

Newsletter

Covid - 19 How DCSCL continues to cope with the many challenges posed by the ongoing pandemic.

Christmas celebrations - The 12 Days of Christmas will be replacing the Annual Christmas Gala for the second year.

2021/10
Issue #5

News & Features

Important Updates

New Provincial protocols, Christmas updates and more.

Community Inclusion and Employment Services

From Supported Work, to Self Help Skills/HS, to the Opportunity Centre and Cluster programs, read all about what has been happening over the last six months.

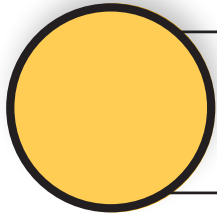
Seniors Services

Northview Assisted Living updates, Senior Meal Call program, Grocery Shopping Services, and the Rural Seniors Initiative.

2021 the year of ups and downs, turbulence and perseverance...

When this all began in March 2020, we thought it would last a few months, six at most and life would get back to normal. Here we are, nearly two years later, still facing ever-changing restrictions, friction everywhere we turn between families, friends and strangers the world-over, questioning if our rights are being violated, and wondering if life will ever return to the 'normal' we once knew. Yet on the other hand, we've witnessed in the brief moments of reduced restrictions, a renewed appreciation for the simple things; a visit with family or friends, holding the newest addition to the family,

wsletter



Residential Services & Home Share

Get up-to-date with all that has been going on in the various residential programs.

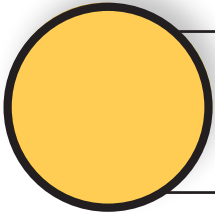
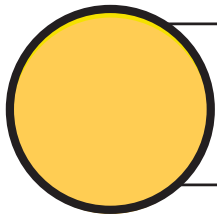


Photo Gallery

Take a peek at some of the great times had throughout the spring and summer.



Resources

Inclusion BC updates, Mental Health, webinars and more.

holding the hand of a loved one as they pass from this world, going to a movie theatre, or for many, returning to work, has brought a sense of serenity, peace, and utter relief. Gone are the days of taking such basic things for granted.

As they often do, the individuals that we are lucky enough to support here at DCSC, have taught us a thing or two over this past couple years. Despite all that's going on around them, they hardly let it phase them, instead focusing their attention on the important things; the moment, their loved ones - even if seeing them only happens over Zoom, the fact they can still sing with their friends, even if they aren't allowed to dance with

them. They acknowledge the bad around them, adjust, and then do what needs to be done to get on with life. Rather than get caught up in all the things they can't do, they choose to focus on the many things they can. We like to think we are the teachers, but in reality, we have as much to learn from them as they do us.

DCSC continues to take extensive measures to protect the vulnerable people we provide services to, as well as our staff. In a time when orders can change so quickly we barely manage to implement one before another is released, we continue to do our best to ensure that all Provincial, Regional, and WorkSafe BC Guidelines are being

adhered to. At times, this has led to frustration for the individuals, loved ones, staff, and for those whose job it is to implement the changes. We ask for your patience as we do our best to make sense of all the conflicting information, in order to keep your loved one safe.

With our second Covid impacted Christmas season nearly upon us, I am certain that most of you will join us in our hope for a safe and happy season ahead, and a new year free of all things Covid. Merry Christmas and all the best to each and everyone one of you!

2021 Christmas Celebration

12 Days of Christmas is back!

Baskets with a special gift for each of the Twelve Days of Christmas, will be delivered to individuals by December 10th.

The fun will begin on December 13th and there will be something new to look forward to every day until the 25th, when there'll be something extra special to open up on Christmas Day!



The changes keep coming...

We are disappointed to inform everyone that once again, we have had to cancel the Annual Christmas Gala due to the ongoing global pandemic. However, staff have been busy planning the Twelve Days of Christmas again, to ensure everyone has something to look forward to while ensuring everyone's safety and adherence to provincial guidelines. This year's baskets will be less food oriented and more fun-focused!

On December 9th and 10th, baskets full of goodies will be delivered at some point throughout the day. If a basket recipient lives out-of-town, arrangements will be made to get one to them prior to the December 13th start date. If other arrangements need to be made, please contact us.

From December 13th to 24th there will be a small gift to open each day, while on the 25th there will be an extra special gift just for Christmas Day!

One small change...

We know how much individuals enjoy buying gifts for each other, so this year everyone will be contacted for:

1. A list of items they would like to possibly receive as a gift.
2. The name and list, of the person they are to buy a gift for.

