apartment. My connection to the Edmonton community gave me a role in The Alice Sheppard and Daniellie Peers dance film, *Inclinations*,

which has given me the opportunity to attend UCLA’s Dancing Disability Lab—a one-week workshop for artists with disabilities to learn from leaders in the field.

None of this would have been possible without the support, love and mentorship from my dance community. I believe it is important to support and help our growing community to flourish inside the studio and out in the world. It has been a joy to be part of building that community

by dancing, mentorship, facilitating classes and creating choreography that helps share our stories.

Community is about a shared experience. A place where we can all be seen and support each other. The inclusive dance community, for me, is a place where we can move in a way that feels good to us.

CONTACT ALL BODIES DANCE AT INFO@ALLBODIESDANCE.CA OR LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW YOU CAN JOIN IN AT [HTTP://ALLBODIESDANCE.CA](http://ALLBODIESDANCE.CA). 

SPAREPARTS, CHOREOGRAPHED BY HARMANIE TAYLOR AND SARAH LAPP, FEATURING CHEYENNE SEARY AND DIANA MACKENZIE.



PHOTO: SHENG HO, TAKEN AT THE VINES ART FESTIVAL 2017

On the Table

| by Glenn Ewald

We're giving people across BC an excuse to invite their friends, family, coworkers, strangers—anyone and everyone—to share food and conversation.

A lot of people today are feeling disconnected from the community around them. That's what Vancouver Foundation discovered in 2017 when we released Connect & Engage—a survey of Metro Vancouver residents that looked into various aspects of personal, neighbourhood, and community connections.

That's probably not a big surprise.

So many of us have a hard time making new friends. We find that more and more of our social interaction these days is happen-

ing online. And there can be many barriers to connecting face to face, from challenges like getting around to just finding the time.

Vancouver Foundation ended our report with a call to action: for all of us to help create a greater sense of welcome and belonging in our communities. We resolved to step up and do our part, so we've created a platform for others to do the same called On the Table.

The foundation of On the Table is a simple idea, but a deeply profound one.

We're giving people across BC an excuse to invite their friends, family, coworkers, strangers—anyone and everyone—to share food and conversation. Each host chooses their own venue, serves their own food, and talks about whatever issues or ideas they find most interesting.

What everyone talks about is collected and shared—giving us an exciting snapshot of what's on people's minds throughout BC. It's a fun, meaningful opportunity for people everywhere to meet, gather and share.

In 2018, our first year of On the Table, we were energized to see thousands of people connecting with one another across the province in self-hosted events tailored to each host's community and interests.

We asked that there be some sort of food served. It could be anything from a simple snack to a three-course meal—that was completely up to the host.

Most important, we asked hosts across BC, "What's on your mind?" This simple, open question was a spark that ignited hundreds of conversations.

It brought together 361 hosts in every corner of the province, with more than 4,500 guests. And people really did talk about everything—from the survival of bees, to what matters to seniors, to designing for disabilities, to mental health and art.

Most people hosted in their homes, but lots used the office or workplace as a venue. It didn't matter where the event happened, how many people came, or even how great the food was. What we heard was that people most enjoyed having a reason to gather people together and have a conversation.



It didn't matter where the event happened, how many people came, or even how great the food was. What we heard was that people most enjoyed having a reason to gather people together and have a conversation.

Through this platform of sharing food, and just talking, we learned three important lessons.

First, that anyone can be a catalyst for connection. Some of our hosts were seasoned conveners with experience bringing people together— but most hosts were individuals who simply had something on their mind.

Second, we learned that we all benefit from a little nudge. So many hosts told us all they needed was a good reason to extend an invitation.

And third, that being face to face is important. In this digital age, we're immersed in technology in all aspects of our lives. These tools can help connect us, but technology can't replace the meaningful communication that happens in a common space, over shared food. Through this human experience, people are brought together in a unique, interesting, and meaningful way.

There's Still Time!

We liked it so much we've decided to do it again this year. Our big day is on September 26, but there's flexibility for anyone who's busy on that day.

Registration is now open through our website at OnTheTableBC.com, with resources to help anyone host a great conversation. Why not take a look and join us?

It's true that solving social isolation is complicated, but On the Table is an inspiring reminder that connecting with people can be easy.

GLENN EWALD IS DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS AT THE VANCOUVER FOUNDATION. 

dabc is moving!

a message from justina loh

2019 is a busy year for all of us at DABC. Along with the transitional period following past Executive Director Jane Dyson's retirement in 2018, our office lease expires at the end of this year.

We're working hard to find a new office space that will meet our needs and the accessibility needs of our clients.

NO GALA IN 2019

Finding a new DABC office is our priority, so we have decided not to host our annual gala this year.

STAY TUNED FOR UPDATES!

When we have found a new office and chosen a date for the 2020 gala, we will update you through Transition, email and social media.

If you aren't already following us, join us at:

Twitter: [@DisabAllianceBC](https://twitter.com/DisabAllianceBC)

Facebook: [DisabilityAllianceBC](https://www.facebook.com/DisabilityAllianceBC)

Sign up for our **e-newsletter** at <http://disabilityalliancebc.org/>

Finding Community Where You Least Expect it

I by Trace Ekdahl

In my neighbourhood, I see the same people and dogs a lot. We've become part of each other's community.

