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The Kamloops Self-Advocate



THE KAMLOOPS SELF ADVOCATE NEWSLETTER



May 2015

Issue #20

The Kamloops Self- Advocate:

A Newsletter for
People with
Diverse Abilities

This month's newsletter is all about the power of language and abilities. It's important to raise awareness about people with disabilities and not using the R WORD. We need to remember that words do hurt and we shouldn't call others names or bully. It's also beneficial to think before you speak. You could be hurting someone next to you like a family member who loves someone with a disability or a person who has a disability. Remember to treat others how you would like to be treated. Let's use respect, kindness and compassion.

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The Power of Language

By Lisa Coriale

Words can encourage and can also be used to develop someone's self-esteem. Words can leave a negative imprint on a person's heart and mind forever. The use of language is a powerful tool of communication. Language gives our society the ability to express ourselves in multiple ways, whether it be positive or negative. People are impacted by the use of words no matter what background, race, ethnicity or ability. Over time, language has changed and specific words have become more derogatory. The word "retarded" is no exception to this rule. There are many other words that apply to this concept such as "handicapped." Many people use words flippantly without even realizing what they are

doing or saying. Sometimes people just have the wrong motives; they want to make themselves feel better by putting someone else down.

The English language has evolved. What was once acceptable is not acceptable anymore and vice versa. Phrasing is vitally significant, for instance when writing the phrase "person with a disability," you'll notice that the person should always be placed first to acknowledge their value rather than focus on their disability. This may be more appropriate than writing "disabled person." Being both a writer and journalist myself I know this first hand. When I write I have to do my best to use the precise word or phrase because my audience may take what I am writing out of context or they might misunderstand my meaning. This is not only true for the written word but for the spoken one as well. The media also has a major influence in shaping language. They often use the incorrect words or they eliminate a certain people group from the media all together. The media perpetuates how language is used. Our society must

be aware of how we use it in our everyday occurrences. It is time to educate ourselves and others on the power of language and how to use it correctly. This will in turn change people's perceptions.

**SPREAD THE WORD
TO END THE WORD
03.02.11**

R-Word - Spread the Word to End the Word®

Please take a few minutes to check out www.r-word.org. This site will get you thinking about things you can do to help get people thinking about the words they choose and the impact this has on others. Here is some information from the site:

Language affects attitudes. Attitudes impact actions.

The R-word is the word 'retard(ed)'. Why does it hurt? The R-word hurts because it is exclusive. It's offensive. It's derogatory. Our campaign asks people to pledge to stop saying the

R-word as a starting point toward creating more accepting attitudes and communities for all people. Language affects attitudes and attitudes affect actions. Pledge today to use respectful, people-first language.

Respectful and inclusive language is essential to the movement for the dignity and humanity of people with intellectual disabilities. However, much of society does not recognize the hurtful, dehumanizing and exclusive effects of the R-word. This is a post from one of their contributors: How "retardation" went from a clinical description to a word of derision When they were originally introduced, the terms "mental retardation" or "mentally retarded" were medical terms with a specifically clinical connotation; however, the pejorative forms, "retard" and "retarded" have been used widely in today's society to degrade and insult people with intellectual disabilities. Additionally, when "retard" and "retarded" are used as synonyms for "dumb" or "stupid" by people without disabilities, it only reinforces painful stereotypes of people with intellectual disabilities

being less valued members of humanity.



Thoughts from Krystian about the R-word:

Spread the Word to End the Word is a good thing to raise awareness about not judging or using 'retard'. We are people first, so use people-first language and don't ever call us retarded because it's rude and mean.

We have lots of abilities and want to showcase our abilities so others can realize even with developmental disabilities, we can be productive members of society. Don't limit us and what we **can** do.

When will people realize we are all human? When you don't know something, look it up please and read about mental illness or other issues that you are scared of. It's human nature to fear what we don't understand.

~ By Krystian



Website Links

If you would like to support and learn more about The Kamloops Self Advocate Newsletter please visit this page on Facebook.

<https://www.facebook.com/thekamloopsselfadvocatenewsletter>

There is also a new forum I created where you can leave a comment or suggestion for the newsletter. Any success stories, events or news is also welcome.

<http://thekamloopsselfadvocate.yuku.com/>

Here is a website that talks about mental health first aid

<http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/initiatives-and-projects/mental-health-first-aid>



Meet Ben

Although he has recently moved to Kamloops from 100-Mile House, Ben is a very busy and active young man. He made some time to sit down and answer some of Krystian's questions.

What is your disability like?

My disability is a visual impairment. It is called cortical visual impairment. The brain doesn't connect. (Some people call it a brain problem rather than an eye problem.) For me, I have to see things close up. I can't see across a room. I can't see small print. I can see shapes and colours, although they can be blurry or very tricky to see.

