

April  
2010

# posAbilities

Empowering people with developmental disabilities

## Quarterly News

### Welcome to posAbilities

I am pleased to announce that on Monday, March 15, 2010 our Board of Directors voted in favour of adopting a new name and logo for our organization: posAbilities. As you may know, the name Mainstream Association for Proactive Community Living (MAPCL) was chosen in 1998, when four independent service providers merged into one. By 2008, it was clear that our organization had grown and developed its own culture. We knew that our name was long, difficult to remember, and did not fully reflect the scope of the work that we do. Shortening it to MAPCL didn't help those outside of the Community Living sector understand us either. We began to consider a change.

In 2009, a committee consulted members, employees and persons served to get input on the matter. Of those who responded, the majority asked for a shorter and more memorable name and updated logo. Many helpful comments and key words were submitted for us to think about. In the end, we chose to focus on two words: positive and abilities. These words truly reflect how we

approach the work that we do and people whom we support. We see abilities before limitations in all that we do. This change process is anticipated to take about 6 months, and is being implemented with our existing administration resources. There will be no changes or disruptions to our programs or services.

We are confident that our new identity will help us raise our public profile, which in turn can help us attract new community partners and funding sources. Ultimately, our goal is to continue to provide innovative and responsive services to the people we support.

Please visit our new web-site [www.posAbilities.ca](http://www.posAbilities.ca) and send your feedback to the Agency Profiling Committee through [info@posAbilities.ca](mailto:info@posAbilities.ca). We would like to hear from you!

**Fernando Coelho, CEO**

On March 11, 2010, Shannon proudly represented the peoples of the Musqueam First Nation at the University of British Columbia Paralympic Games torch relay. A large group of family and friends gathered at the community celebration to cheer on their favourite torch bearer and to celebrate her achievement. (Photo courtesy of Joshua Curran.)

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### CONTEST: Name our Newsletter! Submitted by the Agency Profiling Committee

Feeling creative? posAbilities needs a new name for the quarterly newsletter.

We are offering a super prize to the person who submits it: A \$50 Gift Certificate for products or services offered by Ladybug Art Gardens! Check out the Spring Catalogue at [www.posAbilities.ca](http://www.posAbilities.ca) to see what you could win! This contest is open to everyone. Please submit your entry(ies) to the Committee care of Head Office by mail, or email [info@posAbilities.ca](mailto:info@posAbilities.ca). Contest closes at 4:30 p.m. on Monday, May 3, 2010.

## Your View

### Vera Anderson, Parent

The Employment First Conference with Dale Dileo was EXCELLENT! Dale is an inspiring speaker with a powerful message. In the field of employment, one needs to know the community, the work world - the employers and their needs: but most importantly the clients - their strengths, weaknesses, likes and dislikes. Time spent here is invaluable, it leads one to match a client's strength with an employers need. The most important aspect of this process is fostering a good relationship...a relationship in the community, in the work world, and on the job site. It is the quality of that relationship that determines if the job is kept, acceptance found and people valued.

## 15th Annual Stone Soup Festival

Saturday, May 8, 2010

12 noon - 5:00pm

Napier Greenway, East Vancouver

Join the Ladybug Art Gardens team as they represent their social enterprise at this fun-filled celebration of spring, food, culture and the environment. Artists, farmers and crafters offer free soup, entertainment and more!

For more event listings visit the website.

## Transforming Organizations to Employment First Cultures and Services



**Sara Hoshoooley, Executive Assistant**

On March 15 and 16, Mainstream Association hosted 130 participants from across BC to hear Dale DiLeo speak about employment programs for people with disabilities, this event was supported by

Community Living BC. Dale is a widely sought after speaker, consultant and author who is a well known advocate for those with disabilities. Guests in attendance included parents, front line staff and management. Through presentations and interactive question and answer periods, Dale assisted participants in exploring and developing strategies in shifting day programs to employment first organizations. The main areas that Dale addressed were organizational change (new roles and responsibilities), transforming day programs, human resources and training, partnerships; and policy, advocacy and funding. These concepts brought together a new way of thinking about employment for those with disabilities. Dale told many success stories and reinforced his belief that all people are employable, it just takes some creativity to find our special gifts and talents are and then apply those to meaningful and paid work. Feedback from the event was very positive and enthusiasm for this initiative continues within head office and our programs. For further information, please visit Dale's website: <http://www.trninc.com>.

