

CLT's Peer Links

Volume 6 Issue 2
January 2005

Happy New Year!

Happy 2005 to everyone. I hope you enjoyed the season's festivities, and I wish good health and happiness for you all.

As we begin a new year of Peer Links, I invite you to share any personal stories, ideas for future issues, article submissions are also welcome.

If you are interested in sharing news, a personal story, an anecdote, a poem or anything else, please contact Nancy at (416) 599-2458, extension 27.

Peer Links has always been a place where we share with others news about what's happening in the community - linking consumers to resources. However, it would be nice to hear from our consumers about ideas or issues that are on their minds.

Activate Your Winter at Birchmount Bluffs!

Birchmount Bluffs Neighbourhood Centre offers access to integrated and adapted living and learning programs, and persons are free to participate at a level suitable to their ability and choice:

Chair Tai Chi: enjoy the practice of low impact movements in this gentle wellness class that starts January 10, 2005, Mondays, 11:45 am to 12:45 pm. It runs for 10 weeks and the cost to join is \$10.

Fitness and Wellness Classes: the centre offers access to integrated and adapted fitness/wellness classes. Classes include yoga and Aqua Fitness, yoga in the hot tub, low impact fitness classes.

Stress-Reduction Group: practice easy to learn breathing and relaxation techniques that reduce stress in a safe, supportive group setting. Takes place every third Tuesday of the month from 2 pm to 3:30pm (free of charge).

Barrier-free Access to Swimming Project: this program begins Tuesday January 25, 2005 and offers attendant-supported access to an integrated lane swim. Runs to early June. Every Tuesday from 12 noon to 3:30pm. For more

information, call (416) 690-8804 (free of charge).

Other programs offered through Birchmount Bluffs include information and referral services, informal counseling and advocacy and workshops on disability-related topics. The winter session begins the week of January 3, 2005 and registration began on December 6. Annual membership is \$4.00 and subsidies are offered to offset program fees for those who face financial barriers.

Location: Birchmount Bluffs Neighbourhood Centre, 93 Birchmount Road (at Kingston Road). For more information, please contact David Meyers at (416) 396-7606.

OMOD Geneva Park Winter Weekend

Geneva Park Winter Weekend **January 28-30 and February 25-27, 2005**. The Ontario March of Dimes invites consumers to join new and old friends at the YMCA's Geneva Park Conference & Resort Centre in Orillia.

Come out, relax and have some fun in an accessible environment. Vacationers are encouraged to participate in and enjoy the great Canadian outdoors.

Indoor and outdoor activities such as dog sledding, ice fishing, arts and crafts, and socializing provide an unforgettable wintertime experience.

Attendants will be available on site to provide attendant services as required. For more information, please call Indra Parsan at (416) 425-3463 x360.

SCCC Swim and Social Program for 2005

Every Monday and Thursday, 6pm to 8:30pm the Swim and Social Program meets - a social-recreational program for adults with physical disabilities. It is free of charge to anyone with a disability who is a member of Scadding Court Community Centre.

Scadding Court Community Centre is wheelchair accessible with ramps and an elevator. Their Swim and Social program includes:

- an elevator chair that lowers you into the water
- coffee, tea and fresh fruit before and after the swim
- the opportunity to meet new people and make new friends.

Please note that this program cannot provide one-to-one care. Participants should make arrangements for attendants if they require such care/assistance. For more information, please contact Walter Quan or Mohsin Khattak at (416)

392-0335.

Youth Weekend Retreat

A Life Skills Weekend Retreat program offered in partnership with:

- Ontario March of Dimes, Recreation and Integration Services,
- Ontario March of Dimes/York Region Brain Injury Services, and
- Bloorview MacMillan Children's Centre.

When: Friday, February 18 to Sunday, February 20, 2005

Where: The Salvation Army Jackson's Point Conference Centre (in Jackson's Point near Lake Simcoe)

Who: Youth with Physical Disabilities and/or Acquired Brain Injuries ages 16- 25 years

Cost: \$150

For more information or an application package, please contact:

Julie Osbelt

Bloorview MacMillan Children's Centre

(416) 425-6220 x3298

Josbelt@bloorviewmacmillan.on.ca

Susan Jones Angela VanAlstine

Ontario March of Dimes Ontario March of Dimes

(905) 773-7758 x225 Provincial Office

sjones@dimes.on.ca (416) 425-3463 x298

avanalstine@dimes.on.ca

Participants and their parents must attend an INFORMATION NIGHT on...

