

The Canadian Deafblind and Rubella Association (Ontario Chapter) Inc.

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Mission Statement

The Canadian Deafblind and Rubella Association (Ontario Chapter) Inc. is a non-profit organization committed to enhancing the lives of people who are deafblind through support, services, awareness, recognition and Intervention.

Vision Statement

All people who are deafblind will live rich meaningful lives.

Does your child who is deafblind require specialized equipment or emergency Intervention hours?

CDBRA Ontario is proud to say that we have funding available to current members for these situations.

If you are interested in more information, please download the “Request for Funding” application form from our website or contact Cathy Proll at the office.

The Accessible Channel (TACTv)

The Accessible Channel (TACTv) is a national descriptive, closed-captioned HD digital TV specialty service for the vision impaired and hearing impaired that is inclusive of the whole family. More than 700 films, countless television programs and entertainment will be accessible to all cable subscribers on The Accessible Channel.

Beginning January 29th, all cable and satellite companies across Canada will have TACTv on their basic digital packages. Our broadcasting partners currently include Rogers Media, CTV Globemedia, Canwest, CBC, Audiovision, CTS, and the Channel Zero group. By regulation, TACTv will be part of the basic digital package of TV programming offered by all distribution companies — cable systems and satellite direct-to-home services.

The station will acquire the most popular TV programs from conventional and specialty TV services and foreign-rights holders. All TACTv programs will be described and captioned so that at any time of the day they can be enjoyed by a viewer with low or no sight or low or no hearing — a world first. And viewers can access TACTv on the regular family TV set, allowing viewers with a disability to enjoy TACTv broadcasts in the company of their family, their friends, their neighbours and other acquaintances.

Conference Proceedings

The proceedings from the “Co-Creating Communication with Persons with Congenital Deafblindness Conference” that took place in Leeds, England in Oct. 2008 are now available on the web. The link is below:

[www.sense.org.uk/Resources/Sense/Help and Advice/Proceedings of Leeds Conference 2008 Final.pdf](http://www.sense.org.uk/Resources/Sense/Help%20and%20Advice/Proceedings%20of%20Leeds%20Conference%202008%20Final.pdf)

Thought for the Day

“When one door of happiness closes, another opens, but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one that has been opened for us.”

Helen Keller



The Monitor

Spring 2009

A bi-annual publication of
The Canadian Deafblind and Rubella Association
(Ontario Chapter) Inc.

Some of the stories included:

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International Connections by Sue Hall, Director of Training and Consultation

CDBRA Ontario has recently had the privilege of hosting three of our international colleagues. For three days in February, members of our management and supervisory teams met with Inger Rodbroe, Director of the Danish Resource Centre on Congenital Deafblindness, learning about the assessment process and tools that are currently in use in the Nordic countries. Inger is the co-author, with Karen Andersen from Norway, of the document “Identification of Deafblindness” which was used as the starting point for our training sessions. These sessions covered topics such as “Congenital Deafblindness and Identification”, “Sensory Assessment”, and “Assessment of the Sensory and Cognitive Capacities”. The entire group felt that our training had not only been informative and inspirational, but had also set the stage for some future development within the organization.

A short 4 weeks later, CDBRA Ontario welcomed Knut Johansen, Director, and Gunnar Vege, teacher, from the Andebu Deafblind Centre in Andebu, Norway. The theme for their presentations was focused on the varied ways that videotapes can be used within Intervention services. As well, Knut shared the history of the development of services for people who are deafblind in Norway, and the shift to a more person-centered set of values that guides those services today. Videotapes have become an integral part of the tools used by staff at Andebu to enhance their interactions with their residents. Gunnar's lecture set the stage for a presentation of a video he co-created entitled “Traces”. The premise of this video is that people who are deafblind and their Intervenors can share experiences through movement and touch, which leave traces in the memory and which can become a shared language between the two. “Traces” is an incredibly powerful and moving video. In addition to demonstrating a very individualized and motivating way of developing communication, it emphasized again just how effective videotaping can be at capturing those elusive moments of shared interactions! Knut and Gunnar spent an additional day with the management and supervisory teams, guiding us through an analysis of some video footage of a couple of our consumers. This experience will be invaluable as we move forward in our efforts to incorporate the use of videos as an important tool in our service delivery.

Needless to say, our visits with Inger, Knut and Gunnar were very successful and we thank them for so graciously sharing their time and expertise with us. While we undoubtedly learned a great deal, it was also very gratifying to be able to return the hospitality they had shown to the CDBRA Ontario Study group last year!