We then ask for those items to be wrapped and dropped off at the Administration Office by December 1st, to be added to the baskets. Please contact us by November 26th, to make arrangements if drop-off is not possible.



Opportunity Centre

There are many things that have occurred over the past several months, but one of the most exciting for us has been the breaking of ground on July 12th, for our fabulous new addition! With all the restrictions right now, the new centre is a promising ray of hope for better times to come. Dances, Gala's, large scale activities and more are on the horizon and when freedom returns. You can be sure that we'll be hosting a memorable open house just as soon as we can!

In addition to the expansion, this summer brought many road trips, a slew of 'normal' activities, and some serious heat! On a couple occasions the Centre was used as a cooling facility for those with nowhere to beat the extreme heat and in need of a cold drink. Accessibility was a hot topic this summer as well and we participated with Trans Canada Trail and Access Now to map out the local walking trail. We discovered some areas of need and they will use the information we were able to help provide to make future improvements and enhance accessibility. If you are interested in locating accessible businesses in whatever town you may find yourself in, Access Now has an app for that. And if you are an accessible business owner, perhaps consider having your business added so you'll be found easily. Inclusion can't happen without accessibility.

As this pandemic drags on, people are feeling more and more isolated and hopeless. It is for this reason we continue to make every conceivable effort to ensure no one is left without some kind of personal contact, that personalized arts and crafts projects are being assembled and distributed to those that cannot attend activities, and why wonderful baskets of goodies will be arriving on people's doorsteps just prior to Christmas again this year. Together, we will get through this!

"Thank you for all you do..."

~Family Member

Some of what we have done and/or are doing at the Opportunity Centre:

- **INDIVIDUAL RECEIVING SERVICE (IRS) HOSTED ACTIVITIES**
- **CLASSES ON BRAILLE OFFERED TO ALL IRS TO ENHANCE UNDERSTANDING**
- **CULTURAL DIVERSITY CELEBRATED THROUGH A VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES**
- **IRS ARE BEING TAUGHT TO PLAN BETTER, SHOP LESS & BULK BUY**
- **ENHANCED EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS ON SAFETY, RESTRICTIONS, ETC.**
- **FREQUENT HANDWASHING WORKSHOPS**
- **FORCE HORSE PROGRAM**
- **HEALTH AND WELLNESS CHECK-INS, ENSURING MENTAL HEALTH STATUS**
- **YOGA & RELAXATION WORKSHOPS & MORE, IN-PERSON & VIA ZOOM**
- **OUT OF TOWN DAY TRIPS, SHOPPING, SPLASH PARK & MORE**
- **MOST-LOVED PROGRAMS LIKE LUNCH PROGRAM & KARAOKE**
- **FALL FAIR, MUSEUMS, DAY CAMPS & MORE. HALLOWEEN CELEBRATION SOON**
- **STAFF ARE BEING SURE TO MODEL DESIRED BEHAVIOURS**
- **ENCOURAGING A CONTINUATION OF LIFE WHILE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES**
- **TOUCHING BASE WITH IRS & FAMILIES CURRENTLY NOT ACCEPTING SERVICE**

Self Help Skills / Home Support (SHS/HS)

What a rollercoaster 2021 has been! With the ever changing guidelines and restrictions that have come, gone, and returned over the past spring, summer and fall, many of us are feeling the effects of so much uncertainty. Thankfully, a less restricted summer meant people had a chance to recover somewhat before the fall set in and brought with it a set of new restrictions.

Individuals and staff alike continue to utilize Zoom, Facetime, Microsoft Teams, etc., to ensure face-to-face check-ins, visits with families and friends, group activities, meetings, etc., when in-person isn't an option. It remains our top priority to ensure the mental health and wellness of the individuals supported while maintaining services to the fullest extent possible.

SHS / HS continues to be a very busy program. With the addition of new referrals, schedule changes to reflect the needs of the many IRS being supported, and the latest addition of our brand new Centennial Cluster, there is no shortage of challenges needing to be met.

The Centennial Cluster was established out of necessity, for a supportive program that sits between Supported Living and receiving only SHS/HS hours. A program able to meet the unique needs of people living independently and within close proximity to one another that are in need of additional supports for a variety of reasons. This program is the first, of hopefully many of it's kind, for DCSCL.

“Thank you so much for allowing me to be a part of your services. I wish I could have found you sooner.”