Wednesday January 12, 2005

7:00-8:30pm

Bloorview MacMillan Children's Centre

Bloorview site, 25 Buchan Court, Toronto

Epiphany Design

Epiphany Design's mission is to create innovative ways of giving people freedom and self-reliance. Epiphany Design offers attractive, specialized clothing designed for people with limited range of motion and/or muscle control. Epiphany Design's products give people with mobility disabilities solutions to the day-to-day challenges of life and leisure. They are functional and effective, bringing new options to people's lives, colourfully and stylishly. For more information about Epiphany Design's products, visit www.epiphanydesign.ca or contact Joe Ross, proprietor at 416-410-2243 or toll-free at 1-888-410-2243.

Peer Educator/Community Trainer wanted!

1. ARE YOU A WOMAN WHO WAS BORN IN ANOTHER COUNTRY OR IS A NEWCOMER TO CANADA?
2. DO YOU SPEAK ENGLISH AND ONE OF THE FOLLOWING LANGUAGES?
3. ARE YOU INTERESTED IN HELPING WOMEN WHO ARE NEW TO CANADA, LEARN MORE ABOUT WOMAN ABUSE?
4. DO YOU SPEND LOTS OF TIME TALKING WITH LOTS OF WOMEN IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

If you answered YES to ALL of these questions, we want to talk to you!

Education Wife Assault is currently looking for 7-10 newcomer women interested in volunteering as "Peer Educators and Community Trainers."

As a Peer Educator/Community Trainer you will receive training on woman abuse; have the opportunity to participate in existing EWA training activities; and share what you have learned.

Child-care, refreshments and TTC will be provided.

If you are interested, please contact Beryl Tsang at (416) 968-3422 x23. TTY (416)968-7335 or btsang@womanabuseprevention.com by FEBRUARY 5, 2005.

We welcome immigrant women with disabilities, who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing, and who identify as lesbian/bi/gay/trans or queer.

Pfizer Finds Heart Risk With Celebrex

Associated Press, December 17, 2004

NEW YORK - Pfizer Inc. said Friday it has found an increased risk of heart problems with patients taking its painkiller Celebrex, a drug that is in the same class as the Vioxx, which was pulled from the market in September because of safety concerns. Pfizer said the increased risk was found in one of two long-term cancer prevention trials, while the other trial showed no increased risk.

The National Cancer Institute (news - web sites), which was conducting the study for Pfizer, suspended the use of Celebrex after finding that patients taking 400mg to 800mg of the drug daily were found to have a risk of 2.5 times greater of experiencing heart problems than those who weren't. A separate cancer study found no increased heart risk with patients taking 400mg of Celebrex per day.

Pfizer was conducting the trials as part of an effort to find a new application for the drug. The news sent the stock of the giant pharmaceutical maker plunging in early trading on the New York Stock Exchange (news - web sites), where its shares were down \$5.61, or more than 19 percent, at \$23.37.

Both Celebrex and Vioxx, which is made by Merck & Co., are a type of drug called cox-2 inhibitors, which have become popular because of their effectiveness in treating the pain of arthritis and other ailments.

Earlier this month, the Food and Drug Administration (news - web sites) said it was adding a warning to the labels of another Pfizer drug, Bextra, warning of potential heart problems associated with the use of Bextra in people who have recently had heart bypass surgery. Bextra is also a cox-2 inhibitor type of drug.

Celebrex is currently approved for use in the United States for the treatment of arthritis and pain.

Ten Restaurant Chains Commit to Improving Accessibility

The Ontario Human Rights Commission today announced that another ten restaurant chains have voluntarily committed to a process that will eliminate barriers for customers with disabilities. They include: Burger King, Coffee Time Donuts, Harvey's, Kelsey's Neighbourhood Bar and Grill, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Montana's Cookhouse and Milestones, Pizza Pizza, Red Lobster, Taco Bell and Timothy's World Coffee. The Commission is still negotiating similar commitments with another eight chains.

Chief Commissioner Keith Norton stated, "I am very pleased that these chains have agreed to work towards improving the accessibility of their facilities and services for customers with disabilities. Their actions indicate responsible corporate citizenship."