Community comes in many forms—family, neighbours, work colleagues. Communities can be online, involve sports, hobbies or interests. The list is endless.

One community you may not have considered is the pet community.

I have a cat named Daisy. She has a disability—she falls down. A lot. She has Cerebellar Hypoplasia, so the balance part of her brain is under-developed.

She may be disabled, but she is a regular cat. She is my best friend and fuzzy roommate. She has also created a community for me.

When I go to the pet store, I talk about her latest quirk. She has a lot. Her new one is, when I feed her treats, I must now pet her for a bit or she won't eat them.

I also need to buy her food at the vet because of her allergies. We also talk about Daisy's new behaviours. The vet assistants love hearing stories about Daisy.

My co-workers and neighbourhood acquaintances ask about her because she is pretty weird and interesting. Lately, when I touch her toys, she lies on them so I can't. She lets me know they are HER toys, not mine.

These places have formed a community for me based on my bestie, Daisy.

I have a mobility disability so, other than my part-time job and shopping, I don't leave the house much. I also don't have any family in my city. So, Daisy is my at-home community.

We have conversations while I make her meals. I will ask her a question, and if she meows, it means "Yes", and if she is silent it means "No." We talk about everything from what we did that day to the meaning of life.

I have a lot of physical pain and when it's bad Daisy knows and cuddles with me on the bed while we watch TV. It's her favourite interaction. She curls up with me and

puts her paws on my chin. She falls into a deep sleep and sometimes makes groaning noises and moves her legs.

Any pet can be your home community. With some, they can be your outside community, too.

I talk to a lot of people on the street about their dogs. Some dogs recognize me and come up for pets. In my neighbourhood, I see the same people and dogs a lot. We've become part of each other's community.

I used to have a hedgehog named Alex. He also created a community for me. When people found out I had an exotic pet, they asked a lot of questions. Every time I would run into these people, they would ask about him.

Even a snake, a guinea pig or a fish can create a community. There are many places on the internet where you can find like-minded people who share your love of pets.

You don't even need a pet to have a pet community. I follow a lot of cats on Instagram. I comment on their videos and pictures and read other people's comments. I interact with people and their pets from all over the world.

There is a new trend of teaching cats to do tricks. It helps you and



Pets are a good ice breaker, too. This is how I open a lot of conversations with people I've just met. If you're shy, you don't even need to do a lot of talking.

your cat with interaction and, not only keeps their bodies in shape, but also their minds.

They can be taught to jump over things, jump through hoops, give high fives and fist bumps, and much more. On Instagram, the account [@cat.school](#) has many videos of cats doing amazing tricks.

There are all kinds of online places to enjoy pets and talk about them. Reddit is also a good place to meet people who share your interests.

There is a Reddit group for everything and every kind of pet you can imagine. You can contribute as much or as little as you like. I've met new friends there that I will have for a long time to come.

A lot of people like animals and are open to talking about their favourites. Most people, at some point, have had a pet.

Pets are a good ice breaker, too. This is how I open a lot of conversations with people I've just met. If you're shy, you don't even need to do a lot of talking. People love to talk about their pets, past and present.

Pets provide love and support, and a connection with people that is pure and sweet.

So whether you have a pet or just love pets, there is a community somewhere waiting for you.

TRACE EKDAHL IS A CONTRACT WORKER WITH DABC'S ADVOCACY ACCESS PROGRAM. T

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THANK YOU!



INVITE DABC TO HOST A WORKSHOP

DABC provides workshops across BC to share information on provincial and federal disability benefits, the Registered Disability Savings Plan, Disability Tax Credit, income tax filing and emergency preparedness.

Most of our workshops are provided free of charge. However, we ask that a minimum of ten participants be confirmed for workshops outside of Metro Vancouver.

For more information or to request a workshop, please go to: disability-alliancebc.org/programs/workshops. Or contact Val at DABC at 604-875-0188 or feedback@disability-alliancebc.org.

Disability Benefits

DABC advocates provide workshops on provincial disability benefits –Persons with Disabilities (PWD) and the Persons with Persistent and Multiple Barriers (PPMB) benefits– as well as the federal Canadian Pension Plan-Disability benefit.

The workshops include information about financial and medical eligibility criteria and the supplementary supports that are attached to PWD and PPMB. They can be tailored to the needs of the organization or group.

Tax Filing

Our Tax AID DABC program provides workshops on simple income tax filing issues for people with disabilities, common tax filing credits, options for dealing with tax debt, and much more. In 2018, DABC started a partnership with three organizations across BC to expand the availability of these workshops.

RDSP/DTC

Access RDSP advocates provide workshops on the eligibility criteria for the Disability Tax Credit (DTC), strategies for communicating with your doctor, options if your DTC application is denied and eligibility criteria for the Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP).

Other topics include: tips for communicating with your bank, information about grants and bonds, best practices for maximizing RDSP benefits, and accessing the Endowment 150 grant.

Emergency Preparedness

DABC offers workshops to businesses, provincial and local governments, and community organizations on how to create emergency plans that include people with disabilities and seniors. These workshops may be provided at no cost, when funding is available.