~Individual Receiving Services

Some of what we have done and / or are doing in SHS / HS:

- **CREATED A NEW CLUSTER LIVING SUPPORT MODEL PROGRAM**
- **PARTICIPATED IN FUNDRAISING BBQ'S**
- **SUPPORTED IRS TO FULFIL THEIR RIGHT TO VOTE IN THE FEDERAL ELECTION**
- **PROVIDED EDUCATION & SUPPORT REGARDING COVID-19 VACCINATION**
- **SUPPORTED TWO COUPLES IN THEIR CHOICE TO GET MARRIED**
- **HOSTED A THANKSGIVING DINNER FOR THOSE UNABLE TO JOIN FAMILY**
- **HEALTH AND WELLNESS CHECK-INS, ENSURING MENTAL HEALTH STATUS**
- **IRS CONTINUE TO BE TAUGHT TO PLAN BETTER, SHOP LESS & BULK BUY**
- **ENHANCED EDUCATIONAL DISCUSSIONS ON SAFETY, RESTRICTIONS, ETC.**
- **HOLIDAY PLANNING IN FULL SWING TO ENSURE NO ONE IS LEFT OUT**
- **ASSISTING WITH APPOINTMENTS, SHOPPING, BANKING & MEDICATIONS**
- **HELPING IRS TO STAY ON TOP OF CLEANLINESS & DISINFECTING IN HOMES**
- **WORKSHOPS BASED ON SKILLS OF DAILY LIVING OCCURING REGULARLY**
- **STAFF ARE BEING SURE TO MODEL DESIRED BEHAVIOURS**
- **FOCUSING ON CULTURAL DIVERSITY & ALL THAT IT EMPCOMPASSES**
- **MAINTAINING COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES**



Supported Work and Confidential Shredding

As the pandemic presses on, things continue to shift and evolve and Supported Work and Confidential Shredding are working hard to adjust to the new challenges. With the decrease in office work, we have seen a decline in paper coming in for shredding, but rather than focus on what we're gradually losing, we have chosen to look for new opportunities.

Amongst these new opportunities is our new Recycling Program, a growing list of janitorial contracts, a renewed focus on snow removal, and a scanning service aimed at scanning those piles of receipts you've been meaning to get to or that stack of old photo's you wish were digitized. For more information on any of these, reach out to the Supported Work staff and they'll be happy to tell you more.

In an exciting new twist on things, we were contacted by Sandbox Media, who was in search of an IRS willing to be featured in an online web series called Career Trek. Featuring a variety of different careers and jobs, Michael Ryder, can be seen on film proudly discussing different aspects of his job. This was a fantastic, and well-paid, opportunity and the individuals in the Employment Program hope there'll be similar opportunities in the future. Keep an eye on the Scoop for more details on when and where you can find the video featuring Micheal.

Supported Work and Confidential Shredding are grateful to work with the many wonderful businesses in our community. Despite the economic struggles that have been wide spread throughout the past couple years, local businesses continue to keep most people working. Meaningful work has long been one of the most important ways to feel good about oneself, and who doesn't need a reason to feel better about things these days? Sincere thanks to all of you.



“Your staff are doing an awesome job!.”

~CDC regarding Janitorial Team



Seniors Services & General Info...

Northview Assisted Living

Northview Assisted Living has had many challenges over this past year. COVID-19 has made family visiting difficult although staff have worked hard to get our residents connected with loved ones through technology. Residents have been able to participate in group activities throughout most of this year, and have safely been getting out into the community. Residents once again grew a beautiful garden this past summer which included potatoes, carrots and tomatoes, as well as a variety of flowers. Many families came out to visit with loved ones over the summer months and staff held a Canada day and Fall Fair event for residents. Northview kitchen staff has worked hard to prepare a variety of foods from different cultures; each month one country is chosen and a traditional meal is planned by the cooks to represent that country and culture. Some great traditional meals that residents have enjoyed so far have been inspired by cuisine from countries like Italy, Germany, Poland, India and Greece, just to name a few. With many more holidays to come and cultures to celebrate, staff will continue to find ways to create fun and engaging activities throughout the year.



Seniors Meal Call & Grocery Shopping

Our Senior's Meal Call program is very busy. We regularly cook for approximately 60 seniors weekly. While the program is based out of two of our buildings, Southview and Rotary Village, we have also branched out to some seniors that live alone that have a need for a healthy home-cooked meal once a week. Our cook Audrey, has been very popular with her cooking abilities and knowing just what our seniors want to eat. We just celebrated Thanksgiving with a home style turkey dinner with all the fixings!

We also offer, and are currently providing, grocery shopping for senior's that are unable to do so for themselves, whether it be due to the pandemic or other reasons.

