



# February 2020

**THE KAMLOOPS SELF ADVOCATE NEWSLETTER**

**FREE**



**SPREAD  
LOVE  
AND  
STOP  
BULLYING**

February is an exciting month. We get to celebrate Valentine's Day and love. Valentine's Day can be exciting, even for those who don't have a love interest in their life. We can use February 14th as a special day to tell everyone who is important in our lives just how much we love them.

Love is a powerful tool! It is about kindness and compassion, about connecting with people and accepting them as they are. When we see people and are seen by others, we are less likely to do things or say things that are hurtful. We can strive to be kinder. We can try to see things from another's point of view. We can have conversations.

We also have a chance to raise awareness about Pink Shirt Day and ways to reduce bullying.

Remember if you see someone being bullied, be an upstander not a bystander. It could save the life of the one being bullied and can also get help for those who bully.

Knowledge is also power – you might not feel so stuck or unable to deal with what is happening. You might have a better idea of who to turn to. Make sure to check out some of the articles in this month's newsletter to learn more about staying safe. So, have fun, be safe, and show love when on the Internet.

#### Inside this issue

Community inclusion and  
entertainment

Family friendly enter-  
tainment

Feature articles

Recipe

Celebrating Disability  
Awareness and success  
stories and inclusion for  
all ! Written by people  
with Diverse Abilities.

*Do you have a story idea or an event you think would be interesting for our readers?*

*Contact us at:*

[thekamloopsselfadvocate@yahoo.com](mailto:thekamloopsselfadvocate@yahoo.com)

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Office phone: 250-828-1344

**SAFER INTERNET DAY** Tuesday, 11 February 2020 "Together for a better internet"

Over the years, Safer Internet Day (SID) has become a landmark event in the online safety calendar. Starting as an initiative of the Europe Safe Borders project in 2004 and taken up by the Insafe network as one of its earliest actions in 2005, Safer Internet Day has grown beyond its traditional geographic zone and is now celebrated in approximately 150 countries worldwide.

From cyberbullying to social networking, each year Safer Internet Day aims to raise awareness of emerging online issues and chooses a topic reflecting current concerns.

<https://www.saferinternetday.org/>

This website provides a global online community platform where countries and international organisations can showcase events and actions conducted locally, nationally and internationally for Safer Internet Day.

You will find many resources empowering young people, their teachers and their families to make the best possible use of online technology. It is a space where leaders in the internet safety community can communicate with the public and exchange ideas, knowledge and experience with each other.



**Safer Internet Day**  
**2020** | **Tuesday**  
**11 February**

**Together for a better internet**



**Kamloops  
Hearing Aid  
Centre**

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**Jan & Blaine Alexandre** RHIP

jan@kamloopshearingaidcentre.ca  
blaine@kamloopshearingaidcentre.ca  
414 Arrowstone Drive Kamloops, BC

250.372.3090  
1.877.718.2211

## The Kamloops Self Advocate

The Kamloops Self Advocate Newsletter was founded in September of 2013 and is growing with more advertisers, supporters and readers. The newsletter is online and in print.

The newsletter serves people with diverse abilities, parents and caregivers, and anyone from the general public. Our goal is to reduce stigma and to raise awareness so there can be less judgment towards people with all abilities. We also like to have fun as well, so we have jokes and much more.



## Ability Friendly Accessible Business program

1. Fun Factor
2. Horzion Dental Clinic
3. Headhunters Salon in downtown Kamloops
4. 5 Bean Brewbar & Café



#### Chocolate Covered Pretzels

6 oz. melting chocolate or chocolate chips\*

15 oz. small pretzels

Melt chocolate chips in the microwave, stirring every 30 seconds. Dip pretzels in chocolate and let harden on waxed paper or silpat.

\*If using chocolate chips, add 2 Tbsp. shortening when melting. You can use white chocolate or flavored melting chips also.

Taken from:

<https://www.livingonadime.com/10-easy-valentines-day-candy-treats-recipes/>

**We are focusing on siblings for the April Newsletter. Send us your stories and why you love your siblings. We might include it in the newsletter.**

## The Challenges of the Internet

By Krystian

There are good things about the Internet, like e-mail, Facebook and YouTube, but there's also a downside to the Internet. There are cyberbullies and their victims. We've probably all heard the very sad stories of victims of cyberbullying, some who have had to deal with anxiety, depression, and PTSD. Even worse are the situations in which victims have committed suicide.