CMIST

CMIST stands for the following needs: Communication, Medical, Functional Independence, Supervision and Support, and Transportation.

This approach to emergency planning and response offers a different way to consider the range of needs of the people in your local community.

The Duty to Accommodate is part of the BC Human Rights Code. You will learn what the law says about providing public services in a way that is accessible to all citizens and how to implement solutions to address accessibility.

The CMIST workshop can make your emergency planning and response more comprehensive and inclusive.

We provide half and full-day workshops (half-day workshops are offered only in Metro Vancouver).

Through presentations, table top exercises and group discussions, you will gain an understanding of how disabilities impact a person's ability to respond in emergencies, and you will take away planning and response solutions you can implement to meet those needs. **T**



Accessibility Projects

2018 Winners



Organization	City	Grant (\$)	Project Name
Aquafit for All Association	Vancouver	27,641	Aqua BLAST
BC Wheelchair Sports Association	Vancouver	20,000	Aboriginal Bridging the Gap Program
Blind Beginnings Society	New Westminster	15,000	Youth Speakers Bureau
Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion (BACI)	Burnaby	40,000	Making Kudoz Accessible in new BC regions
Camp Bowen Society for the Visually Impaired	Vancouver	35,437	Music Camp 2019
Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House	Vancouver	24,000	MAKE IT
L'Arche Comox Valley	Courtenay	10,000	I Belong Centre Outreach program
Nanaimo Food Share Society	Nanaimo	35,668	Everyone At the Table (EAT)
PacificSport Vancouver Island	Nanaimo	13,000	Making Kudoz Accessible in new BC regions
posAbilities Association of BC	Burnaby	40,000	Individualized Sexual Health and Health Relationship Training for Adults with cognitive Disability
Prince George Brain Injured Group	Prince George	40,000	People with Brain Injury - Preparing for wildfire & other emergencies
Richmond Centre for Disability	Richmond	28,000	Accessible Parking in Accessible Communities
The Cridge Centre for the Family	Victoria	40,000	Food Service Skills Training & Employment
UVic School of Public Health and Social Policy	Victoria	18,454	James at UVic
viaSport British Columbia	Vancouver	32,800	#LevelTheField: Disability Inclusion in Sport & Recreation
Victoria Disability Resource Centre	Victoria	30,000	Disability Awareness Training Project

Disability Alliance BC #204 - 456 West Broadway, Vancouver, BC V5Y 1R3

T: 604-875-0188 **E:** ap@disabilityalliancebc.org



Our sincere thanks to the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction for funding the accessibility project grant.



DABC advocates and staff are often on the road presenting workshops, speaking at events and working on committees. Here are some of our recent and upcoming events.

Want to book a DABC speaker at your organization or event? Please contact Val at 604-875-0188 or feedback@disability-alliancebc.org.

SEPTEMBER—NOVEMBER/19

New Tax Services at Maple Ridge Library

The Tax AID Team will start a new partnership with the Maple Ridge Library this fall with income tax consultation on-site services.

This pilot project is for people receiving BC disability benefits, CPP Disability Benefits and Disability Tax Credit recipients with lower incomes (under \$35,000).

Upcoming Dates

Thursday, September 19th from 10:30 am – 4:30 pm

Thursday, October 17th from 10:30 am – 4:30 pm

Thursday, November 21st from 10:30 am – 4:30 pm

Location

Maple Ridge Library, 130-22470 Dewdney Trunk Road, Maple Ridge.

OCTOBER 2, 2019

Self-Employment Program (SEP) for PPMB and PWD Workshop

Tax AID will present a new workshop about The Self-Employment Program (SEP), offered by the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction.

SEP is intended to assist BC Employment Assistance clients who have either a Persons with Disabilities designation or meet the Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers criteria in establishing and operating a self-employment enterprise.

Upcoming Date

Wednesday, October 2nd from 10:00 am – 11:30 am

Location

Disability Alliance BC, 204 - 456 West Broadway, Vancouver

RECENT EVENT JUNE/19

"Make It" Art Show

Myung Lee, Accessibility Project Manager, attended the "Make It" art show, hosted by Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House, winner of an Accessibility Project Grant. The Honourable Shane Simpson, Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction presented the award. The show was a huge success and included art pieces created by youth to inspire dialogue on mental health. 

LEFT TO RIGHT: GARY DOBBIN AND ROBIN ANDERSON, FROG HOLLOW NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE; MINISTER OF MSDPR, THE HONOURABLE SHANE SIMPSON; ROSIE FORTH, DRIVE YOUTH EMPLOYMENT SERVICES; AND MYUNG LEE, DABC.



DTC Resources for Health Professionals

Access RDSP has created two new booklets to help health professionals support clients with Disability Tax Credit applications:

- **A Nurse Practitioner's Guide to the Disability Tax Credit**
- **A Guide to the Disability Tax Credit for Occupational Therapists**

The Disability Tax Credit (DTC) offers significant benefits for people with disabilities who qualify.

With these guides, we explain the different sections of the form and offer suggestions for supporting patients' applications.

For more information, please contact the Access RDSP Outreach Coordinator at DABC at 604-872-1278 or rdsp@disabilityalliancebc.org.