(Back Row L to R): Shawn Voisin, Cathy Pascuttini, Inger Rodbroe, Denise Drake, Sue Hall, Lisa Jackson. (Front Row L to R): Diane Wilcock, Leah Cameron, Cathy Proll.

Charitable
Registration #:
10684 5159 RR0001

My Mentoring Experience by Karen Esmail, Board Member and Consumer

My instructor from the Literacy Program for Deaf-Blind Adults at CNIB asked me if I was interested in volunteering as a mentor with a deaf-blind child at a school. I was not sure I wanted to because I never had experience mentoring with anyone.

I got a volunteer job as a mentor at a school in 2006. I met a deaf-blind child and her Intervenor. I was surprised to see some teachers and two Intervenor I knew. They were very happy to see me. I was excited that I was able to stay around them.

I introduced myself to a deaf-blind child. She asked me why I was there. I explained to her about mentoring. She did not understand what mentoring was. It was a big challenge for me to make her understand.

After a few visits, an Intervenor told me that my mentee did not want to use her Intervenor. She used an interpreter but she missed following what an interpreter signed. So, I explained to my mentee that she was very lucky to have a large print screen computer, CCTV and Intervenor to help her understand; things that I did not have when I was young. I had very little help. She accepted to let an Intervenor stay with her.

One day at my visit, my mentee had her lunch time with me. She asked me if I was deaf-blind, I said yes. She asked if her school friends were deaf-blind and I said no, but she and I were the only ones in the school. She was a little bit confused. Another day, I decided to bring my own Intervenor and showed her how I use my Intervenor. I explained to her that she has an Intervenor just like mine. Then we left.

Four months later, finally her Intervenor told me that my mentee asked her if I was deaf-blind just like her. She said yes just like me. I was delighted to know she understood her identity as a deaf-blind person because I am her role model. A mentee asked me again if she is deaf-blind same as me and I said yes indeed. That is a wonderful inspiration to me. I believe that Deaf-Blind adults can meet deaf-blind children. They will understand who they are. That is a wonderful experience for me.

In Loving Memory of Katelyn Darlene Walker Written by Julie Cooksey, Intervenor for Katie Walker Grade 6, Sir John A. MacDonald Middle School, Brampton, Ontario (June 18, 1999)

“Katie”

My name is Katie Walker
and I am no slacker.

I'm slightly different than the rest,
but I'd rather be thought of as 'unique'.
My eyes don't see the same as yours,
but mine can talk, can yours?
I may not hear all that you do,
but your tone tells me all.
I can't say words with my mouth,
but I sure can vocalize.
I go to school and love to learn,
I just take a different route.
I understand more than you think,
it just takes a little more time.
I love to laugh, smile and giggle,
It makes my Intervenor giggle and wiggle.
My family loves me, one and all,
they lift me up when I am down.
You'll see there's more to me
if you open your eyes, ears and heart.
Then you will know I have lots to offer
right from the start.
So don't feel sad for me,
I love my life and I am happy,
For I have the love of my friends and family.



November 12, 1987 - March 14, 2009

Nevada Vendors

CDBRA Ontario is very appreciative of the following vendors who sell tickets on our behalf...THANK YOU!

7 DAYS VARIETIES
808 Pape Avenue
Toronto M4K 3S7

99 MINI MART
445 Brock Street North
Whitby L1N 4H8

BARRIE MASTER CONVENIENCE
101 Dunlop Street West
Barrie L4N 1A8

BECKERS 66024
33 Stanley Street West
Bloomfield K0K 1G0

BECKERS 66026
261 Main Street
Foxyboro K0K 2B0

BIG BEE CONVENIENCE
5056 Montrose
Niagara Falls L2H 1K5

CAMBRIDGE MINI MART
550 Hespeler Road
Cambridge N1R 6J8

CAMPBELL'S CONVENIENCE
391 Walton Street
Cobourg K9A 3X4

CARNARVON JUG
Part Lot 14, Concession 13
Carnarvon K0M 1J0

CHOICE CONVENIENCE
45 Main Street North
Georgetown L7G 3H2

CLOVER FOOD
516 River Street
Alvinston N0N 1C0

DAISY MART
27 Ruth Ave, Unit #2
Brampton L6Z 4R2

GEORGE'S CONVENIENCE
#1 - 110 Ansley Grove Road
Woodbridge L4L 3R1

GREER'S VARIETY
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Sarnia N7T 3W4