It is important to be aware of the dangers of cyberbullies, online predators, and online harassment and, it is also important to know that there are things you can do to protect yourself. Raising awareness is the first step. Know that there are programs and safeguards that you can install on your computer. You can also report problems to different Internet companies, like Facebook, or to the police.

When people can say things anonymously, they sometimes feel like it is easier to be mean or cruel. A good rule is that if you wouldn't say it to a person's face, you shouldn't say it online. Here at the KSA we would like people to think before they click. We would also like to honor the memories of some of the people who have died from cyberbullying. They include Phoebe Prince, Ryan Halligan, and Megan Meier, and also include many others. We would also like to celebrate their families, many of whom have become anti-bullying activists. We are sorry for your loss. Let's make the Internet better for everyone. If you see bullying, report it. Treat people with kindness, com-

passion, and love both online and offline. Treat people how you like to be treated. People need to be held responsible for being mean online. To learn more about the anti-bullying foundations that families have started, go to:

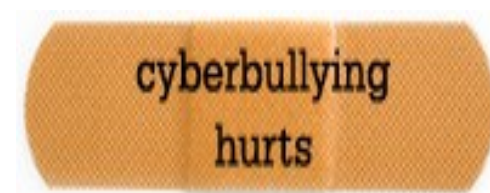
<https://meganmeierfoundation.org/>  
<http://www.ryanpatrickhalligan.org/>  
<https://www.amandatoddlegacy.org/>

#### Internet Safety education resources

<https://www.cybercivics.com/>  
<https://www.cyberwise.org/>

#### Abduction Survivor and internet Safety Expert

<https://www.aliciakozak.com/>



## Upcoming Events

### 2020 KTFC Gary Reed Classic

February 7, 2020 - February 8, 2020  
 Recurring daily  
 Location: TRU

### For the Love of Clara

February 8, 2020  
 Location: Sagebrush Theatre

### Valentine's Day

February 14, 2020

### Family Day

February 17, 2020

### Blazer Homegame

February 17, 2020  
 Location: Sandman Centre

### Celtic Illusion

Dates: February 27, 2020  
 Location: Sandman Centre

## Ask about a Registered Disability Savings Plan.



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 Financial Advisor  
 275 Seymour Street  
 Unit 5  
 Kamloops, BC V2C 2E7  
 250-851-2052

[www.edwardjones.com](http://www.edwardjones.com)  
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## Time to Talk about Mental Health

By: Lisa Coriale

Many people that we know and love face mental health issues and are afraid to speak about it. In Canada, Bell Let's Talk Day is celebrated and was on January 29<sup>th</sup>. It was established in 2010 and has since been talked about in schools, homes, workplaces, in the media and online. In the United Kingdom, they have Time to Talk Day, which is also a day that encourages everyone to be more open about mental health, to talk, to listen, to change lives. If you missed out on January 29<sup>th</sup>, why not celebrate Time to Talk on Thursday, February 6<sup>th</sup>.

"Mental health refers to an individual's social, psychological, and emotional well-being."

Mental health issues affect one in four people, yet too many people are made to feel isolated, ashamed and worthless because of the stigma attached to this topic. There are many types of mental illnesses that people face on a daily basis such as Depression, anxiety, Bipolar Disorder, Schizophrenia and a number of other disorders. It is important to begin discussions about these mental health issues in order to break down stereotypes, improve relationships, aid recovery and take the stigma out of an issue that affects us. We should be open to our friends and family who have a mental illness. We should take the time to be there for them because what they experience is real and we should show them that we care by listening to them.

If you are wondering how to engage in a conversation about mental health, here are a few tips: Do not be afraid to ask difficult questions but be mindful of how your question comes across. When this topic arises be aware of the time and place. Do not try to fix them or their challenges. Treat them the same as you would treat anyone else. Always value their feelings and be patient with them.

There are many ways to support friends and family that face mental health challenges. This includes participating in activities together with them. This may be carrying out a small gesture like sending a text to let them know you are thinking of them. They may find it helpful if you help them out with day to day tasks. Put together a care package with all of their favorite things. These small gestures of kindness can go a long way.

Being there for someone can make a huge difference. We should not be afraid to talk about mental health on a daily basis.

