

OPENING THE DOOR

Contents

Plan Results in More Services	P.2
Toronto Network of Specialized Care	P.2
dsto Council Update	P.2
More Than Expected . . .	P.3
Passport Update & More!	P.3

Toronto developmental services agencies, consumers, and the Toronto Region of the Ministry of Community and Social Services are working together to improve the quality of life of adults with developmental disabilities—today and into the future. We are committed to the equitable, strategic and effective use of all available resources in meeting the needs of adults with developmental disabilities and their families.

Partner Agencies

Check out www.dsto.com for information about partner agencies and developmental services provided in Toronto.

Addus	416-544-8847
Bob Rumball Centre for the Deaf	416-447-2378
Christian Horizons	416-630-3646
Community Living Toronto	416-968-0650
CORE	416-340-7929
Common Ground Cooperative	416-421-7117
COTA Health	416-785-9230
Family Service Toronto	416-971-6326
Geneva Centre for Autism	416-322-7877
Griffin Centre	416-222-1153
Harmony Place Support Services	416-510-3114
JVS Toronto	416-787-1151
Kerry's Place Autism Services	416-537-2000
L'Arche Toronto Homes Inc.	416-406-2869
Mary Centre	416-630-5533
Meta Centre	416-736-0199
Montage Support Services	416-780-9630
Muki Baum Treatment Centres	416-630-2222
New Leaf	905-478-1418
New Visions Toronto	416-868-1493
Operation Springboard	416-913-1301
Participation House Toronto	416-439-3226
Pegasus	416-691-5651
Reena	905-889-6484
The Safehaven Project for Community Living	416-535-8525
St. Vincent de Paul	416-265-2605
Salvation Army Broadview Village	416-425-1052
Surex	416-469-4109
Surrey Place Centre	416-925-5141
Vita	416-749-6234
Woodgreen Community Services	416-469-5211
York Community Services	416-653-5400

For referrals contact any of the above agencies.

HAADD and One Member's Story

By Beth Komito-Gottlieb

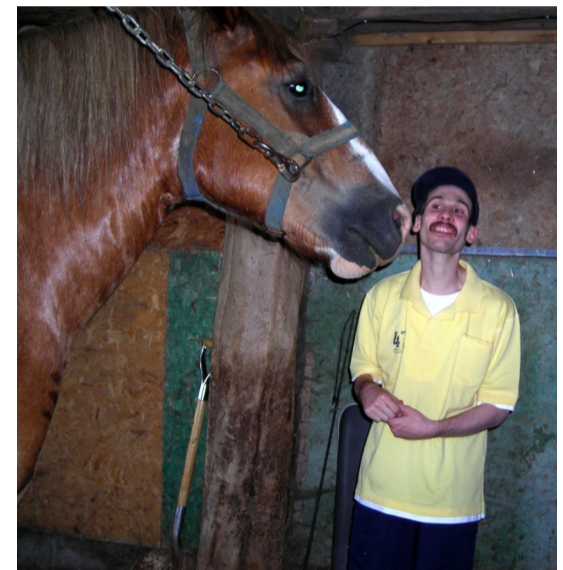
Incorporated in 1992, **HAADD** (Helping Adults with Autism and Developmental Disorders) established our mandate to assist members of our community with autism to have a better quality of life. Our members are individuals on the autism spectrum or related developmental disorders, their families, and friends. Many are adults living at home, with aging parents who are deeply concerned about the future.

HAADD receives no government funding and has no paid staff. We raise funds through benefit concerts and donations, organize speakers and workshops, and administer the **Joseph Umbrico Bursaries & Grants**. In addition to furthering our commitment to support our members in making choices, planning, and establishing good lives, one of **HAADD's** community partnerships was in the initial development of the CHOICES programme for adults, now permanently a part of the Geneva Centre's services.

HAADD's bursaries were launched in the spring of 2008. In the first year, **HAADD** awarded bursaries to eight individuals providing funds for opportunities that might not otherwise have been possible. One of the first recipients was 38 year-old Kris. He is on the autism spectrum, has a winning smile, and a great work ethic.

