

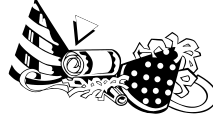


Continuity News

Helping families in Manitoba plan a secure future for their family member with an intellectual disability

JANUARY 2008

From The Continuity Care Office



Happy New Year from the staff and Board of Continuity Care!

I am pleased to report that our Administrative Assistant desk is no longer empty. Liz Allen joined us in early November. She is currently in the office Monday to Friday on a part-time basis. For those of you who may not know Liz, she is the eldest daughter of the late Bob Manwaring, who was Continuity Care's first Executive Director. Liz has much to offer our organization, both professionally and personally, and we are pleased to have her aboard.

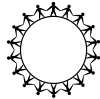
A huge thank you to the Manitoba Community Service Council for their recent grant support to our operating expenses. I am looking forward to the Bingo events and hope to see many of our members out to show their support.

We are also looking for new members for our various committees, so if Bingo's are not for you, then please consider contributing your time and insights to one of the following committees: Family Advisory, Fundraising or Human Resources.

Speaking of fundraising, our Committee is currently exploring new fundraising ideas. We will not be continuing the Help Us Grow Tomato Plant Sale this year. Although this fundraiser was "fruitful" in terms of the tasty tomatoes, it was time and labor intensive. One of the ideas we are considering is a charity golf tournament. We are open to new ideas and welcome your thoughts. If you would like to join our fundraising committee, please contact our office @ 779-1679.

It's hard to believe that I have been with Continuity Care for a year and a half already. It has gone by quickly and I am glad to be a part of such a valuable organization and have the opportunity to meet the families who are a part of it. I am also very excited about our support network project and the opportunity to share what we are learning with other families and organizations. Stay Warm!

Suzanne Swanton - Executive Director



Building Support Networks

In 2006, Continuity Care embarked on a pilot project about developing Support Networks, which has been funded through grants from the Winnipeg Foundation and Community Living Manitoba.

The literature review has provided a foundation for the next phase of the project, which is currently underway. In this phase of the project, we are developing 3 new support networks for individuals with disabilities. Two of the individuals live in Winnipeg and the third individual lives in Selkirk.

We are exploring different models of support network facilitation and maintenance with each of these networks. Of particular interest is the model involving a paid facilitator, which Continuity Care has hired on a contract basis. As part of this phase of the project, we are also offering 15 workshops in Winnipeg and in rural communities on the topic of "Building a Support Network". To date, we have done presentations for different parent groups and organizations in Winnipeg, Pinawa, Selkirk and Beausejour. There are upcoming presentations in Winkler and Steinbach. We will also be offering more sessions in Winnipeg through Continuity Care Workshops, as well as with other parent groups and organizations. We are still looking for groups and organizations who would be interested in hosting a presentation in Winnipeg. Please contact Suzanne at 779-1679 for more information.

The goals of the project are to share what we have learned about support networks; hear from Manitoba families about their needs; explore and evaluate the different models of support network facilitation; and to determine the amount of time and costs involved. We will also be developing resources and best practices guidelines. Continuity Care will be utilizing the results of this project to determine how best our organization can further assist families in Manitoba to develop a sharing circle of support for their family member, as part of their plan for the future.



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TIPS FOR TRANSITIONING

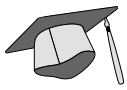
For parents who have children who are in or entering High School, this is a time when you and your child are starting to think about the future. What happens after graduation? You begin to plan for this next stage in your child's life. This time of transition and change brings about many questions and also many feelings. Excitement and hope for the future is often combined with fear, worry, anxiety and confusion. If you are feeling this way, you are not alone. Many children, young adults, parents and caregivers are experiencing the same feelings during this time.

Transition planning often begins at school, as that is where the student spends most of their day. The student, the teacher and the parents/caregivers will begin to get together to discuss and develop a transition plan. The plan should also include other aspects of the student's life, such as their interests and activities outside of school.

These are useful steps for transition planning:

- Identify the student's strengths, abilities, skills, interests and needs
- Identify programs that may be available to address the student's individual needs
- Explore the availability and requirements for:
 - Post secondary education, vocational training and employment (including supportive work options)
 - Independent or supportive living options
 - Leisure and social opportunities
- Develop a person centered plan for leaving school, based on the student's individual needs and desires

PLAN
For the Future



In Manitoba, transition planning for students with special needs should begin by at least age 16. Students, parents/caregivers, the school, support services workers and others who are part of the student's team will meet to develop a written plan (Individual Transition Plan or ITP) that outlines roles and responsibilities, time lines and actions to be taken before the student leaves high school.

A Transition Planning Checklist



COMMUNICATE

- Ask for a meeting with your child's team to begin transition planning
- At this meeting, discuss the supports currently in place for your child and some of the new or adult-focused supports that will be needed

PLAN AHEAD AND WORK TOGETHER

- In planning during this stage of your child's life, begin with a clear understanding of
 - Who your child is and where he/she wants to be
 - What supports and services are available or need to be available
 - What actions need to be taken to achieve the transition plan

ASK YOURSELF SOME QUESTIONS

- What are your child's strengths and needs?
- What do you see your child doing in 4-5 years?
- What does your child see themselves doing?
- Do you have enough information to make decisions?
- Do you need to investigate what opportunities or options are available?
- Are there some specific skills your child needs to focus on to be as independent as possible?