# COMMUNITY LIVING

## Pride: One man's story

The Provincial Networking Group Inc. (PNGI) is a Terrace-based employment agency that provides Community Living Services. The agency recently sponsored a province-wide contest to encourage people to share their employment success stories. From over 30 entries, eight stories were chosen for publication, serving as inspiration to other self-advocates and families. Raman Dhesi's story entitled "Pride" was selected, and it highlights his personal experience working at Playland. An initial print run of 2,000 copies is anticipated in early April. For more information about this publication, please contact Chris Arnold, Clinical Director, Provincial Networking Group Inc., Phone: 250-635-4479, email: [pngi@telus.net](mailto:pngi@telus.net)



## An urban agriculture and community development initiative

**Cinthia Pagé, Project Coordinator**

How can we resolve the problem of isolation experienced by persons with developmental disabilities? One can choose the more traditional approach of facilitating connections between individuals and existing networks (e.g. teams, clubs, classes, etc.), or choose something innovative and new. The "Can You Dig It" initiative falls into the second category, as persons with developmental disabilities create and coordinate their own local social networks through gardening. Over three years, the project plans to start 24 vegetable gardens at sites owned, rented, or leased by posAbilities, resulting in community inclusion for 72 persons with developmental disabilities.



Can You Dig It's mission is to empower persons with developmental disabilities and expose the community to their skills and abilities. The project sees persons with developmental disabilities as invaluable social and economic assets: persons with gifts, abilities, and contributions to make. By creating and coordinating meaningful, self-sustaining micro-networks within the community, they contribute to eliminating prejudice, and then become the binding agents bringing people together with the ultimate goal of bettering the community, fostering a true sense of belonging!

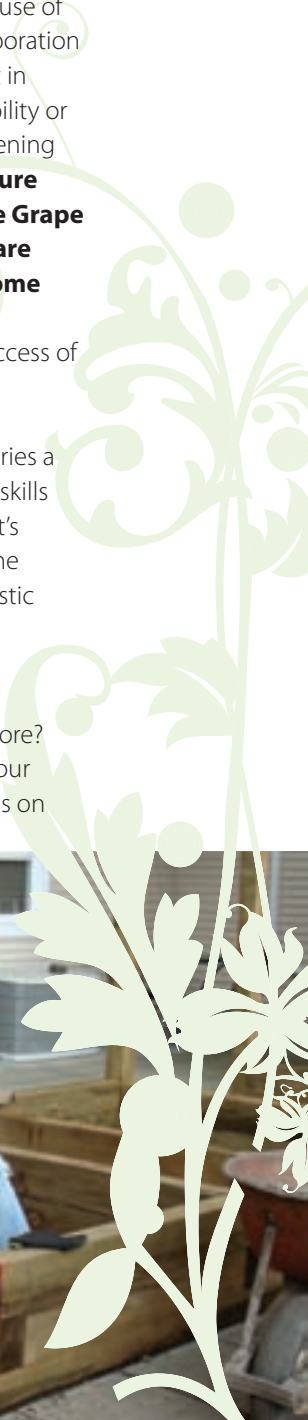
In addition to physical and psychological benefits for participants, the project also promotes environmentally responsible and sustainable land-use. Along with providing healthier nutritional options and improving food security for our communities, the project also contributes to the community by giving back a percentage of the harvest to food depots. Giving back is an important part of this initiative because it helps erase common misconceptions of persons with disabilities as being the ones in need. Here, persons with disabilities

are on the giving end of social and economic transactions instead of on the receiving end.

