

The Ripple

Summer 2010



It's a Citizen Movement!

Mission

We teach people with disabilities to advocate on behalf of themselves and others. We are a united voice which promotes equality, opportunities, and inclusion for us, by educating the community about our dreams and what we can achieve.

Vision

The vision of the SRSAN is a world where:

Everyone has the opportunity to make informed choices and participate.

We can be leaders in helping people with disabilities achieve their own goals.

There is respect and equality for all.

We believe in ourselves and we can take pride in our accomplishments.

We work together to succeed in making positive changes in our communities.

On June 18, 2010, the South Region Self-Advocacy Network (SRSAN), Southern Alberta Individualized Planning Association (SAIPA) and Greensence are working together on a Citizen Walk About. The walk is about raising awareness about the groups, what they believe in and their issues. It is also an opportunity for other groups, with similar values or issues, to stand together to influence public policy and shift the power to the citizens of this city, province, country and world!

The day begins at City Hall at 10:00 am with speeches from dynamic speakers. Afterwards, we will walk side by side from City Hall to Galt Gardens showing our pride and commitment to our fellow neighbor and our community. Speakers will be at Galt Gardens as well and a barbecue will conclude the event. It will provide people with the opportunity to meet new people, have an understanding of the groups, their issues and collaborate on solutions to those issues.

When standing together, as a united movement, there is more strength or power than if we stood alone. If any other person or minority group is looking to join us in a strong citizen movement, please call Anna Olson at SAIPA for more information phone 403-320-1515; toll free 1-866-320-1518; email anna.olson@saipa.info

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Changes	Page 2-3
Self-Advocates Say...	Page 4-5
Self-Advocacy Tool Box History of Disabilities in Canada?	Page 6-7
What a song can say... Sports by Kent	Page 8
Allies Alley	Page 9
Calendar of Events	Page 10-11
SRSAN Gear Contact Us	Page 12



Changes

Kent Pedersen

Can you tell us a bit about how the disability field has changed throughout your life?

High staff turnover in the field affects my program. I wrote a letter to the mayor regarding the staff turnover and how something needs to be done to help stop this from happening. It's hard starting over and over again and having to continuously develop new relationships. It affects my progress in my program. There are very few staff left from when I started and it makes me sad to see them go.

Can you tell us what ways you feel societies views have changed throughout your life?

People I meet in the community are more friendly to me and they don't ignore me. People seem more open. I'm not as lonely. It's easier to make friends with people in the community.

Where would you like to see changes occur in the disability field in the next 10 years?

I would like staff to get higher pay so that they stay a lot longer than they have been.

Where would you like to see changes occur in societies views in the next 10 years?

I want to see more people include me and take the time to talk to me.

Danielle Petersen

Can you tell us a bit about how the disability field has changed throughout your life?

There is more of a focus on my being independent. I now take the bus and walk home by myself which I didn't do a few years ago. That has been a positive change.

Can you tell us what ways you feel societies views have changed throughout your life?

I feel more accepted. People talk to me more, they used to not say hi to me or anything and now they do. I feel like I get more respect.

Changes

Where would you like to see changes occur in the disability field in the next 10 years?

I would like to get a full time job and have more support working towards that goal and have the ability to do so.

Where would you like to see changes occur in societies views in the next 10 years?

I want people to continue to talk to me and want to be friends with me and include me.

Shannon Kehler

Can you tell us a bit about how the disability field has changed throughout your life?

I have more of an opinion in the changes that may happen in my future. I feel more comfortable asking people to explain changes to me so that I can understand the changes in my life. Staff change has happened a lot. I feel like once I get to know a staff they leave and then they get a new person and I have to get to know them and start all over again. Until I know them I'm not sure if they will understand right away if I have a problem and they might not know what to do.

Can you tell us what ways you feel societies views have changed throughout your life?

I feel like I get treated with respect more. People joke with me now and are less serious.

Where would you like to see changes occur in the disability field in the next 10 years?

I would like to have a second main worker so that I have more than one person working with me in case of issues or if one person isn't there that day, and an issue comes up I still have someone to talk to.

Where would you like to see changes occur in societies views in the next 10 years?

I want to be able to have a part time job at toys-r-us or some place stocking shelves and not have anyone say no because of my disability. I don't want to just get volunteer jobs but to get a real paying job.

Self-Advocates Say...

Can you tell us a little bit about yourself?

I have been in the PDD system since before it was the PDD system which was 1991. I have spastic cerebral palsy. I grew up in Picture Butte and graduated from Picture Butte High School. I moved to Lethbridge in 1991. I am currently 36 years old and have been a self advocate all my life.

Why did you decide to be a self-advocate?