HASTY MARKET
347 Lakeshore Road East
Mississauga L5G 1E6

HELEN'S CONVENIENCE
11 Strathcona Avenue North
Hamilton L8R 3B8

HILLCREST ZELLERS LOTTO
#321 - 9350 Yonge Street
Richmond Hill L4C 5G2

KANG'S LOTTO
4841 Yonge Street
North York M2N 5X2

LIM'S GROCERY
281 Pefferlaw Road
Pefferlaw L0E 1N0

MAC'S CONVENIENCE 1707
3250 Brookdale Avenue
Cornwall K6H 7A3

MR. CONVENIENCE
190 Simcoe Street
Peterborough K9H 2H7

ONE STOP VARIETY
501 Ritson Road South
Oshawa L1H 5K3

SAM'S VARIETY
228 Margaret Street
Kitchener N2H 4J5

SIDNEY MARKET
423 Sidney Street
Trenton K8V 6N6

ST. JOACHIM VARIETY
969 Highway #2, P.O. Box 27
St. Joachim N0R 1S0

STRATFORD SMOKE PLUS
VARIETY
#8 - 925 Ontario Street
Stratford N5A 6W5

TICKET HUT
1255 The Queensway
Etobicoke M8Z 1S1

TOLLGATE MINI MART
255 Tollgate Boulevard
Waterloo N2L 4M3

TOTTENHAM SMOKE & VARIETY
55 Queen Street South, Unit 18
Tottenham L0G 1W0

TOWNE CONVENIENCE
420 Durham Street
Walkerton NOG 2V0

VIC'S VARIETY
349 Kerr Street
Oakville L6K 3B7

VICTORIA VARIETY
483 Speedvale Avenue East
Guelph N1E 6J2

WELLINGTON MINI MART
297 Wellington Street East
Aurora L4G 6H6

YOUR CONVENIENCE
899 Grand Marais Road East
Windsor N9X 3H9

ZELLERS - APPLEBY
2000 Appleby Line
Burlington L7L 6M5



to the Dance Club, received her certificate in babysitting and attended the Kindness Club at the local humane society. She attends swimming and has movie nights.

Although choosing EC Drury School for the deaf was the hardest decision I ever had to agree with, Stephanie assures me that she is happy. We know that it was the right decision. Our community could not provide the education and social life that Stephanie so deserves! Stephanie has exceeded so many obstacles and I am so very proud of the young lady she has become.

Switches

Parents, are you looking for a creative way to bring assistive technology into your child's life?



Niall Brown, an Intervenor with CDBRA Ontario, has created a new website called Creative Expressions (www.creativeexpressionsweb.ca) as a way of sharing information with families should they want to try some switches with their children and do it inexpensively. To contact Niall with any questions about his site or how switches work, please send him an e-mail at niallbrown@creativeexpressionsweb.ca.

We are also happy to include several additional links to websites that provide information on switches and other adaptive equipment:

- www.inclusivetlc.com – look under the software for the Choose & Tell stories, and the SwitchIt! Series is also very good.
- www.adaptivation.com – a good site for different switches and the Bright Box tactile seems quite interesting for different populations as well.
- www.lindaburkhart.com – another site which deals in simplified technology and ideas of how to create your own switches and handles to hold them.

Another site which can be downloaded onto your computer for a visual stimulation with music for students who like to work at a computer can be found at www.synthesoft.com/cdspro/cdspro.htm.

Meaghan's Volunteer Job by Ashlee Rollins, Intervenor

Meaghan Severs has been volunteering at the John Noble Home in Brantford weekly for one year, taking various residents for walks around the grounds.

As the weeks went by, Meaghan began developing a bond with a resident named John, who would wait every week for Meaghan to take him for a walk. After each walk John would give Meaghan a banana.

John was eventually moved to a different floor; now Meaghan will go get John, take him to the "nook", a lounge area, and visit with him. Meaghan really looks forward to her visits each week with John, and it's nice to see their bond grow.



Editor's Note by Paul Nobes, Fund Development Coordinator

Hello everyone,

This issue of The Monitor will be my last, as I am leaving CDBRA Ontario at the end of May to move to the beautiful island of Cape Breton in Nova Scotia.

It has been my sincere privilege to be part of such a wonderful organization for eight years, working with a very dedicated and talented group of individuals and getting to know many of you well through our various programs and Parent Conferences.

Thank you all for your kindness and the lessons you have taught me; I will keep them close in my travels.