Such life-changing experiences become possible because of our numerous partners and supporters. Through collaboration with the Ladybug Art Gardens, raised beds will be built in gardens to ensure easy access to people with low mobility or in wheelchairs; participants will also be trained in gardening and woodworking. A special thanks to **BC Social Venture Partners (BCSVP), The Vancouver Foundation, The Grape Box, the City of Vancouver, United Family Child Care Providers Society (UFCCPS), West Coast Seeds, Home Depot, Vancouver Coastal Health, and the City of Burnaby** for their support and commitment to the success of the project.

Six gardens are being started in 2010. Each of them carries a special story and involves people with different sets of skills and experiences to share. You can follow Can You Dig It's adventures on their website, to be launched soon. In the meantime, you can visit a blog initiated by an enthusiastic member of one of the Can You Dig It gardens, a <http://elgincommunitygarden.wordpress.com/>.

Do you want to participate? Would you like to know more? How about replicating the Can You Dig It initiative in your community? Please contact posAbilities for more details on how to get involved!





# INTERNAL MUSINGS

## The Quality Beat:

David Livingstone,  
Continuing Quality Improvement Officer

## R.A.D.A.R... Manage Your Own Behaviour!

Right now, hey it's your tomorrow  
Right now, c'mon it's everything  
Right now, catch a magic moment, do it  
Right here and now... it means everything  
Van Halen

The world surrounds us with sights, sounds, smells, things, and other people... and then there are our own internal noises such as, "If I stop at the store on the way home from work, what will I buy?", and "I wonder if the Canucks won?"

To be fully present at any time is to be attentive to what is important or necessary given the context or situation we are in. While we are working we are only as effective as the degree to which we are fully present. The Mandt System provides us with a tool to help facilitate this: **R.A.D.A.R.**

**Recognize: The situation**  
**Assess: Yourself, others, the environment**  
**Decide: What you are going to do**  
**Act: Do it!**  
**Review: What happened?**

...straight forward right? Not so much. More often than not in a situation where a person's anxiety has been raised they are quick to assess others and the environment... but not themselves. The Mandt System says, **assess yourself first**. Only then can you affirm your emotions and **manage your own behaviour!** Only then can you respond rather than react.

Relationships are vital, dynamic, complicated, wonderful, frustrating, enlightening, et cetera. We are expected to work on enhancing healthy relationships with everyone we work with... it starts with you. Keep your R.A.D.A.R. on: assess yourself first.

## Time for Spring "Greening!"

Rosemary Schwarz, Green Committee



With eager anticipation we embrace a new season and invite everyone's participation in our Green Crusade. Our primary focus at this time is finding creative, fun and engaging activities to enlist the participation of persons served. Being green creates confidence in ones ability to make a difference by: using natural resources, saving money, reducing waste and building a strong sense of community through information sharing. Look for opportunities at home, in programs and in the community.

We invite you to become a Green Ambassador. Join the Green Committee and help us spread the word about coming events like the Annual Clothing Swap in April and the Green Exhibition in June. See our web-site calendar for full details. We also need your help to gather information about what others are doing to improve, protect and maintain the health of our planet.

Remember: Green is, as green does! Send in your Green Tips today and contact us if to become a Green Ambassador at [greenpowercommittee@posAbilities.ca](mailto:greenpowercommittee@posAbilities.ca)

### Spring Quick Tips:

- Pet shedding? Good for the compost.
- Spring-cleaning? Vinegar works wonders on wood, windows and disinfects and softens cloths when used as a fabric softener.

## Save the date: First Annual Wellness Fair

**Save the Date!** *posAbilities* will be hosting our First Annual Wellness Fair at Heritage Hall, 3102 Main Street on Thursday September 16, 2010 from 11 am to 7 pm. The Wellness Fair is intended for our staff members, their families, and the public. Our goal is to bring many unique vendors and exhibitors together under one roof to combine our resources in sharing a healthier and happier future. We will also have performances and guest speakers to keep guests entertained while they explore the fair. If you have a business or are part of an organization that focuses on health and wellbeing and would like to set up a booth, please contact Sara at [shoshooley@posAbilities.ca](mailto:shoshooley@posAbilities.ca).

**posAbilities**

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*"The only way of finding the limits of the possible is by going beyond them into the impossible."*

Arthur C. Clarke