

# Prime Timer Focus

Spring/Summer 2009

## Two Brand New Publications Created By CILT

### **ACCESS Health**

ACCESS Health is a new quarterly newsletter brought to you by CILT's Peer Support Program, in which we hope to bring you current and pertinent news, tips and resources pertaining to health issues. As many of us know, living with a disability can be challenging, but as the years go by, and our bodies start to change, facing new challenges brought upon us by the aging process can be, at times, a harsh reality.

Everyone, whether or not they have a disability, has to face the aging process. However, when one already has a disability, the aging process can present changes in our bodies that we haven't been used to in the past, creating even more difficulties including increased pain, fatigue, muscle and joint stiffness, weight gain, infection, etc. All of these, coupled with our already existing disability, can make everyday life seem, at times, almost unbearable.

The topic of Aging and Disability seems to present an unfamiliar front to researchers. For instance, when one googles "aging and disability", much of the existing research discusses disability as a result of the aging process—for instance, arthritis, rheumatism, dementia, etc. rather than on the challenges one faces in the aging process as someone with a pre-existing disability.

This is what we hope to do in ACCESS Health. If there are any topics that you would like us to address, we want to hear from you. We feel that our time would be much better spent on addressing issues that are of concern to you, as adults living with disabilities, facing the aging process. Please feel free to contact us at (416) 599-2458, extension 227, by TTY at (416) 599-5077 or by email to [peers@cilt.ca](mailto:peers@cilt.ca).

## **“SCHOOL YEAR CHRONICLES: A Personal Collection of Your Child’s School Year Memories”**

The PDN is very excited to bring you our fourth parenting publication, “SCHOOL YEAR CHRONICLES: A Personal Collection of Your Child’s School Year Memories”, an exciting and innovative way of capturing your child’s special childhood school moments and achievements; while providing tips for you, as parents with disabilities, on parenting issues including how to educate your child about your disability, how to breastfeed when you are a mother with a disability and facing post partum blues.

It can be purchased through the Centre for Independent Living in Toronto, for only \$20.00 a copy (in a binder), or \$15.00 (without binder). So please, tell your friends, family, peers and colleagues about the “SCHOOL YEAR CHRONICLES: A Personal Collection of Your Child’s School Year Memories”, and give them the opportunity to enjoy their children’s school year memories as well.

CILT intends to inform as many service providers and parents across the community as possible about SCHOOL YEAR CHRONICLES. We are hoping that it will be a great success.

If you would like to find out more, please contact us at CILT. We are very excited about this new publication, and we hope that you will be as well.

## **AODA Update: MCGUINITY GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF AODA’S EFFECTIVENESS - Review; June 15, 2009.**

On Friday, June 12, 2009, the McGuinty Government announced the appointment of Mr. Charles Beer, a former Liberal Member of the Legislative Assembly, to conduct an Independent Review of the AODA’s effectiveness. Below we set out the Government’s news release, the Government website’s Frequently Asked Questions on this announcement, and a short biography of Mr. Beer, taken from the website of his consulting firm, “Counsel Public Affairs.”

Section 41 of the AODA requires the Government to appoint this Independent Review of the AODA’s effectiveness four years after this legislation went into operation. That four year mark was reached on June 13, 2009, the day after the Government announced the appointment of Mr. Beer.

The Independent Review must “undertake a comprehensive review of the effectiveness of this Act and the regulations and report on his or her findings...”. The report of the Independent Review may, among other things, “include recommendations for improving the effectiveness of this Act and the regulations.” The Independent Review must consult the public, and in particular, the disability community. It must render a report to the Legislature. That report must be made public.

We are particularly pleased that the Government’s announcements indicate that the Independent Review is expected to deliver its report by January 2010. This provides the public, including the disability community, needed time to take part in this Independent Review, while making sure that its final report is available for full implementation well before the 2011 provincial election.

We are also pleased that in his first public statement on this Independent Review, Charles Beer has emphasized the need to see how things have been progressing, with a view to recommending ways to strengthen the AODA. He stated: “I look forward to consulting with a variety of people across the province to gauge, and ultimately strengthen, the effectiveness of the legislation.”

The key issues that this Independent Review must address are these: Is Ontario now on schedule for becoming fully accessible for all people with physical, mental or sensory disabilities on or before 2025, as the AODA requires? If not, why not? What new changes are needed to the AODA itself or to the Government’s implementation of it to ensure that Ontario is on schedule for reaching the goal of full accessibility by 2025?