A Gift from Boehringer-Ingelheim (Canada) Ltd.

On November 18, 2008 CDBRA Ontario was the beneficiary of a very generous gift of \$1,250 from Boehringer-Ingelheim (Canada) Ltd., a leading Canadian health care company. This donation was the result of a quarterly employee draw at the company.

CDBRA Ontario is very grateful to Michelle Zimmer, Paula Penney and Cheryl Stephenson for all their support in obtaining this gift. Thank you as well to the staff of Boehringer-Ingelheim for believing in our mission and our work.

Newsletter Naming Contest

We need a new name for our print newsletter...and we would love your help! "The Monitor" name needs a makeover, a name that will stand out and help promote the organization and the work we do in Ontario.

To enter the contest, please send an e-mail to paul.cdbraontario@rogers.com by Friday, May 15, 2009 and include your suggested new name for the newsletter along with a short message explaining why you feel your proposed name would be a good fit.

The winning entry will be selected by a group of staff members; the winner will have their newsletter name printed on the next issue scheduled for the fall, have a short article written about them in the next issue, as well as receive a certificate and a complimentary CDBRA Ontario shirt!

2009 Parent Conference

The planning for the 2009 Parent Conference, CDBRA Ontario's 10th annual event, is well underway.

We would greatly appreciate any suggestions that you might have to make this year's event a memorable one.

If you have any ideas of activities or speakers you would like to see please e-mail them to Sue Hall, Director of Training and Consultation at sue.cdbraontario@rogers.com by Friday, May 29, 2009.

Registered Disability Savings Plans (RDSPs)

Excerpt taken from letter received from Madeleine Meilleur, Minister of Community and Social Services

Once available from the federal government, RDSPs will help families save for children and adults with disabilities, and will help people with disabilities plan for their future needs.

To demonstrate our government's support, we intend to fully exempt RDSP assets, contributions and withdrawals when determining financial eligibility for social assistance. This means that having an RDSP would not make people ineligible to receive social assistance.

To further benefit Ontario Disability Support Program recipients, we are increasing the amount that they can receive as a gift or payment from a trust to \$6,000 a year.

To establish an RDSP, a person must first qualify for the federal Disability Tax Credit (DTC). The federal government assesses eligibility for this tax credit on a case by case basis. The federal government will offer matching contributions as grants and bonds. To learn more about RDSPs, or find out how to qualify for the DTC, you may visit the Canada Revenue Agency's website at www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tx/rgstrd/rdsp/menu-eng.html or call the general inquiry line at 1-800-959-8281 (TTY service 1-800-665-0354).

We will have social assistance regulations in place to support the changes we have proposed in the near future. Once this happens, detailed information will be posted on my ministry's website at www.mcass.gov.on.ca/mcass/english/pillars/social/what/rdsp.htm. Our government is committed to supporting hope and dignity for individuals and families who rely on Ontario's social assistance programs.

Let's Celebrate Allison by Shari Ernst, Training Assistant

Allison Kimmerer has been attending the Canadian National Institute for the Deafblind Literacy Program for almost a year now. I am grateful that I have had the opportunity to work with Ali and attend classes with her. Her positive attitude and willingness to make a solid effort excelled throughout the year as she worked on numeracy, reading, writing, and communication skills.

Each year in September CNIB holds a Learner Celebration to provide an opportunity for the students to come together and celebrate all the accomplishments achieved the previous year. I am pleased to announce that Allison received an award for Goal Attained as well as 2 Goal Certificates: one for Basic Counting Skills to 30 and the other for Reading Milestones Red Level Books 1 – 3. "She is a joy to work with – she is always happy and cooperative – a teacher's dream student." (Lee Garret, CNIB Literacy Program Coordinator).

I am confident that Allison will continue to excel within the program, reaching beyond her future goals. Congratulations Allison – CDBRA is proud of you!



Allison receives her certificate

Intervenor Program Update by Betty Jean Reid, Intervenor Program Coordinator and Ontario Board President



Greetings from the Intervenor Program,

2009 has started as a busy and different year for the program. We have a January intake of students for the first time. We had expected a small group of 10 but have 20 students registered! We are fortunate to benefit from the government "Second Career" program and several people have been able to apply to our program and be supported by this new initiative. We will blend our September 2009 group with this new group by next September and hope to have a very large third semester!

Our "Introduction to the Field" is a first semester course and enables students to hear guest speakers - Intervenor, graduates and consumers, plus visit many agencies. We thank everyone for their support in helping us introduce this wonderful profession to new students. This past fall we once again were pleased to have Joan Mactavish accept our invitation to speak to the class. Students are always so interested in her life, her book and her experiences.