What are the top three things people should know about people who are visually impaired?

In my opinion, the top things would include:
 - Watching out for me walking with my white cane is important. I might trip others accidentally.

- Getting to know me within my disability – having people see me first, not my disability.
- When you get to know my disability, don't be afraid of asking me questions about it.

What should people know about people who are half blind or fully blind?

If you are fully blind, you wouldn't have any vision. You would have to use adaptive tools or technology, like Jaws or Dragon Naturally Speaking, or things like braille.

What are your successes despite your disability?

Well, right now I'm finding employment. I'm also learning to navigate in Kamloops after moving here from 100-Mile House. I'm now using the bus system, which is different from 100-Mile. And, I've been using the taxi cabs & HandyDart.

How should people have more sensitivity and reduce stigma?

The best way to reduce stigma is to talk to a person who is visually impaired. Don't just assume that I am visually impaired, but get to know me as a person and find out more about my challenges. Don't ask

other people about me; talk to me directly.

If you don't know what visual impairment or blindness is, find out about it. You can talk to people who have visual impairments, you can do research on the Internet, and you can contact your local CNIB office.

For more information, go to:

www.cnib.ca
www.ccb.ca

Ben's advice: Look after your sight. Make sure you get your eyes tested regularly. Sight is a gift and you have to appreciate it while you have it.

“A lack of sight is not a lack vision.”
 ~ Terry Kelly



Options and Opportunities Program Update:

It is with sad hearts we share the loss of a beautiful soul: Our dear friend Ashley Robichaud passed away this past April 9th at the young age of 34.

Ashley knew how to light up the world around her with her amazing smile, sparkling eyes and her vibrant personality. She was always up for any sort of adventure and she wore many hats. She was a prolific artist with our Artisans collective (where her art was shown and sold in galleries throughout the Kamloops area), she was a founding member of the O&O Community Players where she loved being in front of the camera (as she was in our in-house production of 'Grease') and also behind it, as the director of 'The Big Tony Show'. She was also the president of the Pay It Forward Crew and was a huge part of all the fundraising projects we worked on. She especially loved helping with the shopping for two families we adopted for Christmas Amalgamated last December. She loved being out and about but especially liked it when we had to load the back of our white van right up and have everything piled all around her. She loved cruising the malls in the winter as she was always

very stylish, fishing in the summer and was always up for a good party like our Mardi Gras celebrations.

In memory of Ashley, the Pay It Forward Crew will be contributing a lounge chair to our outdoor retreat area for her friends who are wheelchair bound to use, as she loved being out of her chair and in a lounging chair. Ashley was an integral part of O&O for the past 14 years, and she will be greatly missed by all of the people who were blessed to know her in our program and out in our community.



Dr. Oz's Energy-Boosting Smoothie

This smoothie is more than just a delicious drink. Take a sip and revitalize your energy level. At under 250 calories, this refreshing blend is the perfect way to start off your day.

Ingredients

2 tbsp cocoa powder
2 tbsp peanut butter
1 banana
8 oz Greek yogurt
Cinnamon

Directions

Pour peanut butter, cocoa powder, Greek yogurt and ice cubes into blender and mix at high speed. Slice banana, add into mixture, and re-blend. Pour smoothie into two cups and serve. Sprinkle dash of cinnamon on top for extra flavor.



Accessibility

By Andrew Embury

With the weather getting warmer I can't help but think of fun activities that I like to do during the summer. The first activity I enjoy that makes me think about summer is Canada Day at Riverside Park. There are a great selection of food vendors who serve food from around the world as well as Art in the Park and a lot of other fun activities. At the end of the day at 10:30pm there is a fireworks display.

Music in the Park is another evening event

that I like to do with friends and family. This begins every year at the start of July and goes to the end of August. It is a great way to get to hear different and unique types of music and local talent and is a great way to enjoy the company of friends. The best thing is it's free and outside.

Hot night in the city is the most exciting activity that I like to do in the summer. If you're new to town, this is a car show where all of the car owners show up to show off their collector cars including antique cars and the cars of today. Even the Army brings their own unique rides. This is my favourite thing to do in the summer.

I hope you all enjoy everything that summertime has to offer, including the fantastic weather. P.S. Don't forget the Farmers Market.

**Fun Day @
McDonald Park
Friday, June 5th
10 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.**

Join in the fun & have a chance to meet Krystian. Here is your chance to share your story ideas!



Barbara Coloroso Comes to Kamloops

Guest report from Linda Shaw

Barbara Coloroso came to Kamloops on April 21st 2015. She spoke for 2 hours at the Calvary Community Church. Her topic was "The bully, the bullied and the bystander."