The Frequently Asked questions web page says that part of Mr. Beer’s task will be to devise a strategy for the repeal of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2001. From the perspective of the AODA Alliance, at this point, the repeal of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2001 is quite premature and would be counterproductive. This Independent Review should instead consider how the Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2001 might be better used to help achieve the shared goals of that law and the Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005.

The AODA Alliance looks forward to working together with Charles Beer to ensure that this Independent Review is effective and comprehensive. We are already hard at work developing our submission to the Independent Review. We will make more information available on this over the next weeks and months.

We encourage both individuals and community organizations, who are interested in equality for persons with disabilities, to plan to take active part in this

Independent Review. We have already recommended to the Government that it is very important for the Independent Review to hold advertised, open, accessible, province-wide public forums to gather input from the public including the disability community. These forums must not be “invitation-only.”

Send us your feedback, including your ideas for recommendations that we should include in our brief to the Independent Review, to: [aodafeedback@rogers.com](mailto:aodafeedback@rogers.com)

### **Stop the Violence (PAREMOS LA VIOLENCIA)**

The “Stop the Violence, Paremos la Violencia Intrafamiliar” initiative is a response to needs expressed by key stakeholders and services providers that specifically serve the Latin American community, that woman abuse is a critical human rights issue, which has not received sufficient attention and action.

This project will carry out a city-wide campaign that promotes women’s safety by providing information about the effects of violence and the support services available for the Spanish Community.

The Stop the Violence Campaign will build the capacity of service providers and mainly the general public to access services and supports to Latin American women in the community. As we have increased our understanding of the breath of the problem of woman abuse, we continue to hear that one of the major issues for women is lack of knowledge of resources and isolation. We know that most women experiencing abuse do not use the criminal justice system (current statistics reflect that less than 30% of women call the police) Many women particularly new immigrants women whose first language is not English do not know of community resources. This initiative will build understanding and awareness of the complex dynamics of woman abuse and will therefore also increase the ability of participating community centres, police services and supports accessible to abused women.

The "Stop the violence, Paremos la Violencia Intrafamiliar" Campaign will protect and promote women's health and safety by involving the community centre and police services in a coordinated effort to identify and address woman abuse. Essential to the prevention of woman abuse is an awareness of the pervasiveness and destructive impact of this issue on women, children and families.

Clearly, there is an urgent need to improve the response to gender-based violence in the Latin American community, particularly since many of these incidents are preventable. Culturally appropriate community Centres play a key role and have a critical responsibility in addressing the issue of intimate partner

abuse and are important members of a coordinated community response. We have notice that most women do not report abuse to the police and seek little or no help from community based services, the reality is that language barriers along with misinformation plays a key role in staying involved in high risk relationships.

### **Background Information & Research**

The Woman Abuse Council of Toronto (WACT) is organized around a network of standing committees and task groups that offer the opportunity for members to work on specific areas of interest and concern. The Committees of the Council include a number of sector-specific committees including Health, Shelter, Partner Abuse Response Programs (batterer's programs) and Support Services Cultural Issues.

The Shelter Support/Cultural Issues and Support Services Committee meets every second Tuesday of each month. Members include front-line counsellors, advocates and community workers who are working in the area of woman abuse in the City of Toronto. This committee provides an opportunity for members to identify and create ways to provide improved services that are responsive to the diversity of women's lives and to better protect women and children's safety, well-being and quality of life through enhanced coordination and accountability.

According with information shared from these agencies there is approximately a 30% increase in the number of Spanish Speaking people accessing VAW shelters in the GTA. One of the members of the Committee that provides interpreter services reported Spanish as their number one language requested, the service users of this particular agency are only victims of domestic violence.

The project will be managed by the Woman Abuse Council of Toronto. WACT is an incorporated non profit organization with a governing Board of Directors. WACT complies with all generally accepted accounting and financial management procedures.

WACT has an extensive history of collaborating with external agencies and communities; currently we have a total of 25 services providers attending the monthly meetings who have the expertise and knowledge about the diverse services provided in Toronto. Overall the project will be under the direction of a Project Advisory Committee and there is currently a team of 20 volunteers who will in addition contribute to the development and implementation of the campaign.

Membership of the Project Advisory Committee will be selected from the Shelter/Support Services Committee. This Advisory Committee will meet regularly over the course of the one year project. The Overall goals of this project are:

- To develop a social marketing campaign geared to the Spanish community called “Stop the Violence, Paremos la Violencia Intrafamiliar”.
- To raise awareness of the cycle of abuse and its impact in women.
- To provide clear and practical information about the support services available for the Spanish Community in the GTA

This project will assist women who are experiencing abuse and do not speak English, this particular barrier may have a direct impact in the fact that they are not aware of the services and options they have should they decide to leave the abusive relationship.