Access RDSP
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ACCESS RDSP IS A PARTNERSHIP OF BC ABORIGINAL NETWORK ON DISABILITY SOCIETY, DISABILITY ALLIANCE BC AND PLAN INSTITUTE, MADE POSSIBLE WITH GENEROUS SUPPORT FROM THE VANCOUVER FOUNDATION.

THANK YOU TO THE BC NURSE PRACTITIONERS ASSOCIATION FOR THEIR COLLABORATION ON THIS RESOURCE.



What Matters to Seniors

| by Lorraine Copas

Over the course of our lives, there are many factors that shape how we age. It's well known these days that health can be influenced by our social and economic status, as well as our general life course and experiences.

The research literature also supports some common sense assumptions about staying active. Older adults who remain active in their community, and who have opportunities to engage in regular physical activity, report better health outcomes (Hanson et al., 2013). Older adults who are less active or who are more socially isolated experience poorer health (Dickens et al., 2011).

With aging, many seniors can experience significant changes in their personal circumstances, with these changes having an impact on their quality of life and personal circumstances. SPARC BC has the privilege of connecting with many seniors through the delivery of the Parking Permit Program, and has learned that healthy aging includes oppor-

Our experience shows that seniors value the opportunity to continue to engage in their community, have new experiences, meet new people and continue to learn and grow.

tunities for seniors to feel safe and connected, and to have a sense of purpose.

Our experience shows that seniors value the opportunity to continue to engage their community, have new experiences, meet new people and continue to learn and grow.

Through their Global Age-Friendly Cities Project (2006), the World Health Organization (WHO) observed that when planning for seniors the following considerations matter:

- Accessible, safe and vibrant outdoor spaces where seniors can go to be part of their community;

- Community supports and health services;
- Access to information;
- Opportunities for participation and engagement in all aspects of civic life;
- Respect and inclusion; and,
- Social participation.

It is not surprising that the literature also recognizes the importance of having access to a supportive social infrastructure including safe, affordable housing, as well as safe and accessible transportation that can help seniors to get to where they need to go. As our population ages, the demand for these services and supports will only grow.


While many seniors will have the opportunity to age with dignity, there are a growing number of

seniors who are living in poverty and facing difficulty in meeting even their most basic needs. In 2018, SPARC BC published a Seniors' Poverty Report Card which showed that, in 2015, there were more than 70,000 low income seniors across British Columbia and that this number has been steadily increasing. This translates into about 1 in 10 seniors in BC.

Our research showed that single seniors living alone were among the most vulnerable, with these households having an annual income of \$25,000 or less (before tax). For many low-income seniors, the future can seem uncertain and difficult without the support of community. So, when asked what matters to seniors, the answer should be, "Community that matters!"

There is a saying that how we care for our very young and our very old is a measure of who we are as a society. It is important to keep in mind that solving poverty is not just about social and economic inclusion—it is about strengthening our communities for neighbours of all ages and about creating a better future for all of us.

LORRAINE COPAS IS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF SPARC BC.

SPARC BC RECENTLY PRODUCED A "SENIORS' POVERTY REPORT CARD" AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD AT [HTTPS://WWW.SPARC.BC.CA/SOCIAL-POLICY/](https://www.sparc.bc.ca/social-policy/). IF YOU WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE NEEDS OF SENIORS, PLEASE CONTACT LORRAINE AT LCOPAS@SPARC.BC.CA OR 604-718-7736. 

There is a saying that how we care for our very young and our very old is a measure of who we are as a society.



¹ Hanson, H. M., Schiller, C., Winters, M., Sims-Gould, J., Clarke, P., Curran, E., Donaldson, M., Pitman, B., Scott, V., McKay, H., Ashe, M. C. (2013). Concept mapping applied to the intersection between older adults' outdoor walking and the built and social environments. *Preventive Medicine*, 57(6), 785-791.

² Dickens, A. P., Richards, S. H., Greaves, C. J., & Campbell, J. L. (2011). Interventions targeting social isolation in older people: A systematic review. *BMC Public Health*, 11(1), 647-647.

³ Global Age-friendly Cities: A Guide. World Health Organization (WHO). Retrieved from http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Global_age_friendly_cities_Guide_English.pdf.



Welcome to Marpole Neighbourhood House

by Zahra Esmail

Malavika Santhosh performing a beautiful Bharata Natyam dance number.

Imagine a space where you are greeted with familiarity, with a smile, with the laughter of children and the aroma of fresh coffee. A space where you belong.

In our rapidly changing city, places like this can seem difficult to find, but this is exactly the purpose of the neighbourhood house—to provide community members with a space to connect, volunteer, lead programs, make friends, and access services and information.

In 2019, the newest neighbourhood house in Metro Vancouver opened its doors—Marpole Neighbourhood House.

Marpole is a unique neighbourhood. There are long-standing residents who have lived in Marpole for decades, and there is major development with hundreds of new families moving to Marpole each year. The old Fire Hall No. 22, located at the corner of Hudson and West 70th, used to be home of “Marpole

Now that Marpole Neighbourhood House is open, we want to be like an extended living room or second home for the Marpole community. This is a space where people can hang out and enjoy the company of others, volunteer, develop long-lasting relationships and become more connected to their community.