I learned a long time ago that while people will fight with me and beside me very few people will fight for me. I have to be willing to fight for myself. I have had certain conflicts within the system that provide my daily needs. I rely on AISH, Lethbridge home care and PDD and because I don't sometimes fit into the traditional mould or box of what some of these programs provide for services, that has led to some disagreements.

We know that you have been an ally for others. How did you become a voice for other self-advocates?

Basically you see someone in need of help and you help them. For example, in 2001 there was a human rights action being taken up against what used to be called the Lethbridge Handi-bus and the City of Lethbridge. Before I was aware of this action I had many disagreements with the handi-bus association. I organized a meeting of handi-bus users to get information. When I got this information at this meeting I took it to an alderman who suggested after listening that I go before the city council and do a presentation. For two hours I went back and forth with city counsel regarding handi-bus and it was a real eye opener for the city counsel. My three greatest weapons for myself or others are my vocabulary, my mind, and my will and my ammunition is my integrity. I don't have people to speak for me it's just me and honesty is the best policy. As a result when I have these disagreements or see someone in need it's becoming easy as I am suited for taking on issues related to services not only for people with disabilities but for anyone if it's doing something for victims of violence I'm willing to do that. I'll advocate for anyone who needs it.

What has been your greatest challenge or obstacle as a self advocate?

In 1991 after I moved out of my parents house I had a rather traumatic emotional break down and I became agoraphobic (the fear of open places and panic attacks). Up to that point I had always been a shy person and I still have some of that now. Because I had some personal problems as a child I didn't have a lot of friends or social outlets and I didn't develop socially like others did. In many ways people younger than I am had experiences before I did. Some I haven't even had yet now. I feel in a lot of ways that I

Am still an adolescent or young adult. The world is still new to me and I am still trying to open myself up to it. My biggest obstacles have been my fears and anxieties that I have had to live with. A barrier has been getting people interested or getting them to listen in regards to our local community. Another obstacle is the provincial government of Alberta. In my experience they don't want to hear the issues that I raise.

What has been your greatest accomplishment as a self advocate?

My greatest accomplishment is it's not really an accomplishment but when I was at a store about a year or two ago and this young gentleman wanted to say hi to me. I had never met him before but he introduced himself and wanted to say thank you. I asked what are you saying thank you for? He said for the work on the handibus. I don't do what I do for a reward or recognition but to help. It's still very nice to receive a thank you. It made my fighting feel worthwhile.

Where do you find your resources as a self advocate?

When I fight I fight dirty. So if I have a computer and a telephone I can make my voice heard. As long as I have the government right number I can get any number I want out of that. Also, talk with people you come in contact with. Others are resources.

If you could give a word of advice to other advocates what would you say?

I would say this. Do not take what people say to you at face value. Do not assume that just because something has always been done one way that that thing that you need can only be done in that way. People are not cut out of a sheet of dough with a cookie cutter that looks the same as the other cookies. We are not mass produced we are all individuals and all they have to do is say I'm here. Notice me. The self advocate is best serving themselves by educating the public.

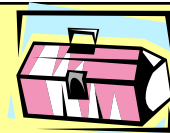
We are always looking for events or activities to put into the calendar of events. Share your information with us and we will help you get the message out.

Remember, together we are stronger!



Our contact information is on the back of this newsletter if you want to send us your information to share with others. We look forward to hearing from you!

Self-Advocacy Tool Box



Personal Empowerment

“Think about ways you can increase your personal power, such as making decisions, setting goals, liking yourself, or being more assertive. The personal power you hold is what makes you a strong self-advocate”. We brainstormed and came up with some suggestions listed below.

- Talk to others you trust
- Get to know yourself (counselling, try new things, talk to family and friends, journal/diary)
- Write goals down and make small steps towards your goal
- Self-Esteem– Join a gym, go swimming, go out with friends, develop good relationships
- Assertive– Knowledge, practise speaking in groups
- Knowledge– If you know what you are talking about people listen



Disability Awareness

“Think about ways you can increase your awareness of what it means to be a person with a disability in this country, such as learning about moral, medical and civil rights viewpoints of disability; learning about stereotypes; or learning about disability history”. Some suggestions to create awareness that we came up with are listed below. Try to come up with your own!

- Speak up
- Join up– get into a group
- Ask for help
- Protest unfairness
- Write letters to government officials
- Research what people have done in the past
- Get involved in the community– teach by being in society. Make friends
- Get employment/volunteer– show abilities
- Fundraisers– be in community
- Working on the ripple



Collective Action

“Think about ways to increase your group power by working on an issue together, such as organizing a letter writing campaign to let elected officials know what you care about.”