For more information and community resources on mental health, feel free to contact 8-1-1/ 8-2-2-2 (toll free) or visit [www.healthlinkbc.ca?mental-health](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca?mental-health) / <https://kamloops.cmha.bc.ca/>

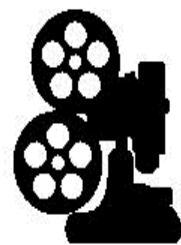
## 2020 FOCUS: LIFT EACH OTHER UP Date February 26<sup>th</sup>

Taken from:

<https://www.pinkshirtday.ca/>

Our theme for this year's Pink Shirt Day is "Lift each other up", a simple but powerful message encouraging us to look beyond our differences and celebrate the things that make us unique. When we lift each other up, we see beyond the things that separate us and see instead the things that unite us as people; we can see how our differences are beautiful.

In a world of people tearing each other down, it is more important than ever to focus on being kind to one another. This Pink Shirt Day and every day, let's Lift Each Other Up. In 2007 2 Nova Scotian students Travis Price and David Shepperd bought 50 pink t shirts for students to wear after one student was bullied for his pink shirt. Since then the pink shirt has become a part of many anti-bullying campaigns.



**THE KFS** at the  
Paramount  
Theatre  
(503 Victoria Street)

**the best films and popcorn  
in Kamloops!**

Info & Tickets: **thekfs.ca**



## Changing Perceptions

Interview by Krystian

*We often think of models as being perfect. This young woman is changing the idea of beauty and how we choose to see what is possible. See how professional model Shaholly Ayers is encouraging society to change perceptions of disability.*

### What got you into

**modeling and how do you reduce stigma and discrimination by working in the fashion industry?** I began modeling as a way to change the perception of disability. For a good part of my life I was defined by my disability, constantly told what I "could not" do. I realized, due to my experience, that people with disabilities were undervalued within society and I thought the best way to change this was by visual showcasing differences. I figured this would spark conversation and thus the masses would be educated and experience disability in a positive light.

This obviously was not an easy task. I modeled for almost 10 years, unpaid and hiding my arm in photos (due to publications feeling uncomfortable showing my arm). But finally, after hard work and determination, I walked in New York Fashion Week as the first amputee to walk the runway without a prosthesis; and this went "viral" my arm was finally published in major newspapers around the world. After that more and more companies started reaching out to me to model for them. It was a long and difficult path but I finally feel like it's paying off.

### Have you ever felt bullied because of your difference?

I did experience bullying as a child and young adult. This stemmed from children but I was also bullied by adults and teachers. My track coach once referred to me as "the one armed freak." This was probably the most difficult time of my life. Eventually, at one point, I began believing I was not "good enough" and became very alienated and struggled with depression.

### What would you like kids and their parents to know about asking people about their differences?

I used to try and fit-in and be "normal" but after everything that I have experienced and learned; it is really my difference that makes me special. Having grown up with a limb difference and being bullied, I am more empathetic; I've learned patience and perseverance. And, as crazy as it may sound, these difficult times helped me to become the strong, independent woman I am today. So my suggestion to children and parents is to celebrate what makes you, you! Everything about you is special. You may have a difference but you are more than that. And don't be afraid to fail, to hurt or to struggle. Things may become difficult, as they do for all

of us, but you have to keep moving forward; growing, learning and progressing.

### What is Global Disability Inclusion (GDI)? I hear you are a spokes person for them.

I love GDI! Global Disability Inclusion is a human resources, management consulting firm specializing in disability employment and inclusion. They work with Global 500 companies and U.S. Federal Contractors to design and develop comprehensive disability employment & inclusion strategies and programs. They are the first people to truly support my modeling/inclusion efforts, sponsoring my trip to New York for that historic New York Fashion Week moment.

### How can people reduce their judgments and stereotypes about people with disabilities?

I understand that differences are difficult for us to accept because they may be difficult to understand. It's easy to say, "we are just like you" but honestly, we are not. We are a little different, perhaps in the way we think or get around, but that's okay, everyone is different. Don't be afraid to ask questions! I prefer people to ask my name or talk to me a little before asking me personal questions about my life, like my arm. But, after that I am an open book.

### How can people promote inclusion more in the marketplace and in all workplaces?

Support companies that are already showcasing inclusion efforts. A few that I am aware of are: Target, Nike, Tommy Hilfiger, Zappos, Ulta Beauty, Nordstrom, Sports Illustrated. And if you are a business, start diversifying your ads and campaigns to be more inclusive of sexual orientation, ethnicity, abilities, age, etc.

