

# CONTINUITY NEWS

Supporting families in Manitoba to plan for an enriched quality of life for  
their family member with an intellectual disability

MARCH 2012

## Manitoba Disability News



### An Announcement from Employment and Income Assistance:

Effective January 1, 2012, the Employment and Income Assistance (EIA) Regulation has been amended to harmonize the EIA Disability Trust with the Canada Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP). These changes have been made to provide EIA participants who are eligible as persons living with a disability, equal opportunity to save assets towards future needs.

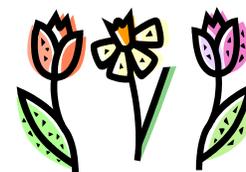
### **The new regulation reflects the following:**

- The allowable lifetime contribution to the provincial Disability Trust has been increased to \$200,000 to equal the federal RDSP. Participants with both an RDSP and an EIA Disability Trust are now able to contribute a lifetime maximum of \$200,000 combined. This change allows participants to have access to resources that are more readily available in the short-term for disability related items and services and participate in the long-term savings vehicle at the same time.
- Interest or growth accumulated within the EIA Disability Trust beyond the lifetime contribution limit will now be exempt, as is currently permitted for the RDSP.
- The real property exemption for the EIA Disability Trust has been eliminated. A participant will no longer be able to shelter property in a RDSP or an EIA Disability Trust. Participants that held real property in their Trusts prior to January 1, 2012, will not be affected by this change.

Withdrawals from an RDSP are exempt and funds from this type of savings plan can be used for any purpose. This is not the case for EIA Disability Trusts. Each year, a participant can withdraw up to the maximum amount of their liquid asset exemption (\$4,000 per person to a maximum of \$16,000 per case). A participant can withdraw more than their liquid asset exemption provided that the money is used for approved disability-related items and services (see list on page 2). A participant should contact his or her EIA case coordinator or counsellor if s/he is unsure if the item or service would be considered a disability-related expense. More information on page 2.

### **Cabinet Shuffle at the Manitoba Legislature**

On January 13th, 2012 Premier Greg Selinger announced several changes to Cabinet Members at the Manitoba Legislature. Important to note in the area of disability, Family Services was added to the portfolio of Minister Jennifer Howard. Previously the Minister for Family Services was Gord Mackintosh. Minister Howard's portfolio also includes: The Minister for Labour, the Minister Responsible for Persons with Disabilities, the Minister responsible for the Status of Women, Minister charged with the administration of The Workers Compensation Act and she is the Government House Leader.



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# Manitoba Disability News continued...

## Employment and Income Assistance (EIA) Disability Trust Disability-Related Items and Services

Withdrawals from an EIA Disability Trust Fund can be used for items that will assist you to meet your disability-related needs to participate fully as an active citizen.

Examples of disability-related items and services may include, but are not limited to the following:

- |  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Technical aids and equipment   | Personal services                |
| Homemaker services   | Brokerage                        |
| Purchase of a vehicle or primary residence   | Transportation                   |
| Shelter  | Respite Services                 |
| Education to assist with independence  | Clothing purchase and alteration |
| Modifications to primary residence, workplace or vehicle for accessibility purposes. |                                  |

Contact your EIA case coordinator or counsellor if you are unsure if the item or service you plan to purchase is related to your disability.

### **Name Changes For Manitoba Disability Programs**

There have been some recent changes to the names of some Manitoba Government Disability Programs that we thought it was important to share with our members.

#### **Previous Name:**

Children's Special Services  
Supported Living Program  
Vocational Rehabilitation Program

#### **Current name:**

Children's disABILITY Services  
Community Living disABILITY Services  
marketAbilities Program



## **A Book Review by Adeline..... Riding the Bus With My Sister by Rachel Simon**

Rachel is the second of four children in her family. The family is concerned about Beth, the third child, since she doesn't seem to be developing like the other children. Rachel is a hyper busy person who has little time for relationships of any sort. Beth likes to ride buses and on one occasion challenges Rachel to ride the buses with her for a year. This book is the story of how both Beth and Rachel's lives are transformed while they spend these many hours together. Rachel speaks to both the joys and frustrations of having a sister with a developmental disability who she deeply cares about, one she deeply loves but one she also deeply resents at times. She masterfully weaves their family story of terrifying abandonment by their mother with the lessons she learns from the lively and wise bus drivers. A worthwhile read for anyone living or working with a person with a disability but also for the whole community who is trying to understand the need to live a life of self determination.

### **Spring is sprung! It is time for us to have some fun.**

The Sib-to-Sib group, known as the Baby Boomer Cafe', is planning a pot luck supper on Sunday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012. The time is 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Kildonan Community Church, 2373 Main Street (North of Chief Pequis Trail).

The Sib to Sib group is an opportunity for adult siblings and their brothers or sisters with a disability to spend some time together, socializing and meeting new friends, singing, playing games and enjoying a meal together. Please bring along something to contribute to the potluck supper and if you wish, bring your favourite game or a instrument to play. A good time will be had by all. Please contact Ben or Heather Friesen at 889-3806 if you have questions about this event.



# News from the Cerebral Palsy Association of Manitoba

Congratulations to Laura Schnellert as she has recently announced her retirement. Laura has worked with the Cerebral Palsy Association of Manitoba since October 1989 and during those years has touched the lives of many individuals, families, colleagues and community members across our province. She has not only made a valuable contribution to the Cerebral Palsy

Association, but has been a part of countless groups, committees, projects and conferences related to the disability community. Laura is one of those people who truly has made a difference and has helped to create change and improvements for people living with disabilities and their families. We will miss Laura and wish you all of the best in your retirement and in your future endeavours.