- There is strength in numbers– the more people the more you can get the word out
- More ideas– It is easier to brainstorm the more people you have to think about it
- People to rely on– When it gets difficult you have people to support you
- More resources– Each person knows other people who all can be useful resources for assisting the group.



Try and think of more ways to get together and fight for fairness and other issues you care about. Together we can make a change!

Resources: Advocating Change Together

History of Disabilities in Canada?

Where we've come from...where we hope to go to.

“Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, or mental or physical disability”. (15. Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms)

In 1980 the inclusion of protection for mental and physical disabilities was not included in the first drafts of the charter of rights and freedoms. Self advocacy groups and individuals fought to have this included in order to guarantee their protection. Letter writing campaigns were formed and numerous phone calls and protests occurred. Representatives were sent to Ottawa to lobby the federal government for a change. The government officials did not want to include protection for those with disabilities into the rights and freedoms act because of a fear that it would be too costly. They claimed that if they included it they would then have to change everything from phone books to buildings to make everything excess able to everyone. They feared this would bankrupt the country. The protection of disabilities was also not included due to the government not having an understanding of the experiences of people with disabilities, not understanding that those with disabilities were entitled to legal protection and being concerned about the difficulty of defining disability. January 28th, 1981 after a year of protests the announcement was made that the government had decided to include protection of disabilities in the Canadian charter of rights and freedoms.

Today, disability groups still continue to fight for changes in their communities and ultimately their worlds. Self advocates can make change occur. We just need to stand together and fight for what we believe in.

“I would like to be treated with proper respect by others in society, and feel respected by everyone and included in my society. I would like to have the right to live on my own without discrimination. I feel for all other's dealing with this same thing. I would like to see in the future that people with disabilities would have more opportunity to get a job and be able to support myself in society.”- Jasmine Pilling

<http://disabilityrights.freeculture.ca/index.php>



What a song can say...

Change- Carrie Underwood

What'cha gonna do when you're watching TV.

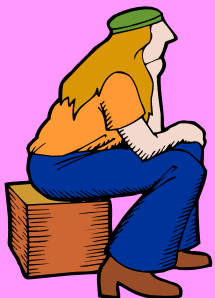
And an ad comes on
Yeah you know the kind
Flashin' up pictures of a child in need

For a dime a day you can save a life
Do you call the number reach out a hand
Or do you change the channel call it a scam
Or do you tell yourself

Oh the smallest thing can make all the difference
Love is alive
Don't listen to them when they say

The worlds so big it could break your heart
And you just wanna help
But not sure where to start
so you close your eyes
Send up a prayer into the dark

Oh the smallest thing can make all the difference
Love is alive
Don't listen to them when they say
You're just a fool
Just a fool
You believe you can change the world



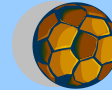
Shannon Says: "This song means that you can change the world by doing small things by thinking of big things to change it".

Sports by Kent

Exercising keeps us healthy and makes us feel great. Now that it is summer it is much easier to get out and get that much needed exercise our bodies desire.

There are many summer sports you can participate in such as:

- ◆ beach volleyball
- ◆ badminton
- ◆ tennis
- ◆ basketball
- ◆ baseball
- ◆ soccer,
- ◆ water fights
- ◆ street hockey
- ◆ frisbee
- ◆ flying kites
- ◆ swimming



If cost is an issue for you, you can exercise by walking or running or you can get together with friends and see if you have any sports equipment available to you. Another fun thing to do is make a sports team with your friends and get together to play a game against each other. All you need is a group of people looking to have fun outdoors that can come out and play. I challenge you to get out and have fun and be healthy this summer.

- Kent Pedersen

If you don't like something change it; if you can't change it, change the way you think about it.



~Mary Engelbreit

Allies Alley

What would be useful resources for you in trying to support people in the area of self advocacy?

It would be useful to have a better idea of what the people we serve are looking for in regards to supports needed and what their short term and long term goals are so that we can work with them better on a day to day basis – in summary, Janis Dibben



Learning more about the individual, like gathering more information to help us out. Knowing about more resources in the community so we know what is available and who are our allies that we can work with. ~Karen Gleed

I think that we need to be continuously searching for new ways to advocate for ourselves on issues in our lives and then we will learn what works and doesn't work so that we can help others. Creativity is very key in this field and we need to find new resources through what is available to us such as the internet and talking to other allies so we can see what has worked for them in the past.

Talking to the individuals we support and seeing where they think we are lacking in support would be an amazing way to better learn what areas to focus on for the future. We have resources all around us and need to implement these resources. ~Alison Napper

How could agencies better support you in developing these resources?