TALK TO YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER, OTHER FAMILY OR COMMUNITY SUPPORT WORKERS TO ASSIST YOU IN THE TRANSITION PROCESS

GATHER INFORMATION FROM VARIOUS SOURCES, SUCH AS THE FOLLOWING:

- Children's Special Services
- The Society For Manitoban's with Disabilities
- Supported Living Programs
- Vocational Rehabilitation Program
- Employment and Income Assistance
- Office of the Vulnerable Persons' Commissioner
- Regional Health Authority
 - Mental Health
 - Home Care

Source - Working Together

A Handbook for Parents of Children with Special Needs in School

Transitioning Resources Available from Continuity Care's Library

- What Are You Going To Do After Graduation?
- A Family Guide to the Vulnerable Persons Act
- A Parent's Guide to Inclusive Education
- Person Centered Planning Tools
- All My Life's A Circle
- Transition Planning to Adult Services
- Working Together - A Handbook for Parents of Children with Special Needs
- Working Together - A Guide to Positive Problem

- IEP Handbook

www.continuitycare.ca

www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12

- Towards Inclusion: A Handbook for Modified Course Designation Senior 1-4
- Working Together - A Parent's Guide to Formal Dispute Resolution Solving for Schools, Families and Communities
- Manitoba Transition Planning Process Support Guidelines for Students with Special Needs Reaching Age 16

(This document is currently under review and they are looking for your feedback. Please visit this link for more details @ www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/index.html)

Please call 779-1679 for more information

Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP)

On December 14, 2007, the Registered Disability Saving Plan received royal assent (*this bill has become a law*) after passing third reading in both the House of Commons and the Senate. The next stage will focus on how the RDSP will be implemented in Manitoba.

The RDSP is a new plan that will allow funds to be invested tax-free until withdrawal. The plan structure is similar to a Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP). This plan is a way of assisting parents and others to save for the long term financial security of a child with a disability.

Who will be eligible?

To be eligible, the individual must qualify for the Disability Tax Credit and also be a resident of Canada.

Who can contribute and how much?

Anyone can contribute to an RDSP; however, contributions are limited to a lifetime maximum of \$200,000, with no annual limit. Contributions can be made until the year in which the individual turns 59.

When will the RDSP be available?

Unfortunately the RDSP is not available in Manitoba yet, but it will be available sometime in 2008.



What is the Canada Disability Savings Grant (CDSG)?

This is a program that is designed to augment funds in the RDSP. The government will contribute, in the form of a grant, matching funds at rates of 100, 200 or 300% up to a maximum of \$3,500 annually, depending on the net income of the beneficiary's family. There is a maximum lifetime CDSG limit of \$70,000.

What is a Canada Disability Savings Bond (CDSB)?

This is another program designed to help low-income families save. A CDSB of up to \$1000 per year can be paid to an RDSP where family net income does not exceed \$20,883. There is a maximum lifetime CDSB limit of \$20,000.

Continuity Care will stay involved and informed as to how the RDSP is being implemented in Manitoba. We will be sharing this information through future newsletters and hope to offer this topic at one of our future workshops. More information about this plan will be available shortly on CRA's Web site www.cra.-arc.gc.ca.



Calling all Volunteers!!

As part of our grant from Manitoba Community Services Council, they have awarded us the opportunity to work at two bingo sessions this year at either the McPhillips Street Station or Club Regent. Our first Bingo session is coming up in March and we need at least 10 volunteers over the age of 18. *Please call the office @ 779-1679 to volunteer.*

Sunday March 16, 2008

Club Regent (1425 Regent Ave W)

6:00pm – 9:45pm



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contact our office.*

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Continuity Care is a non-profit organization formed in 1995 by a group of dedicated parents, siblings and citizens who wanted to assist other families plan for the future of their family member with a disability.

Continuity Care does not rely upon government funding. We receive quarterly payments from our Endowment Fund, which is used towards our core office functions and allows us to provide our programs and services to families. While our Endowment Fund is a key aspect of our funding, it currently does not cover all of our operating costs, so we need your assistance. There are many different ways you can support our organization.

Continuity Care's Endowment Fund

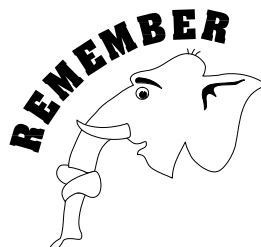
This fund, administered by The Winnipeg Foundation, was established in October 1998 to sustain the basic operation of our organization in perpetuity. Donations can be made online by Visa or MasterCard at www.wpgfdn.org or cheques can be made out to Continuity Care's Endowment Fund and mailed directly to the Winnipeg Foundation, 1350 - One Lombard Place, Wpg, MB R3B 0X3 The Foundation has years of experience managing donations and will issue you a charitable tax receipt.

Continuity Care's Operating expenses

You may choose to donate directly to our organization. This donation will be used towards our general operating expenses. Visit our website at www.continuitycare.ca and a donation can be made online by Visa or MasterCard through CanadaHelps.org or cheques can be made out to Continuity Care and sent directly to our office @ 2-120 Maryland Street, Wpg, MB R3G 1L1 and we will issue you a charitable tax receipt.

We would like to recognize all of those individuals who have made donations towards our Endowment Fund and donations directly to our operating expenses this year. This allows us to direct more funds towards our programs and services for families. Thank you!

Special thanks to the following companies for their financial support



**Membership Renewal Time
is coming up in April**

\$20 1year membership
\$250 Lifetime membership

Continuity Care provides information for the benefit of the readers and does not endorse any particular organization, company, firm or service. Advice and strategies in this newsletter are general guidelines and families should consult professional legal and financial advisors when developing plans.