This year they all posed to have this photo taken with Joan.

Most of our second year class attended the 3rd Intervenor Training Symposium in Niagara Falls. We re-arranged our curriculum and classes to accommodate their attendance. This is a wonderful networking opportunity and we are pleased that the majority were able to take advantage of this.



Children's Corner by Michelle Zimmer, Children's Services Consultant and Parent



Michelle Zimmer

I would like to introduce myself to the members of The Canadian Deafblind and Rubella Association. I am Michelle Zimmer, wife for 12 years to a very supportive husband Ralf Zimmer and mother to three wonderful children; Andre who is 10, Steffen who is 7 and Chanelle who is 3.

I worked in sales and marketing for 10 years for Cadbury Chocolate; I loved my job with Cadbury—who doesn't love chocolate? However, after my son Steffen was born with CHARGE syndrome, I realized that he needed me to be the key person in his life to coordinate all of the therapists, doctors and Intervention that he needed. I left my career with Cadbury and began my life-long career as full-time mother and Intervenor to Steffen.

When Steffen was born, I was overwhelmed; within three hours of his birth, he was diagnosed at Toronto Sick Kids Hospital. I was told that my baby was deaf and blind, and maybe more. I thought what else could there be. I began a journey to seek help. Ralf and I started learning American Sign Language (ASL) and joined play groups and classes with Steffen. I found that it was a full-time job trying to figure out where to get help. So many organizations! Where do we start? Over the last 7 years, I have researched where to get funding, services and help for Steffen. I am passionate about getting the best services and helping my son live his life to the fullest.

I am thrilled to join the CDBRA as Children's Services Consultant. My goals are to help children who are deafblind live their lives to the fullest, and to get the services and Intervention they need. I also want to help parents figure out how to get the support they need to help their children and families. I know how difficult it can be having three children and trying to give all of them the attention and support they need, as well as keeping a marriage strong and finding time to do it all!

As Children's Services Consultant, I will be conducting an in-depth study of the services that the CDBRA Ontario currently provides to children who are deafblind and their families. I will then make recommendations for revisions and additions to those services. I will need your help and support to help identify gaps in services available to your children. I am looking forward to meeting everyone and discussing your thoughts and ideas about children's services. Please feel free to contact me at any time at michelle.cdbraontario@rogers.com.

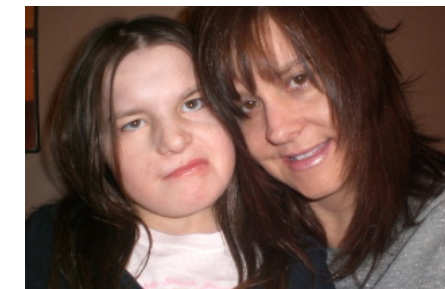
Profile: Stephanie Laframboise by Jo-Ann Laframboise, parent

Stephanie is a wonderful 12-year-old little girl. Stephanie was born with CHARGE syndrome January 1997. Her features include choanal atresia, colobomas in both eyes, right facial palsy, charge ears and deafness.

Stephanie was enrolled at the age of 4 in a regular English catholic school until she was 10 years old. The support provided at her school was sufficient in her early years. However, when Stephanie turned 10, I felt that Stephanie needed more. The school system in our community of Sturgeon Falls struggled to keep up with her learning needs and a "Life skills" program was suggested at that time. Stephanie needed to be in an environment that specializes in teaching a deaf child to be able to meet her academic needs.

The Provincial School for the Deaf was investigated. Stephanie and I, along with Grandma Viv and her Consultant from Deafblind Resources, W. Ross McDonald School attended EC Drury School for the deaf in Milton, Ontario for a visit. Stephanie was then given the choice to attend the "signing school" or to stay in her regular school. Stephanie made the decision to attend EC Drury School for the Deaf in September 2007. This was the hardest decision to accept in my life as Stephanie would have to fly to EC Drury on Sunday Evenings and fly home on Friday afternoons. Stephanie made the transition quite easy. Stephanie loved the idea of speaking to her peers and teachers directly and not through someone else. She felt independent for once in her life.

Stephanie can now read and write. She uses MSN like any other 12 year old. Her computer skills have improved tremendously. She is less frustrated. Stephanie loves residence life. She is an outgoing, social little girl. She belongs



Stephanie with her mom Jo-Ann