October marks the 10th month of trialing the Rural Seniors Initiative which provides access to five meals a week, housekeeping twice monthly and snow removal. If you know a senior that could benefit from any of these services that lives in Peace River Regional District Area D, or part of Area E, please connect them to Anne Pearson at (250) 782-2611 Ext 227



Annual General Meeting

2021's Annual General Meeting followed last years example and was completed virtually. Again, it proved to be an accessible and efficient alternative to the much more labour intensive AGM hosted in past years, and was well-received overall.

If you missed it, be sure to check out our website for the AGM Slideshow, as well as the Annual Performance Improvement Report and slideshow.

The Board of Directors for the coming year are Sam Barber, Charlie Parslow, Rhonda Fields, Ilea Armstrong, Inge-Jean Hansen, Elisa Valentin, Sandra Vipond, and Ann Cameron.

Family Surveys

Please keep an eye on your inbox over the coming weeks as we will once again be sending out our Family Survey's via Survey Monkey. For those of you that would prefer to receive a copy in another format, please call the Administration Office to make alternative arrangements unless you did so last year, in which case we already know your preference and there's no need to do anything. We'd like to thank all of you in advance for taking the time to complete this quick survey. Your input is critical in helping us to better our services.

"Your present circumstances don't determine where you can go, they merely determine where you start."

~Nido Qubein

Residential Services

Nearly two years into this global pandemic, we are facing new restrictions that prevent us from returning to our normal lives, but we continue to persevere...



Canalta / 115th / 1416 Residences

It's been another busy year at the Residences. 1416 was very excited to be the recipient of a new wheelchair van in the spring. Canalta has undergone significant renovations, with the main floor getting a refreshing facelift, while the basement saw significant upgrades to meet the needs of the individual residing there. There were plans for landscaping, but due to unforeseen circumstances, those will now be completed next spring/summer. In the works for 115th are new kitchen countertops, a new fence for the yard, and hopefully new windows. The IRS in each of the residences were excited to get out-and-about this summer. Trips to neighboring communities for some long overdue shopping was on the schedule for most. Having the chance to reconnect with family and friends, and to renew connections within the community were other definite highlights. Good health was had by all. 1416 and 115th Residences support the most fragile of the people served by DCSCL and thanks to the staff that took, and continue to take, extensive precautions, the individuals are healthy and happy.

As Melissa, Program Coordinator of 1416 Residence, eloquently put it, "There are kind people who care, wish to make a difference and want to give from their heart without credit. These are the people of DCSCL."

1408 / 1328 Clusters

The summer was full of excitement as IRS were able to take part in many things they'd not been able to for quite some time due to restrictions. From day trips to other communities, to day camping trips, to fishing, water fights, gardening, and going to the Farmer's Market, there was something for everyone to look forward to this summer.

Even more special than the outings, were the in-person visits with family and friends in the homes of the IRS. The excitement was palpable and the exclamations of utter happiness were the icing on the cake! It was a very welcomed and much needed break after a spring of strict guidelines. Now as fall sets in, and the restrictions have returned to the North, the IRS are full to the brim with great memories, lots of pictures, and a renewed sense of hope that this will won't last forever.

In the meantime, everyone will continue to work on their person centered goals, gaining ever-more skills to impress their families with when they get to hang out in-person again... hopefully sooner than later.

Home Share

Currently DCSCL Home Share program has over 25 contractors. A Home Share arrangement gives community members an opportunity to enrich their lives by welcoming someone with a disability into their home and family.

It gives a person with a disability the opportunity to live in a setting of their choice, with the support they need. The level of care required is as various as the potential Home Share Contractors themselves, and it is our goal to find the best match possible to increase the chance of success.

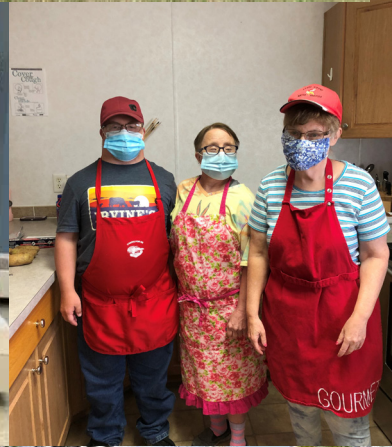
The role of a Home Share Provider is to support an individual in maximizing their potential, realizing their dreams, and helping them live a satisfying life that is inclusive of their family, friends and community.

We are always accepting applications from individuals or families who wish to provide a home that supports an individual's needs, goals and dreams.