### What do you like about being around all types of disability Fashion Models?

I have loved my modeling experience. Especially watching the industry change, adapt, and progress. Originally I was told I would never model because I had a disability at that time I was the only disabled model attending castings and auditions, but now, I meet so many diverse people. It's very exciting and encouraging. I have made a lot of great connection and friendships.

**What do you like about being an amputee?** I used to try to fit-in but now, I wouldn't change my arm or myself for the world. I have really grown to love myself and it changed my outlook. I think being comfortable in your skin helps others connect and feel comfortable with you as well. If I could wish one thing for everyone in the world, it would be to love and accept yourself!

**What do you do in your free time besides working?** I enjoy reading, swimming in the pool and ocean, going to the gym, and eating!

**If you want to follow Shaholly, here are some links:**

[www.shahollyayers.com](http://www.shahollyayers.com)

[Facebook.com/ShahollyDawn](https://Facebook.com/ShahollyDawn)

## ReThink to Prevent Cyberbullying

Trisha Prabhu is a 19-year-old innovator, social entrepreneur, global advocate and inventor of [ReThink™](#), a patented technology and an effective way to detect and stop online hate. She is currently pursuing her undergraduate education at Harvard University in Cambridge, MA, USA.

In the fall of 2013, Trisha, then just 13 years old, read the shocking news story of Rebecca Sedwick's suicide. After being cyberbullied for over a year and a half, Rebecca, a 12-year-old girl from Florida, took her own life. As a victim of cyberbullying herself, Trisha was shocked, heartbroken, and outraged. Deeply moved to action by the silent pandemic of cyberbullying and passionate to end online hate, Trisha created the patented technology product [ReThink™](#), that detects and stops online hate at the source, before the bullying occurs, before the damage is done. Her globally-acclaimed research has found that with ReThink, adolescents change their mind 93% of the time and decide not to post an offensive message.

Trisha has also helped lead a rallying cry against online hate....Determined to end online hate, Trisha created the patented technology product [ReThink™](#) that detects and stops cyberbullying at the source, before the cyberbullying occurs. The ReThink App is available for free on the Google Play Store and the App Store. Today, Trisha is working on rolling out [ReThink™](#) in various international languages to stop online hate around the world. As a global leader and a change agent, Trisha is a strong believer in the power of advocacy. She has spoken at several global platforms, universities, schools, and organizations to raise awareness about the silent pandemic of cyberbullying and engage adolescents to spread positivity and tolerance around the world. To learn more about Trish, go to:

<http://www.trishaprabhu.com/about>



People say sticks and stones may break your bones, but names can never hurt you, but that's not true. Words can hurt. They hurt me. Things were said to me that I still haven't forgotten.

*Demi Lovato*

### ReThink

ReThink before the damage is done! Together, we can conquer cyberbullying.!

What is ReThink?

[ReThink™](#) is an award-winning, non-intrusive, innovative, patented technology, that detects and stops cyberbullying before the damage is done! Here is a quick overview of how ReThink works:

Teen tries to post offensive message

ReThink technology detects offensive message

Second chance to ReThink with an alert

Teen declines to post offensive message

Online hate is stopped. Lives are saved!

Why ReThink?

Research shows that when adolescents are alerted to "ReThink" their decision, they change their minds 93% of the time. Using [ReThink™](#), the overall *willingness of an adolescent to post an offensive message reduced from 71% to 4%.*

It is Proactive, Effective, Teen-Friendly, *and* no cost to students

ReThink Recognition

[ReThink™](#) has been honored with several national and international awards and featured on several national and international stages and forums.

For more information, go to:

<http://rethinkwords.com/whatisrethink>





## Quotes

Things will get better  
it just takes time.

We focus so much on our differences, and that is creating, I think, a lot of chaos and negativity and bullying in the world. And I think if everybody focused on what we all have in common - which is - we all want to be happy.  
*Ellen DeGeneres*

I realized that bullying never has to do with you. It's the bully who's insecure.  
*Shay Mitchell*

If they don't like you for being yourself, be yourself even more.  
*Taylor Swift*



## Blazers Report By Andrew

At the Christmas break the Kamloops Blazers were in first place in the B.C. Division and started the second half with a loss to the Victoria Royals on December 30th.

Coming into the new year in first place, they will definitely make the playoffs. The big question will be how far will they go?

Two players to watch are Dylan Garand & Rayce Ramsey. Both are goaltenders and show a lot of promise. Garand is seen as a 2020 NHL Draft prospect.

At this point, the main competition for the Blazers in their division is the Victoria Royals and the Kelowna Rockets. Keep watching and don't forget the special game on Family Day!