Kris is non-verbal although he has a variety of very successful means of communicating, including typing. The programme Kris attended was not meeting his needs. He did not feel he was spending his days meaningfully. Luckily Kris and his parents were introduced to a farm where they began spending one day a week. Kris's sister began to come as well and soon also fell under the spell of the farm. Kris and Dara connected in new ways when working there together and a new story began to incubate in their minds. They wanted to explore living and working together in the country. That's when Kris's circle applied for and was awarded a **HAADD** bursary to spend three days a week at the farm with his sister.

Around the same time, the home where Kris lived and was supported in a home-sharing arrangement supervised by a local agency was turned into a group home without warning. This was very upsetting for Kris and it was decided that



Kris enjoys country life very much and spending time at the farm

he would spend seven days a week at the farm for the whole summer while his living arrangements were sorted out. At the end of the summer, Kris submitted a report. Excerpts from his report follow.

I enjoyed living on the farm. We slept in the bus made into a trailer. Every morning we go to the house and eat breakfast. We talk about what work we will do. Sometimes we go out to the field and pick weeds so the horses don't eat them. We clean stalls and throw down bales of hay. We help in the kitchen. We visit with friends. We read stories after dinner. I had to go see the doctor for poison ivy.

I like being with the animals. The cats hang around and Dara feeds them tuna. The sheep run around on the grass. They are free to eat it up. I choose to live in the country because it is peaceful. The people are kind to me. They accept that I need help to work. There is lots of space. The city is crowded and the people are stressed out. They are more sad than country people.

At the end of the summer Kris and Dara moved to a bungalow close to the farm. It is quiet and it is just for them! The months which followed have been full of changes and some uncertainty, which has not all been easy for Kris.

Cont'd pg 4

Mark Your Calendars!

4th Annual Information Fair
May 14, 2009 at CNIB

See page 4 for more information

Plan Will Result in More Services

The 32 agencies that provide developmental services in Toronto have completed a plan that will result in more than 80 individuals and families receiving either new or additional services and supports during the next 18 months.

The plan is the Toronto response to the Ministry's *Increasing Community Capacity Initiative*, announced last fall. The initiative required Regions across the province to increase services in four areas through reallocation of some existing resources. The four areas are:

- Conversion of a small percentage of existing traditional residential services to create additional capacity;
- Using residential vacancy management to respond to a portion of the individuals who are leaving the children's system or are adults currently at risk;
- Responding to wait lists for day supports (including Passport) by redirecting a small portion of existing community participation supports funding;
- Increasing the community's capacity to support more individuals through achieving greater administrative efficiencies.

The strategies identified for achieving targets in these four areas must be in place by July of 2010. Agencies will be reporting to the Ministry on the status of implementing their parts of the plan on a quarterly basis.

Developmental Services in Toronto were able to respond quickly and successfully to this Ministry initiative because of the lengthy history of working together as a sector. The Toronto plan has been approved by the Toronto Regional Office of the Ministry and is now being implemented by the agencies.

Developmental Services Council Update

In the past few months, the Developmental Services Council has initiated two activities to help us both understand the needs of our client group better and to do something about three key issues for them. In late 2008, Council began inviting self-advocate groups to make a presentation to Council on the key issues that affect their lives. To date, Council has heard from different self-advocacy groups and several other groups are scheduled to appear in the coming months. If your self-advocate group would like to make a presentation to Council, please contact Carol Krause at ckrause@cltoronto.ca

These presentations, as well as stories self-advocates shared at monthly Self-Advocates Hangouts, helped Council develop its focus on personal relationships. Our own self-advocates on Council have confirmed that this is a very big issue for many people with developmental disabilities. In addition, Council has approved three priority areas to devote considerable time and effort to in the coming year. The three areas are:

- Aging and long-term care;
- Housing;
- Personal relationships.

For each area Council will create a working group comprised of Council members, interested volunteers, and hopefully an expert in the field from an agency or other organization. The goal of this work is not to generate high level recommendations, but rather very practical and useful recommendations that can improve the day to day lives of those living with developmental disabilities.

If you are interested in working with us on any of these projects or on being on Council please contact Carol.

Toronto Network of Specialized Care (TNSC)



Who are we?

The Toronto Network of Specialized Care is a partnership of community based organizations that work together to provide a variety of specialized services, consultations, training, education and research for individuals with developmental disabilities and mental health issues and/or challenging behaviours. In Toronto we have representation from Developmental and Mental Health agencies.