Place”—a neighbourhood hub that bustled from morning to night.

After a flood in December 2013, Marpole Place was closed and the neighbourhood lost a great community asset. Ever since, it has been a challenge for local leaders and organizations to find a space to run the programs and events that made Marpole a vibrant, and active neighbourhood where people could live, work and play.

In 2016, the City of Vancouver decided to refurbish the building and invited proposals from potential operators. The Association of Neighbourhood Houses of BC (ANHBC),

which has a long-history of serving and supporting various neighbourhoods since 1894, received the contract to become the new operators of the building in 2017.

Marpole Neighbourhood House opened its doors on May 22, 2019, with the overwhelming support of local residents and partners. ANHBC celebrates its 125th anniversary this year. What better way to celebrate than to open a brand new neighbourhood house that will strengthen the neighbourhood for decades to come!

Now that Marpole Neighbourhood House is open, we want to be like an extended living room or second home for the Marpole community.

This is a space where people can hang out and enjoy the company of others, volunteer, develop long-lasting relationships, and become more connected to their community.

We are working with our neighbours to develop programming and provide services that meet the needs and dreams of the entire community. We are also having discussions with people to see how we can encourage the growth of peer-led programs. We want to enable our community to animate the space how they would like, and exchange ideas and interests to further strengthen our community network. This may come in the form of a weekly meal program, a conversation circle or an arts showcase.

Inclusion is of the upmost importance to neighbourhood houses. We strive to be places where all people are welcome and included, regardless of age, race, colour, religion, ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, language or anything else. More than just including people, we want to create opportunities for people to get to know each other and break down the barriers that keep us apart.

The potential for Marpole Neighbourhood House is limitless. We are excited to work with and serve our community for many years to come.

ZAHRA ESMail IS THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF SOUTH VANCOUVER NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE. LEARN MORE AT [HTTP://WWW.MARPOLENH.ORG](http://www.marpolenh.org). 



Zahra Esmail with Vancouver Mayor Kennedy Stewart



The new home of the neighbourhood house in Fire Hall 22.

ABOUT TRANSITION

Editorial Statement

The views and opinions expressed within the pages of TRANSITION are not necessarily those held by the total membership or Board of Directors. The material presented is meant to be thought-provoking and to promote dialogue.

Planning Team Justina Loh, Annette Murray, Myung Lee, Ann Vrlak

Editor and Layout Ann Vrlak

Cover Design Fiona Gamiet

Administrative Assistant Lynda Bennett

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Contact Us

Disability Alliance BC
204-456 W. Broadway,
Vancouver, BC V5Y 1R3
T: 604-875-0188 F: 604-875-9227
TRANSITION general:
trans@disabilityalliancebc.org
Ads:
transitionads@gmail.com
Web:
www.disabilityalliancebc.org/transition
DABC general:
feedback@disabilityalliancebc.org



Support DABC

ABOUT US

Our mission is to support people, with all disabilities, to live with dignity, independence and as equal and full participants in the community. We champion issues impacting the lives of people with disabilities through our direct services, community partnerships, advocacy, research and publications.

FRONTLINE SERVICES

Our Advocacy Access Program provides one-on-one assistance with provincial and federal (Canada Pension Plan Disability) income supports and other benefits. Our Tax AID DABC program helps PWD and PPMB recipients to file their income taxes year-round. Access RDSP helps people with the Disability Tax Credit and with opening a Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP).

Our projects respond to community need and increase people's ability to participate and contribute.

GROWING PARTNERSHIPS

We stay connected with a large network of community organizations across BC and regularly provide them with updates about issues of importance to the disability community.

FREE PUBLICATIONS

We publish a range of capacity-building, self-help guides and advocate resources, in reader-friendly language. Resources are provided free of charge, either by mail or from our website.

BECOME A DABC MEMBER

Numbers matter. The more members we have, the stronger our voice in the community.

Please become a Disability Alliance BC (DABC) member today. You can be a voting member or a non-voting member, and we welcome both individuals and groups.

I accept your invitation to join the DABC and enclose my membership fee of \$15 (individuals) and \$25 (groups).

I am also including a tax-deductible donation of \$_____. (Donations over \$10 are tax deductible).

Please return your payment/donation with this form to:
DABC, 204-456 W. Broadway, Vancouver, BC V5Y 1R3.

You can also become a member or donate online at:
<http://www.disabilityalliancebc.org/about-dabc/become-a-member>.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INVALUABLE SUPPORT

Please check the applicable boxes:

☐ New membership or ☐ Renewal

☐ Voting Member or ☐ Non-voting Member

Voting members are people with disabilities and self-help groups where at least 50% of members have a disability.

Name _____

Organization _____

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City/Prov _____ Postal Code _____

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Sign up for our Enews at
disabilityalliancebc.org

Visit our website often to see our work on behalf of the disability community, and to connect with us through social media.

We hope to see you there.

Icons designed by EpicCoders from Flaticon

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Non-profit organizations receive a 35% discount. Prices subject to change without notice.

