



Continuity News

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

September 2008

From the Office

I hope that everyone had an enjoyable summer, even though the weather was not always “summer like”. The office remained open this summer and both Liz and I have been working on some projects, which included organizing the office files. Thanks to a grant received through MCSC (Manitoba Community Services Council) we were able to purchase some new office furniture (two desks, a new filing cabinet, book shelf and a storage cabinet). This has allowed us to not only update the office but utilize the space more effectively.

As we each get back into our Fall routines, so does our office. Our Board will be meeting this month, as will the two Senior Parent to Parent groups. Our Fall workshops will take place in October and November. Please check out the bulletin enclosed for the topics, dates and times. Our Board will also be meeting on October 1st to review our Strategic Plan and set some new goals and plans for the coming year, as well as for the next few years.

Please feel free to contact our office if you have any questions or stop by if you are in the building or in the neighborhood.

Let’s hope that Autumn brings more sunny days so we can get outdoors and enjoy the crisp breezes and the colors of the season.

Suzanne Swanton – Executive Director

Continuity Care’s Annual General Meeting

Continuity Care held its Annual General Meeting on June 23rd, 2008 at 120 Maryland Street. The meeting was attended by 35 people, including Board members, members of the organization and guests.

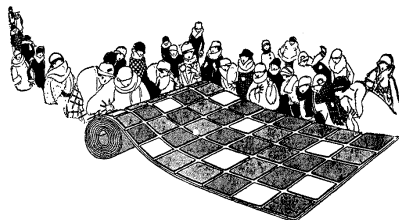
We began with the Business Meeting which was chaired by Linda Ormonde, President of the Board. Merv Gunter provided an overview of the organization’s financial status. Suzanne Swanton gave an overview of the past year. There were no amendments to the current by-laws. We have not added any new board members at this time. Those interested in joining the Board or one of our committees (Family Advisory, Fundraising or Human Resources) can contact either Linda or Suzanne @ 779-1679.



Following the business meeting, a light dinner was served and those in attendance had time to visit, meet new families and reconnect with others. Thank you to De Luca’s on Portage Ave for catering the meal.

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“We don’t accomplish anything in this world alone.....



and whatever happens is the result of the whole tapestry of one’s life and all the weavings of individual threads.”

Sandra Day O’Connor

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We ended the evening with a panel presentation on “Sharing Circles of Support”. A special thank you to Brian, Linda and Mark Ormonde, Megan Scott, Justine Steinkopf and Ivan Berkowitz for sharing their experiences. It was informative and allowed those in attendance to listen and learn more about what a sharing circle of support is and some of the benefits and challenges in developing and maintaining them.



Brian, Mark & Linda Ormonde, Megan Scott & Justine Steinkopf

Copies of our 2007-08 Annual Report are available in hard copy at our office or electronically on our website at <http://www.continuitycare.ca>

Creating a Portfolio for your Family Member

A piece of Continuity Care’s planning model is creating a portfolio for your child or family member. The family is the guardian of a person’s past. Remembering the past builds our strength and our sense of belonging in the present. How can we share the stories of the past and ensure they are heard in the future.....by creating a portfolio. A portfolio is a book that tells the story of who the person is and includes photos, information and memories from their past that can be enjoyed and shared now, but also in the future.

Why is a portfolio important?

- To tell our stories, particularly the story of who our family member is. It is important for each of us that our stories be heard by others. Those stories build a sense of belonging.
- Telling our stories can help us and support staff deal more effectively with our family member. We can remember and pass on what’s important to them. A portfolio can also be an important tool for members of the sharing circle of support and for trustees of a discretionary trust.

- By connecting with your family member’s memories of the past, it’s possible you can reconnect with old friends who might be interested in becoming involved in their present life. This can be a foundation for planning and for building the future.
- It is possible that you might find a sense of strength and belonging as you reconnect with these memories and feelings. Often in life as we have grown up, we have a tendency to push down memories and feelings. Experience has hardened us. Daydreams and imagination has shriveled. Working on the portfolio for your family member can be a way for you to reconnect with yourself as well.

A portfolio can be as simple or elaborate as you wish. With a bit of creativity and imagination, a portfolio can become a treasured keepsake for your family member.

Getting started is often the most difficult part. If you would like more information on creating a portfolio, please call our office. We can provide you with some resources that can assist you and we also offer workshops where you can get directions and assistance and work on a page to help get you started or inspire you to finish, if you have already begun.

Registered Disability Savings Plan Update

The Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) that was introduced by the Federal Government in last year’s budget has been sparking interest all over Canada. Individuals, families and organizations are waiting to hear how and when it will be implemented in each of the provinces.

To date, the provinces of British Columbia, Newfoundland/Labrador and Yukon have amended their provincial policies to exempt the RDSP as an asset for individuals who are receiving financial support through those provinces social services. Just recently, Saskatchewan has also followed suit and exempted the RDSP.