What we do?

Working together to coordinate services for individuals having complex needs; we have set up a monthly Clinical Conference with a membership of skilled professionals who brainstorm and provide ideas for a variety of supports which a person and their caregivers may need.

What's new?

A **Health Care Coordinator** has recently been hired. This is as a result of the individuals returning to their home community from the closure of the last three institutions in Ontario. The role will initially be to ensure that they have appropriate health care and will also provide training, education and assist with linkages to the Health system.

Video Conferencing is also a network initiative. It is a useful tool which allows people to connect without being in the same room. It is being used for healthcare, counseling and assessment, education and training, professional development, administrative meetings and family visits. Some topics that have been presented are:

- *Couples Therapy and Support: A Positive Model for People with Intellectual Disabilities;*
- *Supporting Adults with Intellectual Disabilities who have engaged in Sexual Offending Behaviours;*
- *Developmental Disabilities & the Criminal Justice System;*
- *Foetal Alcohol Syndrome & Foetal Alcohol Effects.*

A schedule of events and sites can be seen on the network website; visit the training calendar (registration is required). The Toronto sites are at Christian Horizons, COTA Health, Centre for Addiction & Mental Health, Kerry's Place Autism Services, and Surrey Place Centre.

For more information on the Specialized Networks check out the website at www.community-networks.ca or contact Sandra Bricker at sandra.bricker@surreyplace.on.ca



www.dsto.com is a resource that provides individuals, families and professionals a central point of information on developmental services in Toronto. www.dsto.com contains an overview of government-funded agencies that are working together to provide responsive, high quality services, and supports to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

The web site provides information and links that will help people to be more knowledgeable about the Toronto collaborative approach and developmental services in Toronto and will keep people informed of new events, programs or initiatives. Some menu items (including examples of information) on dsto are:

- About Us (learn about Developmental Services Council and more);
- News and Events (dsto and agency activities, conferences, workshops and newsletters);
- Agency Programs and Services (descriptions of agencies and their programs);
- How to Access Service (Applying for respite and day programs);
- Government Services (Passport Initiative, government web sites);
- Consumer Groups and Organizations (their mandates, events and contact information);
- Connect **ABILITY**.ca (A virtual community – workshops on planning for life after school and videos on understanding person-directed planning);

- Helpful Resources (recreation and leisure listings and links to 211, Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) and Watch that Page).

People can read or print information and have access to contact telephone numbers, email addresses, and agency websites.

The dsto web site provides descriptions of agencies and resources available to individuals and families including links into agency and other related web sites. Information can be used by professionals when assisting individuals, families and other professionals seeking services and have questions about access to developmental services.

Professionals can find documents they require while providing services and support (i.e. integrated response practitioners guide, administrative forms, lead agency contact list and packages, plus up-to-date communications such as meeting minutes, updates and memos, upcoming events, conferences, training opportunities, and job postings.

Since 2006, there have been a number of updates and changes based on feedback from visitors to the site. Additional changes will be made to further improve the accessibility and information available. Surveys will be posted on the home pages for feedback from visitors to ensure that www.dsto.com is providing a ‘user friendly’ relevant site.

Comments, regarding the website are welcome and can be sent to any developmental services agency in Toronto.

More Than Expected ... And More To Come: The Continuing Story of One Former Facility Resident

Little was expected but failure. Harvey was moved home to the community amongst fears that his history of significant problem behaviour and use of restraints would be too much to deal with, would get in the way of any hope of community integration. Careful planning, along with a staff that was willing to go the extra mile, has achieved what was considered impossible: a fully integrated life, a fully realized dream for Harvey.

Today when staff describe Harvey they refer to his personhood, his personality, his sense of humour – not his history of problem behaviours. He is a man who doesn’t communicate well with words but who is often seen socially interacting with staff and peers, who loves to go to work at the day programme, who loves to make jewelry and arts and crafts.

When Harvey arrived he communicated little, had words that were difficult to understand. He communicated with sign language having given up on speech as a major communication tool. With his life in the community, unrestricted access to parks, to shopping centers, to restaurants (he loves restaurants) he has energized his desire to be understood. He now speaks when he

signs; he works to have his words understood. He knows he is being listened to and he loves the fact that his words give his life direction.