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Sponsors have a unique opportunity to promote their business to our community network. For full details on ads and sponsorships, please contact Ann at 604-875-0188 or transitionads@gmail.com.

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- A 1/2 page, colour banner ad on the back cover
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Sponsors may design their own banner ad or we will design it for you at no charge. We can also design interior pages for you from text and graphics you provide.

Feature Sponsorship

- A 1/3 page, colour banner ad on the back cover
- One inside page
- Two thank yous in our e-newsletter



Emergency Preparedness and Response

by Karen Martin

People in our workshops learn why people with disabilities have high disaster-vulnerability and how to address some of the crucial areas DABC and others have identified.

DABC has been proud to provide workshops to local, regional, and First Nations Emergency Programs for more than a decade.

Our full-day training, *A Functional Needs Framework for Every Community: Emergency Planning and Response for People with Disabilities*, assists Emergency Programs and partner disaster support agencies to increase their capacity to effectively help people with disabilities in emergencies and disasters.

People in our workshops learn why people with disabilities have high disaster-vulnerability and how to address some of the crucial areas DABC and others have identified.

Through presentations, table top exercises and group discussions, we examine emergency public communications and information, accessible evacuations, and creating accessible Reception Centres and Group Lodgings.

Emergency Programs will take away planning and response resources and solutions that will enhance the accessibility and inclusivity of their programs.


We also offer, in combination with the full-day training, a half-day

community engagement workshop to bring Emergency Managers, ESS, Disaster NGOs, community organizations and people with disabilities together.

This half-day session introduces the community to the Functional Needs Framework and is an opportunity for them to “get-to-know” their emergency program.

Through group exercises, we identify emergency/disaster issues facing people with disabilities and seniors in local communities and discuss ways participants can work together to support the most disaster-vulnerable in their community.

These workshops may be provided at no cost, when funding is available. Otherwise, a training fee is charged to cover DABC costs.

For more details, please contact Karen at karen@disabilityalliancebc.org or 604-875-0188. 

DON'T BE SAD

Support DABC's
Visionary Circle



Sometimes it's hard to know what you can do to help.

When you join DABC's Visionaries Circle with monthly giving, you'll be providing the best support possible. Even a small amount goes a long way and provides a stable funding base for planning our programs and services.

Joining is easy.

- You can set up monthly donations in seconds at www.CanadaHelps.org by searching for “Disability Alliance BC.”
- Or, set up a monthly credit card donation by calling Terry at 604-875-0188.

Thank you for your support!

ADVERTISER'S MESSAGE

A 50 Year History of Specializing in Catastrophic Car Accident Injuries

As a team of personal injury lawyers that deal exclusively in car accident injuries, the firm of Simpson Thomas and Associates (STA) has a history of specializing in catastrophic injury claims.

Managing any injury that's caused by another driver is a difficult experience. When the accident has resulted in brain injury, quadriplegia, paraplegia, amputation or severe damage to the spinal cord, claims tend to become much more challenging and complex.

As one of Vancouver's longest running law firms to specialize exclusively in car accidents, the lawyers at STA draw upon 50 years of experience settling ICBC claims. With the upmost care and attention to detail, we ensure our clients receive the most effective rehabilitation, maximum benefits and maximum compensation.

To effectively handle a catastrophic injury claim, our lawyers fulfill multiple roles. We liaise with rehabilitation specialists to ensure that appropriate home care is in place, as well as the full complement of rehabilitation services necessary to promote recovery. Early medical intervention and rehabilitation are essential to maximize recovery and adaptation to life post-injury.

The lawyers at STA will help find the best professionals to assist you. The personal injury lawyers at STA handle all aspects of the litigation. This requires considerable financial resources which are advanced by the firm—clients pay nothing unless their case is successful.

STA, and its predecessor Simpson & Company, are experienced trial lawyers with an enviable record of success handling major loss claims. One of our former clients, whose daughter suffered a severe brain injury after her catastrophic accident, was awarded a tax free structured settlement over her lifetime of over \$5 million. There are countless more examples.

Our 50-year history has given us a deep understanding of challenges, treatment and recovery requirements accident victims face.

We continue to build on our reputation of providing quality service, and take great pride in settling claims related to traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury, and fractures, and helping people to rebuild their lives.

If you or a loved one has suffered a catastrophic injury in a motor vehicle accident, please call Anthony Thomas at (604) 689-8888 to schedule a complimentary consultation.

www.simpsonthomas.com



Bernie Simpson C.M.

Representing only the victims of car accidents for close to 50 years. Awarded the Eloisa De Lorenzo medal in Washington, DC on behalf of Brain Injury Survivors.



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Partner

Helping the victims of car accidents for over 16 years.

We couldn't get there without you.



Programs and Projects

- ♥ BC Rehabilitation Foundation
- ♥ City of Vancouver
- ♥ Council of Canadians with Disabilities
- ♥ Insurance Corporation of BC
- ♥ Law Foundation of British Columbia
- ♥ Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction
- ♥ Ministry of Public Safety
- ♥ Vancouver Coastal Health
- ♥ Vancouver Foundation

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Province of BC.