It would be nice to have a list of other organizations and programs we can use with our individuals to find new and creative ways to help them achieve their goals. ~in summary, Janis Dibben

Network more amongst each other. Have more agency friendly relationships to help our individuals and have more open communication with residential staff. ~Karen Gleed

I think that agencies need to encourage staff to look within the community for new activities and always be asking the individuals we support what they would like to learn and assisting them in finding a place that can teach them if we are unable to teach them ourselves. Each staff comes with different ideas and when we come together and brainstorm we can come up with new resources to try. ~Alison Napper



Calendar of Events


Summer 2010

Schedule of Events

- June 1 - SAIPA/SRSAN fundraising BBQ. SAVE-ON-FOODS (1112 - 2 A Avenue North, Lethbridge) 11:00 am - 5:00 pm; hot dog & pop \$2.00; smokie & pop \$3.00. All proceeds go to help SAIPA and SRSAN.
- June 4 - Speak Out 12 at Olympic Plaza, Calgary 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm. Remember to wear red. For more information look at www.proudtobedisabled.com
- June 5 - Ride for Dreams - 10:00 am at Pavan Park. Lethbridge Therapeutic Riding Association sponsored horseback ride followed by beef on a bun supper. Phone 403-328-2165
- June 7 - Alberta Committee of Citizens with Disabilities is holding a community consultation to identify barriers to health and medical services for Albertans with disabilities. 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm at the Royal Canadian Legion Hall (324 Mayor Magrath Drive). To register, contact Melita at melita@accd.net or call 1-800-387-2514
- June 12 - Target Hunger city wide fundraiser. This city wide food drive consists of volunteers from local LDS churches dropping off per-printed bags at every household in the city to encourage community members to help restock the shelves at our local food banks. For more information call 403-320-8779
- June 13 - Rick Hansen Wheels in Motion. Exhibition Grounds 12:00 pm - 4:00 pm. An event promoting awareness for spinal cord injuries and accessibility for all. Event includes a wheel chair challenge, walk and 5 KM run. Register for the wheel chair and walk challenge at wheelsinmotion.org and the 5 Km at lethbridge@cpa-ab.ca. For more information contact Mike or Dylan at 403-327-7577
- June 17 - SRSAN retreat. It is a time for SRSAN members to renew and refresh! 11:00 am-4:00 pm. If you are interested in attending, please contact Anna Olson 403-320-1515; Toll free 1-866-320-1518 anna.olson@saipa.info
- June 18 - Citizen Walk About. Come join Southern Alberta Individualized Planning Association, South Region Self-Advocacy Network and Greenence for a citizens movement gathering. You will hear dynamic speakers and have a walk about in your community to create awareness on important issues that affect all citizens and to show your commitment to your fellow neighbor and community. 10:00 am - 1:00 pm starting at City Hall with speakers then walking to Galt Gardens and ending up with speakers as well as a BBQ by M&M Meatshop. Hamburgers & pop \$4.00
- June 21 - National Aboriginal Day. Galt Museum & Archives 11:00 am - 1:00 pm. Celebrate National Aboriginal Day with the opening and blessing of the Medicine Wheel garden at the Galt. A partnership event with Aboriginal Council of Lethbridge. Lunch included. Free admission all day!
- June 24 - Persons with Developmental Disabilities South Alberta Board Open Meeting. 1:00 pm-3:00 pm Lethbridge Centre Conference Room #1. If you are planning to attend, please call 403-381-5458 or email Leah Bruder leah.bruder@gov.ab.ca to confirm date, location and time.

JUNE 2010						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 SAIPA/SRSAN Fundraising BBQ Hunger Awareness Day	2	3	4 Speak Out 12	5 Ride for Dreams
6	7 Identifying barriers focus group	8	9	10	11	12 Target Hunger
13 Wheels in Motion	14	15	16	17 SRSAN Retreat	18 Citizen Walk About	19
20	21 National Aboriginal Day	22	23	24 PDD Board Meeting	25	26
27	28	29	30			

July 2010							AUGUST 2010						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Canada Day	2	3	1	2 Civic Holiday	3	4	5	6	7
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30	31				



“Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is not path and leave a trail”

Harold R. McAlindon




SRSAN GEAR



1 T-Shirt for \$15
or
2 T-Shirts for \$25

Hoodies for \$35

Lots of colors and sizes!



“Freedom is not worth having if it does not include the freedom to make mistakes. “

Gandhi



Tell Us What You Think!



UPDATE

Write:
527 - 6 Street South
Lethbridge, Alberta T1J




Call Me!

Phone: (403) 320-1515
Toll Free: 1-866-320-1518
Fax: (403) 320-7054



E-mail
→ Me ←

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The Ripple was created with pride for you by the following Self-Advocates:

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Shannon Kehler
Danielle Petersen