## White Cane Week, February 2-8

By Ben

The Kamloops White Cane Club is having an **Open House on February 8<sup>th</sup>** this year to inform others with vision loss what activities and visual aids are available. The Open House will take place at the Double Tree (339 St. Paul St.). One of the activities will provide awareness with the use of simulator glasses for the sighted to experience doing daily activities with vision loss and the helps that are available to allow the blind/partially sighted to retain independence. You will also learn more about the White Cane Club activities and membership. This will take place on Saturday, February 8<sup>th</sup> from 12:00 – 3:00pm. This is a drop-in event.

The other main activity is the **White Cane Week Luncheon** held on Wednesday, **February 5<sup>th</sup> at Desert Gardens** (540 Seymour St.), 11:30am-1:00pm. A guest speaker is invited to make a presentation to White Cane Club members and guests. There are also door prizes drawn using the tickets. For ticket costs and to learn more about both events, call Linda Hall at [250-376-4900](tel:250-376-4900).



## 2020 FOCUS: LIFT EACH OTHER UP

Taken from: <https://www.pinkshirtday.ca/>

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In a world of people tearing each other down, it is more important than ever to focus on being kind to one another. This Pink Shirt Day and every day, let's Lift Each Other Up.

In 2007 2 Nova scotian students Travis Price and David Shpperd bought 50 pink t shirts for students to wear after one student was bullied for his pink shirt. Since then the pink shirt has become a part of many anti-bullying campaigns.



## A New Platform at Ability Online.

*An interview with Michelle McClure, the executive director of Ability Online, about their new platform for members in 2020.*

**What made Ability Online want to develop myability.ca?** The current site is over 9 years old and is very outdated. The CEO of Synergiq Solutions approached us wanting to help us build a brand new, state of the art, fully accessible peer-to-peer platform. We are very excited by the new features and functionality and can hardly wait to launch it this year!

**What should people know about anti-bullying and why it's wrong to bully others?** Bullying on or offline is mean and hurtful and the only way to stop it is to stand up to bullies and let them know this is not acceptable. Our online community has been bully-free for 30 years! We promote mutual respect and acceptance, because we want all our members to feel, and be, the best they can be. No one deserves to be bullied for any reason, and we are involved in the Pink Shirt Campaign to make sure this message gets out there!

**How does Ability Online protect people with all abilities from being bullied by others?** We screen all registrations, so we know exactly who is joining, and make sure they are coming to our community for all the right reasons. Then we have trained volunteers who are police screened, to help monitor the messages to make sure everyone is respectful towards one another. If people can't be nice online, we remove their access so that they can't hurt anyone. We pay attention to what goes on and we address anything negative before it gets out of hand. Our members know we are watching, and they don't want to lose their access, so they respect our rules.

**What makes Ability Online stand out in the world of social networks?** Our safety and security practices, and the fact we have been incident free for 30 years! Plus, we have the most amazing students, volunteers and members who have helped make the online community a positive and rewarding experience for all.

**What tips should people follow online either on Ability Online or off Ability Online to protect themselves from being bullied by others?** Speak up if someone sends and says something mean or inappropriate. Bullying won't go away if we ignore it.

**How should people respect people with disabilities and how can they get rid of their judgments and stereotypes?** Everyone, regardless of their level of ability deserves to be respected and valued for their own unique traits. The golden rule is the best rule "treat others the way you want to be treated"!

**How do you feel personally or professionally about Pink Shirt day and about anti-bullying?** I am glad we have an opportunity to highlight the importance of standing up to bullying.

What do kids, teens, their parents, young adults and professionals enjoy about Ability Online? The safety, and the supportive community we have built.

**What does schools like about Ability Online compared to other sites online?** In addition to connecting with role models and mentors, we also have lots of other helpful information and resources on the site that teachers can use with their student. We also offer great volunteer opportunities for students earning their community service hours.

**What makes you happy about being at Ability Online as executive director and what makes you the proudest being in the disability industry and social media industry?** The members make me so happy when they share all the reasons why they love Ability Online, and what a difference it has made in their lives. I am most proud of the fact, that even though there are other social media platforms, we are the only ones who have been around for people with disabilities for 30 years.

For more information about Ability Online, go to: [www.abilityonline.org](http://www.abilityonline.org)

Do you know someone who might not be able to read this because the print is too small?  
Tell them they can **READ AGAIN!**

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