Barbara wrote a book on this very title a few years ago, but now has revised the book with 100 new pages. She talked about what a bully is, mentioning the imbalance of power that a bully has. A bully's motive is to harm and threaten with further aggression to create terror so the bullied won't tell. She said bullies often say they're just kidding to escape the consequences of their actions, but action that creates the imbalance of

power is not joking, she pointed out.

Barbara spoke directly to the teachers and parents in the audience about the signs to watch for in kids who may be targeted. For example, the student may lose interest in school and their grades may drop. Kids don't tell, she said, because they are ashamed of being bullied, afraid of retaliation, and they believe ratting on a peer is not cool. Barbara pointed out that we all need to teach our children that telling on a bully is not tattling. Is telling getting someone into trouble or getting someone out of trouble? If it will get someone out of trouble, it is not tattling. That is the only way for it to stop. There is a third group that aids the bully, but is quick to say they didn't bully. That is the bystander, the ones who watch and egg on the bully. Barbara said they are just as guilty as those who bully. We should all stand up as a majority against the bully, she said. Then the bully will lose their balance of power and the bullied will not feel so alone.

Barbara Coloroso's speech was full of humour and very inspiring. After her speech, I bought her book and got a picture taken

with her. If she ever comes back to town, I recommend going to listen to her. She talks about parenting tips, gives humorous examples of what parents face in the young years of a child's life as well as through the teen years. She talks a lot about her own parenting challenges too.

Actually, her philosophies on parenting were the foundation I used in raising my son and he is my most successful accomplishment in my life. Her main philosophy in parenting that I lived by was to teach your kid that there is no problem in life that can't be solved. A child who is taught that will approach a problem head on to find a solution. Google her and read her views on life. It can help you during the most challenging times you may face in life so you and your children come out as winners.



Knock, Knock Jokes

Knock, knock.
Who's there?
Robin.

Robin who?
Robin the piggy bank again.

Knock, knock.
Who's there?
King Tut.
King Tut who?
King Tut-key fried chicken!

Knock, knock.
Who's there?
Dwayne.
Dwayne who?
Dwayne the bathtub, it's overflowing!

Mental Health & Stigma, Part 1

Have you heard of the Mental Health Commission?
<http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/>

What is the Mental Health Commission of Canada doing about reducing stigma around mental illness?

The stigma surrounding mental illness is something the Mental Health Commission of Canada takes very seriously and has been working to reduce for many years. In June 2012, the MHCC and the World Psychiatric Association hosted the 5th international conference on stigma reduction: Together Against Stigma: Changing How We See

Mental Illness
<http://www.togetheragainststigma2012.ca/index.php/omas/tas12> It remains the largest stigma-related event on record.

MHCC's Opening Minds initiative aims to reduce discrimination by changing negative behaviours and attitudes. To date, Opening Minds has evaluated about 75 anti-stigma programs across Canada to identify those that are effective and can be replicated. In 2013–14, the MHCC entered a new phase, successfully transitioning from "creating knowledge" to "creating change." Few people know how to help when a family member, colleague or friend first begins to experience a mental health problem or crisis. The Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) program changes that.

The MHCC's Working Mind is a course aimed at managers and employees to help reduce stigma in the workplace and promote mental health and resilience.

Check out the June edition for the rest of this interview – to be continued.....

Upcoming Events

May 21-June 30th - WCT's Family Series: Bird Brain @ The Pavillion Theatre

May 28th-30th – Inclusion BC Conference in Vancouver – Sheraton Wall Centre – 23 speakers for the 60th anniversary

May 31st – June 6th – Disability Awareness Week – Independence through Employment

For the Month of May – There is a survey for supports and services hosted on: SelfAdvocateNet.com

June 5th, 10 am – 1:30 p.m. Optoins & Opportunities annual Fun Day at McDonald Park.

June 6th, 10 am - National Health and Fitness Day Celebrate this day with a free activity ranging from kick boxing to yoga at participating fitness organizations throughout the city.

Place your ad here. Contact us for rate information at:

thekamloopselfadvocate@yahoo.com

WorkBC Employment Services Centre

Free Employment Services
IN KAMLOOPS

North Shore 795 Tranquille Road T: 250.377.3670 F: 250.377.3695	www.kamloopsesc.ca info@kamloopsesc.ca	South Shore 100-275 Lansdowne Street T: 250.434.9441 F: 250.434.9442
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Canada  **open door group** INSPIRATION AT WORK

The Employment Program of British Columbia is funded by the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia.

Community Futures Thompson Country

Great ideas can be tomorrow's new businesses. If you have an idea, CONTACT US TODAY!

#230-301 Victoria ST. Kamloops, BC, V2C 2A2
T: 250-828-8772 or 1-877-335-295C
www.communityfutures.net info@communityfutures.net




Thompson Community Services

TCS strives to enrich the quality of life for each Individual we support.

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