Dedicated Supporters and Friends

- ♥ BC Government and Services Employees' Union
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- ♥ CUPE Metropolitan Vancouver District Council
- ♥ Hospital Employees' Union
- ♥ Klein Lawyers LLP
- ♥ Osborne Cane Personal Injury Lawyers
- ♥ Provincial Employees Community Services Fund
- ♥ Simpson, Thomas and Associates (Trial Lawyers)
- ♥ TELUS Employees Charitable Giving Program
- ♥ Tompkins Wozny, Chartered Professional Accountants
- ♥ Vancouver Taxi Association

And many generous donors like you!



Contact Tax AID DABC Today for Free Income Tax Assistance

Program Manager
Disability Alliance BC
taxaid@disabilityalliancebc.org
<https://taxaiddabc.org>

Tax AID DABC helps people in BC receiving PWD (Persons with Disabilities) or PPMB (Persons with Persistent and Multiple Barriers to Employment) benefits to file their income taxes.



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CONTACT THE TAX AID DABC REGIONAL PARTNER NEAREST YOU

- METRO VANCOUVER & FRASER VALLEY | VANCOUVER | DABC | 604-872-1278 | Toll Free 1-800-663-1278
- INTERIOR | KELOWNA | Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society | 250-763-4905 ext. 215

Yes, our income tax services are free.

Am I eligible for Tax AID DABC services?

We help people who are receiving:

- Persons with Disabilities (PWD) or
- Persons with Persistent and Multiple Barriers (PPMB) to Employment benefits.

What if I Haven't Filed Taxes for Years?

We help prepare simple income tax returns for the most recent tax year, as well as for previous years. One of our specialties is to help people who have multiple years of taxes to file.

What if I Don't Have All My Tax Documents (T5007, T4s)?

Don't worry! We'll contact government agencies to help you find them.

My Income is Low. Why Should I File Taxes?

There are many advantages to filing your income taxes! Our clients usually receive \$400 to \$600 in income tax credits for each year they file. People eligible for an income tax refund, and those with dependent children, often receive much more.

If you haven't filed your taxes for multiple years, your refunds may grow dramatically.

Other benefits you may be eligible for include:

- GST Credits
- BC Sales Tax and Climate Action Tax Credits
- Working Income Tax Credits
- Child Tax Benefits
- Registered Disability Savings Plan Grants and Bonds

Income tax filing can also help you qualify for MSP Premium Assistance coverage, subsidized housing, and other income-tested benefits.

What Should I do Next?

Contact Disability Alliance BC or one of our Regional Partners. We'll set up an appointment to meet with you. Call us today! We're here to help.

CONTACT THE TAX AID DABC REGIONAL PARTNER NEAREST YOU

- VANCOUVER ISLAND | VICTORIA | Together Against Poverty Society | 250-361-3521
- NORTHERN | PRINCE GEORGE | Active Support Against Poverty Society | Toll-Free 1-877-563-6112



Planned Giving

You've always been there for others. It's part of who you are. Now, you can continue to give beyond your lifetime.

DABC has a Planned Giving program. Planned Giving is the opportunity to think ahead about causes or organizations that you may want to financially support beyond your lifetime.

You can take the time now to gather information and leave instructions in your Will.

By planning ahead, you can research charities, or have someone research charities for you, that fit your values. You won't feel rushed or pressured to make a decision and you can ensure that your money is spent in the way you want.

Benefits

There are many benefits to Planned Giving. By writing down your wishes, you will have increased peace of mind and control over your finances.

Through Planned Giving, you can provide a significant future donation without reducing your income today.

A gift in your Will to a registered Canadian charity is tax-deductible. And, your Planned Gift helps DABC to be here in the future for those who need us.

Tax Savings

You can realize significant tax savings with Planned Giving. For example, stocks, bonds and mutual funds that you may have in a Trust can be transferred in your will to a charity and a tax receipt will be issued.

A bequest from your estate of cash or RRSPs will reduce the taxes that your estate will be required to pay.

Other ways of donating give twofold value: by naming DABC as the beneficiary in a life insurance policy, you do not incur any costs now and a tax receipt is issued when the estate is settled.

To Learn More

Our donors are important to us and we'll work with you to be recognized in the way that you'd prefer.

If you would like more information about Planned Giving, please contact Justina at DABC at jloh@disabilityalliancebc.org or 604-875-0188. She will send you DABC's Planned Giving information to review with your financial planner or lawyer, family and friends.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

DABC Receives Award

On May 27/19, Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (MSDPR) Shane Simpson presented DABC's Myung Lee with an AccessAbility Week proclamation plaque, in recognition of DABC's work in the disability community.

He emphasized the work of our Tax AID DABC program which we operate thanks to funding from MSDPR, and in partnership with other organizations across BC. DABC Board member Elizabeth Lalonde was also in attendance.

We would like to thank the Province of BC for this honour.

Here are some of the reasons Minister Simpson gave for this recognition:

- DABC has been providing services, resources and advocacy support to people with disabilities for over 40 years.
- DABC understands the needs of the disability community, and how to make BC more accessible.
- DABC started a unique program, Tax AID DABC, that helps people with disabilities file their taxes.
- Last year, the Ministry provided additional funding, so DABC could expand Tax AID DABC services past the Lower Mainland.