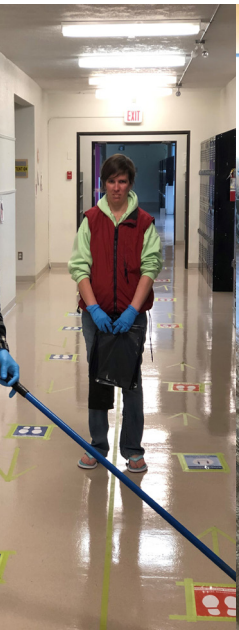
Pictured above, is an individual who, with the help of her supportive Home Share family, has become a successful entrepreneur that is dedicated to keeping the community warm, one toque at a time! Her work is available for purchase at the Art Gallery, just look for Hailey's Toques!

Spring & Summer 2021









**Inclusion BC
Anxiety Canada
Mobile Resources
Family Support Institute of BC**

External Resources

15 Ways To Stay Connected

Inclusion BC

Virtual Learning Series

Over the past 20 months, Inclusion BC has collaborated with community partners to host a series of virtual learning sessions. We have covered topics such as finding employment, voting, and the resources available for the transition to life after high school for individuals with intellectual disabilities.

85% of participants that participated in the Virtual Learning Series, reported the series exceeded their expectations.

We are excited to continue this series over the next few months with new topics and presenters. Please contact us if you have any questions about the series at info@inclusionbc.org

Mental Health Various Resources

Care to Speak, is a free resource for healthcare workers in BC. The pandemic has led to new levels of stress, uncertainty and sadness for those on the frontline. By calling in or chatting online,

healthcare workers get support and acceptance for their feelings and situations. Sometimes all a person needs to feel better is an empathetic ear.

**Call 1-866-802-7337 or
Chat Online at caretospeak.ca**

Anxiety Canada is a leader in developing free online, self-help, and evidence-based resources on anxiety. See their website at www.anxietycanada.com for expert tools for managing anxiety.

The CMHA has launched a special COVID-19 site to help people stay well in uncertain times. The page provides a wide variety of options for family caregivers about mental health care and you can visit it at www.mha.bc.ca/covid-19

BC's Northern Health Authority has published a guide called 'Emotional Support for Seniors'.

Care for caregivers is a website that focuses on professional caregivers' mental health and wellness with solutions to manage the specific strains and stresses resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic. Many family members are providing care to their family member and may benefit from the many resources available on the website:

www.careforcaregivers.ca

FSI Learning Explorations Family Support Institute of BC

The Family Support Institute of BC (FSI) is a provincial not-for-profit society committed to supporting families who have a loved one with a disability. FSI is unique in Canada and the only grassroots family-to-family organization with a broad volunteer base. FSI supports and services are free to any family.

Upcoming webinars you might like to check out:

Nov 4th /18th FASD-Thinking Outside the Box

Nov 8th/10th/ 17th Transitioning to the Adult World

Nov 8th Let's Talk About SIB - Medically Controversial Topics

Nov 10th Complex and Challenging Behaviours

Nov 18th Questions About CLBC Respite

Find more resources or register for a webinar at

www.familysupportbc.com

In light of the enhanced restrictions, keep the following in mind...

DO choose masks that




Have two or more layers of washable, breathable fabric



Completely cover your nose and mouth



Fit snugly against the sides of your face and don't have gaps



cdc.gov/coronavirus

Mask Do's...

1. Cover your mouth and nose with a mask when around others.
2. Remember that masks help prevent you from getting or spreading the virus.
3. Wear a mask because you could spread Covid-19 to others even if you do not feel sick.
4. Everyone should wear a mask in public settings and when around people who don't live in your household especially when social distancing measures are difficult to maintain.
5. Continue to keep about six feet between yourself and others. The mask is not a substitute for social distancing.

DO NOT choose masks that



Are made of fabric that makes it hard to breathe, for example, vinyl



Have exhalation valves or vents, which allow virus particles to escape



Are intended for healthcare workers, including N95 respirators or surgical masks



cdc.gov/coronavirus

Mask Dont's...

1. Masks should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.
2. Do NOT use masks meant for healthcare workers. Currently, surgical masks and N95 respirators are critical supplies that should be reserved for healthcare workers and other first responders.

Sources



Dawson Creek Society for Community Living
1334-102 Ave, Dawson Creek, BC
V1G 2C6
(250)782-2611 Ph (250)782-2662 Fax
info@dcscsl.org
www.dcscl.org