A total of 4 workshops will be prepared, the Project Coordinator and the Advisory Committee will develop the body of the workshop and an evaluation questionnaire that will be handed out at the beginning of each workshop and will be retrieved at the end of it. We are planning to collate and present the results in our final report.

Information will be provided to attendants about referrals to community-based agencies. This project will assist women in the community and will contribute to increase their ability to obtain support, resources and assistance without necessarily disclosing domestic violence.

1. The Campaign will be announced thru Spanish media in the GTA, including TV and radio.
2. We will develop and facilitate a total of 4 workshops at diverse community centres that currently have a high number of Spanish speaking service users.
3. The Project Advisory Committee will develop materials (pamphlets, flyers) that will be posted and handed out during the workshops and also provided at the Shelter/Support Services Committee for the agencies that are currently providing services in Spanish.
4. The Video will also be offered to agencies that currently have high numbers of Spanish Speaking Services Users.

After each workshop and the video presentation we will provide a questionnaire asking to evaluate the workshop and the information provided. The Project Advisory Committee will be in charge of collating and communicating the results to the other committee members and ensure the information is accurate and provided in the final reports

The participation of the Community Mobilization- Domestic Violence Coordinator of the Toronto Police during the workshops is ideal; the information about the role they play in the domestic violence cases is a key topic for the development of the workshops.

Partnership with several agencies who are currently attending the Shelter Committee will be naturally developed.

This project aims to provide information about domestic violence involving Spanish Speaking media under the expertise of several service providers with extensive working experience in the Social Services field. We will be closing the language barriers between the community and the already existing services; therefore, we will not be duplicating any existing services.

For more information, contact Grissel Orellana, Project Coordinator, at [grisselorellana@yahoo.com](mailto:grisselorellana@yahoo.com)

### **WANTED: Mothers With a Physical Disability**

Are you a woman with a physical impairment or disability?  
Have you become a mother within the last eight years?

If so, I would like to talk with you.

My name is Melissa Simas and I am a Master's of Social Work student at Ryerson University who lives with a physical disability. I am doing a small research study about the mothering experiences of mothers with physical disabilities.

If you would like to participate in this study please call 416-899-7178 and we will set up an interview time. The Interview will last approximately 90 minutes and will take place at Ryerson University or we can arrange a more accessible location for you. TTC tokens and light refreshments will be provided.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and the interview data will be shared only with my professor after all identifying information has been removed.

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Next Information Session dates at SCEA:

Monday, July 13, 2009 - 9:30 am to 12:00 pm

Monday, July 27, 2009 - 9:30 am to 12:00 pm

Space is limited. To sign up for a session, call:

416-396-8100 or 416-396-8101, TTY 416-396-8095

Scarborough Centre for Employment Accessibility

3478 Lawrence Avenue East, Unit C006

(Northwest corner at Markham Rd., rear of the building, near Shell Gas Station)

This Employment Ontario project is funded in part by the Government of Canada.

Email: [scea@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:scea@tdsb.on.ca) □ Website: [www.accessibleerc.com](http://www.accessibleerc.com)

## **Barrier Free B.B.Q.**

Join Us for Burgers, Hot Dogs, Salads and more...!

### **Meet & Greet:**

People with Disabilities within a Peer Support Environment!

### **Fun and Fitness:**

Boccia with Toronto Accessible Sports Council

### **Relax & Rejuvenate:**

Music and connecting with your peers

Date: July 10, 2009

Time: 5:00 - 9:00 p.m.

The Anne Johnston Health Station

2398 Yonge Street (at Montgomery)

Attendant Services Provided; Limited Space Available. Peer Support events operate under the Independent Living Philosophy. RSVP by July 8th to 416-486-8666 ext. 0

## **Settling Down in Canada...as easy as ABC**

Learn about things all newcomers should know:

Understand what is where and how to access different services  
Tips on Taxation, Financial System, Legal help, Education,  
Children-aid & many more Information on free government and community  
resources

... and one-on-one assistance on all your settlement issues

Join us at:

SCARBOROUGH CENTRE  
FOR EMPLOYMENT ACCESSIBILITY

3478 Lawrence Ave. East, Unit C006, Scarborough

Wednesday, July 15, 2009  
1:00pm – 4:00pm

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clients to become independent in Canada”

For more information, call (416) 396-9100