Online Communities | by Nancy Lear

More and more people are finding community online, through mainstream vehicles like Facebook, YouTube or Twitter. Others are part of supportive communities, advocacy communities, communities on specific social issues or entertainment communities.

Being a part of an online community can be a way to defend a cause, support an idea, share expertise and interests or find help.

Through the buzz of social media, a post can potentially reach global status in minutes, as the word passes from online community to online community. This worldwide reach has been an amazing platform for many causes and also for those of us who are looking for community.

YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram all offer forms of community that can help lessen feelings of isolation or loneliness.

From our own homes, we can follow the latest videos, read uplifting stories, scan through clothing lines, track new recipes or research travel groups for our next adventure.

These positive connections give us ways to discuss topics, give and receive comments, and be part of something important to us.


A discussion about online communities wouldn't be complete without mentioning safety.

Being a part of an online community can be a way to defend a cause, support an idea, share expertise and interests or find help.

There are unique and serious risks to sharing information online. Many groups have a "join" page that will ask you about your intentions for joining, and experiences with the group topic, and have a waiting period before you will be accepted into the group. And, be careful with the personal information you share online.

There are lots of good tips online about staying safe and secure. If you haven't checked these out yet, now is the time!

Online communities can be a win-win situation. Sharing information and having new resources at your fingertips can be an empowering and connecting experience.

NANCY LEAR IS THE PEER NETWORK FACILITATOR AT THE BC ASSOCIATION FOR INDIVIDUALIZED TECHNOLOGY AND SUPPORTS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES. 

Do You Have an RDSP?

The Registered Disability Savings Plan is a powerful way for eligible people with disabilities to save for their long-term financial security. It also enables people receiving social assistance to protect assets and income.

The Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) is a savings plan introduced by the federal government in 2007. The RDSP is designed to help people with disabilities and their families save money for their long-term financial security.

What Does the RDSP Allow You to Do?

If you open an RDSP, you may be eligible to receive government grants and bonds up to a lifetime maximum of \$90,000.

The maximum you can contribute to your RDSP over your lifetime is \$200,000, but the value of an RDSP could be much higher with government contributions and investment savings.

Your Provincial Benefits

Your provincial disability or income assistance benefits will not be stopped or reduced because of any RDSP savings or withdrawals.

Are You Eligible?

To have an RDSP you must:

- Be eligible for the Disability Tax Credit (DTC) and maintain this eligibility

- Have a Social Insurance Number (SIN)
- Be living in Canada when the RDSP is opened
- Be up-to-date with filing your income tax returns
- Be under 50, if you want to claim the grants and bonds
- Not make any withdrawals for at least 10 years, if you want to keep the grants and/or bonds that you have received.

How to Set Up an RDSP

If you have already qualified for the DTC, contact a financial institution that offers the RDSP. Each institution has its own forms to open an RDSP.

If you want to apply for the DTC, please call DABC to set up an appointment with one of our advocates.

RDSP: Pros and Cons

Pros

- The RDSP provides generous grants and bonds from the federal government, and is an excellent savings opportunity for many people with disabilities.
- For people on income assistance, the provincial government has

made RDSP assets and withdrawals exempt.

- For people who get provincial disability benefits and receive lump-sum payments (like an ICBC settlement), the RDSP is a practical alternative to a trust, to exempt the asset.
- The RDSP can provide long-term financial security.

Cons

- The older you are, the fewer financial incentives you will have to start an RDSP. For example, if you are over 49, you cannot qualify for the grants and bonds.
- You must meet a relatively strict definition of disability to qualify for the DTC. If you do not qualify, but lose your eligibility at a later time, you may have to close your RDSP.
- The Repayment Rules mean that you have to pay back all or part of the grants and bonds you have received in the past 10 years, when you withdraw any amount of money from the RDSP.

Contact Us

For information and assistance, please contact DABC:

604-872-1228 (local)

1-800-665-1278 (toll free)

rdsp@disabilityalliancebc.ca 

Access RDSP

Change your tomorrow today



dabc



Access RDSP is a partnership between Disability Alliance BC, Plan Institute and BC Aboriginal Network on Disability Society.

Information and Support on the Registered Disability Savings Plan



CONTACT OUR PARTNERS



BC ABORIGINAL NETWORK ON DISABILITY SOCIETY

For Indigenous people with disabilities, contact BCANDS and we can help you with the RDSP process. We can assist with the DTC application, filing taxes, and opening the RDSP account. Phone: (250) 381-7303 ext. 204 | Toll Free: 1-888-815-5511 (TTY Accessible) | rdsp1@bcands.bc.ca



DISABILITY ALLIANCE BC

To access DABC's RDSP and DTC services, or to request one of our workshops, please contact us at: Local: 604-872-1278 | Toll Free: 1-800-663-1278 | rdsp@disabilityalliancebc.org



PLAN INSTITUTE

We can provide you with information on the RDSP, future planning, and the Endowment 150 (free \$150 for BC residents).

- Call our disability planning hotline at 1-844-311-7526
- Take the RDSP tutorial or apply for Endowment 150 at www.rdsp.com
- RDSP info sessions and other future planning workshops at planinstitute.ca

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