Harvey has learned, through behavioural programming and staff encouragement, strategies to deal with his anger; he has learned to calm himself down, to be fully in control of himself. He no longer needs external controls; as an adult man, he is in charge. Staff can see pleasure on his face, knowing that he has taken control of a temper that used to control him.

Harvey’s story is just one of many as a result of the provincial government’s initiative to close the remaining Provincial Facilities by 2009. Over the past four years, the 32 developmental services agencies in Toronto have worked together to place 95 former Facilities residents into community settings. Toronto Region has received \$4.1 million in operating funding and \$5.4 in capital funding to support the relocation of these individuals. Stories like Harvey’s bring to life the value of these investments.

When staff was asked how he was doing, the supervisor of his home said, “Well, one word he says really clearly is...happy.”

Passport Initiative Update

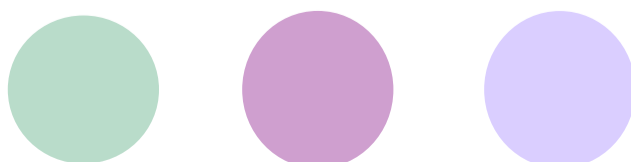
In November 2008, the Ministry of Community and Social Services provided additional funding for the Passport to Community Living initiative. Thirty-five (35) new individuals were approved with the \$383,850 designated for the Toronto region.

All of these individuals, with their families and/or service providers, met with their Passport Assessment and Review Coordinator at Family Service Toronto to review the Ministry’s Passport initiative guidelines, decide their funding options, and devise a budgetary plan that reflects their skills, interests, and community participation goals. They immediately commenced using their funds to purchase resources to upgrade and enhance

their personal interests and skills developments, pay for social/recreational activities, and support to network and access resources and services in their local community.

The parent of one funded participant stated, “Since my daughter will soon be moving to a Supported Independent Living residence, I am excited that this money will help her to transition in her new community and to explore local community resources and services that will further promote her independent living with the support of her service provider.”

After discussing his community participation goals with his Family Support Worker, another individual who has had minimal community participation opportunities since leaving



4th Annual Information Fair

Thursday May 14, 2009
9:30 am – 5:00 pm
CNIB - 1929 Bay view Avenue.

An annual event to learn more about the agencies, organizations & groups that provide developmental services to adults and their families including:

The variety of services & supports available
How to apply for services & supports
Available government assistance programs
Toronto's website for developmental services www.dsto.com
Self Advocacy & Family Groups

Join us for the following presentations:

From Children's to Adult's services at 10:00 – 11:00

An overview of the similarities and differences between services and programs for children and adults, plus tips on how to plan for the transition from the children's service system to the adult service system.

From Family Home to New Home at 11:30 – 12:30

Personal stories about the decision to move from the family home to a new community home. Panelists will talk about how they knew it was time, how they decided what type of community setting they wanted, how they made it happen, and more.

From One Generation to Another at 1:00 – 2:00

Personal stories about transferring responsibility for the care and well-being from parents to the next generation, plus tips on things to consider and do in preparing for the transfer of responsibility.

For more information call Carol Krause –
Consumer Engagement Facilitator 416-968-0650 x 2268
CNIB located two streets north of Eglinton



Passport Initiative Cont'd

school six years ago, has chosen to attend a community day program two times per week, engage in social recreation activities with his peers and learn to use the TTC.

With this additional funding, a total of 299 individuals are now receiving Passport in the Toronto region. Family Service Toronto accepts applications, and will schedule an appointment to meet with applicants and their families to discuss and review their application.

All applications forms may be sent to:

Family Service Toronto
Attention: Passport Initiative
700 Lawrence Avenue West, Suite 498
Toronto, ON M6A 3B4

HAADD Cont'd

His support circle negotiated funding in the new region of the province and hired and began training a team of support workers to accompany Kris as he creates a new life in his new community.

Kris continues to work at the farm five days a week, accompanied by his sister Dara most days. His parents still come to share Fridays at the farm with Kris and his other friends. Without the bursary from HAADD, there may not have been an opportunity for Kris and his sister to try their dream on for size. And THAT is what HAADD's Joseph Umbrico bursary programme is all about!

We are presently developing a new website to be up and running this spring but in the meantime inquiries may be emailed to bkomitogottlieb@gmail.com