A warm welcome to David Kron who is the new Program and Membership Director with the Cerebral Palsy Association of Manitoba. We look forward to getting to know you and working with you in the future.



## Senior Parent to Parent – A Member’s Perspective

I have always said that the Senior Parent to Parent meetings saved my life. That may be an exaggeration, but that is how I feel. I was introduced to the idea of this support group by my doctor, who could see that I needed help from someone. My Dad was sick with cancer; my physically and mentally challenged sister lived with us, as well as our two sons. At that time we had no support from anyone. We did not know about CSW’s, respite or group homes. Eventually we got help from a VON service for Dad and a respite worker for my sister, but they could only provide care to one, not the other. So we had two workers at the house for awhile, which was quite awkward for the few hours that we got to have some “time away”. Eventually we got a night nurse when Dad was really sick, and after many meetings, she could look after both Dad and my sister at night. During this time, my husband and I took turns on the weekends with Dad’s needs through the day and at night, as well as looked after my sister 24-7.

This is when I came to know of the Senior Parent to Parent meetings. The first time I went to a meeting I discovered that there were people who understood the type of care, love and support that is needed in these situations. I tried to tell my story. Between tears and much encouragement from the group, I finally got it out. Since then with the support from Continuity Care and the Senior Parent to Parent group, our lives have changed so much.

As I write this, I am sitting in our condo in Texas for a two month vacation. My sister has lived in a community residence for 5 years now and it truly is her home. It will never be the same care as what would be given at home, however, she does so many things that she would not have been able to do while living with us. She loves her workers and I think they can’t help but care for her too. A new world has opened up for her. When she lived with our family, she was very protected; never went out to shows, out to eat, or anywhere. Today, she has enjoyed Rainbow Stage, the ballet, plays and all kinds of musical events - one of the most favourite being seeing ELVIS at the casino. She misses us and of course, we miss her too, but with internet and Skype, we had our first visit with her on a laptop. She was amazing and did very well. We always had tried to contact her by phone, since she does not speak; it was always a conversation through the workers.

Now that I have been a member of the Senior Parent to Parent group for about fourteen years, I see what a miracle it is for our loved ones to have all this technology, but we still need the support of people who understand what we are going through, as well as our family member. We have found out about many supports, residential agencies, government supports and more at our meetings. It was and is a comfort to know that someone will always listen to your problem and try to help you work it out.

The question of “who will care for our loved one after we are gone?” will always be an issue. In our search for the answer, we need the support of those “in the know”. That is what Senior Parent to Parent has meant to our family.

If you would like more information about the Senior Parent to Parent group, please contact Suzanne at the Continuity Care office at 779-1679. Both groups are open to new members and are warmly welcomed.



# A Great Opportunity for Movie Lovers!!

The Access 2 Entertainment Card provides persons with a disability to receive either free admission or a significant discount for their support person at member movie theatres across Canada. This program was developed by an advisory group of nine national disability organizations, in conjunction with Famous Players and Cineplex Galaxy.

In order to obtain a card, an application form must be submitted by a person with a disability who requires the assistance of a support person. The application must be authorized by a registered health care or disability service provider.

Easter Seals Canada administers the application and delivery of the card.

For more information, please visit their website at [www.access2.ca](http://www.access2.ca)

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Tel: (416) 932-8382 x227  
Email: [a2e@easterseals.ca](mailto:a2e@easterseals.ca)



## It's Membership Time!

Don't forget to renew your membership with Continuity Care Inc.

**1 Year Family Membership \$20**  
**Lifetime Family Membership \$250**

With your membership enjoy free workshops during the year, voting privileges at AGM, one to one planning and a copy of The Circle of Life workbook.

*(see attachment or insert for membership form)*

# Congratulations to Ryan Smoluk

After a worldwide search for talented artists with autism, the United Nations Postal Administration (UNPA) has selected one of Ryan's artistic works entitled "The Path" to be used as a stamp in recognition of World Autism Day. The stamps, and the artists who designed them, will together raise awareness about this important global cause.

Ryan has been invited to New York on April 3rd, to receive the United Nations Stamp Award and a handshake from the UN's Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.

Ryan Smoluk is an award winning Canada based artist. Ryan's art has been showcased throughout Canada and internationally. He has excelled in a number of mediums including oils and acrylic, illustrative art, pottery and clay sculptures. Ryan also is an effective spokesperson and advocate for autism awareness. He was nominated by Toyota Canada for the "Never Quit Award". Ryan is currently completing a bachelor's degree in fine arts at the University of Manitoba.

## Ryan had the following to say about his piece of art



**selected:** "Everyone has a path and journey in life. When I approached this piece at 15 years old I tried to express the need for people to walk with each other and share in each others journey regardless of difference. The rainbow symbolizes the diversity of everyone's path and yet the beauty that results when we all share in the same journey".

Ryan was recently interviewed by CBC News in Winnipeg regarding this accomplishment and can be viewed on CBC's website at [www.cbc.ca/video](http://www.cbc.ca/video)

To learn more about Ryan Smoluk, visit his website at [www.ryansmoluk.ca](http://www.ryansmoluk.ca)

Congratulations Ryan and we wish you continued success as you share your gifts and talents with the world.

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