The Regulations for the RDSP have been finalized and passed by the Federal Government in June 2008. This allows for the banks and financial institutions to proceed with their plans and processes. It is to be available by December 2008.

In Manitoba, we are awaiting the decision of our provincial government. Continuity Care has been part of a multi-agency group that has been advocating on

behalf of individuals and families. Several organizations, including Continuity Care, have sent letters to Gord Mackintosh, Minister of Family Services and Housing, sharing our recommendations as to how we would like to see the RDSP implemented in our province.

Our recommendations included the following:

- Individuals and/or their families and support networks should have the sole discretion to determine how best to utilize the income from the RDSP so that it is of the greatest benefit to the beneficiary.
- The income from the RDSP should be utilized only for the full benefit of the beneficiary, free of any requirements to reimburse for government services.
- The RDSP program should be seen as an additional option for setting aside money to improve the quality of life of someone with a disability, not as a replacement of existing trust fund programs. The provincial government may, however, want to consider raising the existing \$100,000 Employment and Income Assistance trust asset exemption to \$200,000.
- The provincial government should ensure all relevant employees are made aware of the RDSP program and that they are sharing this information with self-advocates and/or their families.
- The provincial government should initiate the formulation of a strategy to ensure participating financial institutions have a clear understanding of the Vulnerable Persons Act as it relates to competency and supported decision-making versus substitute decision-making.

We hope that this Fall will bring positive news from our provincial government with respect to this issue.

Continuity Care will be offering an educational workshop on the RDSP to help learn about this option for investing and saving for the future for individuals with disabilities.

The Independent Living Resource Center is also in the process of developing a video that will be offered as a resource to individuals, families and organizations in our province.

In the meantime, what can be done?

To be eligible for the RDSP, individuals must also be eligible to receive the Disability Tax Credit and have filed a tax return for 2007. For those who haven't yet done so, we encourage you to do so.

Resources are available at the following:

Canada Revenue Agency

<http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tx/rgstrd/rdsp/menu-eng.html>

Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network

Blog <http://www.rdsp.com>

RDSP Online Calculator <http://www.plan.ca/RDSPCalculator.php>

Continuity Care

<http://www.continuitycare.ca>

A Donor's StoryThe Morantz Family

Continuity Care has been fortunate to have received support from many individuals, families, businesses and organizations over the past years. As a way of acknowledging our donors, in each newsletter, we would like to share a story about a donor and why they have chosen to support Continuity Care.

Continuity Care would like to thank the Morantz family for their recent donation to Continuity Care's Endowment Fund. Marty Morantz and his wife, Lisa, heard about Continuity Care through another lifetime member (of Continuity Care) while attending a parent support group this past year. Marty and Lisa have two sons – Jeremy (11) and Nathan (9). Nathan was diagnosed as being on the Autism spectrum at age two. Both of their sons attend the Gray Academy and Nathan has been participating in St. Amant's A. B. A. Program since its inception.

Marty and Lisa chose to donate to Continuity Care out of personal interest and also as a way of raising awareness for people who are vulnerable. As a family, they want to become more connected with their community and gain advice on what to expect for the future.

When they heard about Continuity Care and what we do, they wanted to support the organization. They also realize that families who have children with special needs can't do it all by themselves and need assistance. As well, their son Nathan will need to rely on others in the community as he gets older. Marty refers to the quote "It takes a village to raise a child."

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Marty and Lisa chose the option of donating to Continuity Care's Endowment Fund because they view this as a stable and long term safety net for the organization and preferred to make a gift that would be ongoing in value. They have made regular donations to other organizations in the past, but decided that in this case, the Endowment Fund was their preferred choice.

We would like to welcome the Morantz family as new lifetime members of Continuity Care.



From left to right Lisa, Jeremy, Marty and Nathan

Baby Boomer Café

Who we are: We're a group of baby boomers who like to have fun. But our celebration has a serious purpose. As our parents pass away, our siblings with a disability need relationships and friends more than ever. The Baby Boomer Café is a place where we and our siblings can build relationships and community. Come and join us.

Summer update: The summer gathering at Birds Hill Park on August 16th, 2008 was a huge success. Everyone had a great time at the beach and even enjoyed a scavenger hunt. We had a big BBQ with great food, a sing song and some of us even camped overnight.



Next gathering: We are planning to have another gathering before the end of 2008.

Call Ben or Heather Friesen @ 889-3806 for more information.

Continuity Care Inc. 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.



MEMBERS CORNER

Do you have a topic that you would like to see discussed in our newsletter?

Do you have a story you would like us to share with our readers?

Do you have a question that you would like us to research and answer?

We want to hear from you!

Give us a call at 779-1679 or send us an email at contcare@mts.net and let us know what you as our members would like to see in our newsletter.



“When a person grows up surrounded by acceptance and friendship, they learn to find love in the world.”

Did you know that Continuity Care offers this newsletter and any other publications electronically? If you would like to receive future correspondences by email instead, please contact our office at 779-1679 or by email at contcare@mts.net

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