The Commission also announced that it has launched an investigation against another chain, Select Sandwich. In order to be able to investigate, the Commission has to initiate a formal complaint. The Commission has attempted to work cooperatively with Select Sandwich in the same manner as it has worked with other chains. Although Select Sandwich has not as yet responded to the Commission's requests, the Commission hopes for a positive resolution.

Commenting on the Commission-initiated complaint, Mr. Norton stated that, "while the Commission favours a voluntary and cooperative approach, we are serious in our resolve to remove and prevent barriers for persons with disabilities," adding that, "accessibility is a sector-wide responsibility - it requires a systemic resolution to a problem that persons with disabilities have been facing for far too long."

Under subsection 32(2) of the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Commission can initiate a complaint. The Commission will investigate and then prepare a written report of its findings. If no settlement is reached, the Commission will then decide whether to refer the matter to the independent Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario. No such decision has yet been made.

Following the release of its report on restaurant accessibility earlier this year entitled, *Dining Out Accessibly*, a total of 17 chains have now agreed to respect the following five commitments.

1. Develop an accessibility policy and customer complaints procedure;
2. Review and identify accessibility barriers across corporate-owned and franchised premises;
3. Develop a standardized accessibility plan for future locations;
4. Develop a plan for existing facilities and begin removing barriers; and
5. Monitor progress toward achieving accessibility and report back to the Commission in one years' time.

In April of this year, the Commission secured commitments from Country Style Donuts, McDonalds, Pizza Hut, Starbucks, Subway, Swiss Chalet and Tim Hortons to eliminate barriers for people with disabilities.

Information on similar commitments with another eight chains will be made available once negotiations are complete.

François Larsen, Director
Policy & Education Branch
416-314-4532

Afroze Edwards
Sr. Communications Officer
416-314-4528

Latest Update of CILT's Accessible Restaurant Directory

In keeping with the spirit of the Independent Living philosophy, the Centre for Independent Living in Toronto (CILT) Inc. has compiled an Accessible Restaurant Directory to provide consumers with disabilities with options for dining out at wheelchair accessible restaurants in the General Toronto Area.

CILT's Diner's Club has been enjoying the cuisines of various restaurants since the spring of 1990. All of the restaurants listed in the directory have been visited by the Diner's Club and have been rated by the members as accessible. In order to rate each restaurant, members are asked a variety of questions including the following:

- is the entrance ramped or on ground level?
- Are the washrooms accessible - do they have grab bars?
- Were the staff accommodating?
- Did you have to wait long for your food?

In addition to wheelchair accessibility, there are many other factors that we look at such as cleanliness, quality of food, price range, location and size. After taking all of this information into consideration, the restaurant is given an overall rating of poor, fair, good or excellent.

The Accessible Restaurant Directory is designed in a simple, user-friendly format. Restaurant locations have been divided into four geographical regions: **north west, north east, south west** and **south east**, using Yonge - Bloor/Danforth as boundaries. Each restaurant is listed by region. Under each region, restaurants and cuisines are indexed in alphabetical order.

As the Diner's Club continues to dine out, new restaurants are added. The directory is updated twice a year. The latest revision has just been published. The directory is available at a cost of \$5.00 per copy. To purchase a copy, or to find out more about the Diner's Club, please contact the Peer Support/Volunteer Coordinator at (416) 599-2458, extension 27.

Consumer Attendant Roster (CAR) Online

What is the Consumer Attendant Roster?

The Consumer Attendant Roster is a free, interactive and participant driven web-based system designed to build employment relationships between consumers and attendants.

Consumers can post employment opportunities for attendants or browse the database of attendants seeking employment.

Attendants can post their resumes/profiles and search employment opportunities posted by consumers or employers.

Who can use the Consumer Attendant Roster?

The Consumer Attendant Roster helps to match job-seeking **attendants** with **consumer/employer** job openings for attendants.

- An **attendant** is a person who is going to provide physical assistance for activities of daily living under the direction of a person with a physical disability.
- A **consumer** is a person with a physical disability who requires physical assistance with activities of daily living and is able to self-direct the assistance.
- An **employer** is an individual or organization offering work to people as attendants.

How to use the Consumer Attendant Roster?

1. Go to CILT website at www.cilt.ca
2. Click "**Attendant Services**" on the Home Page and then
3. Click "**CAR Online**" on the Attendant Services page.

All participants in CAR must register first.

For Consumers/Employers

- After you register or login, you can create, edit, and cancel your job ads for attendants. You can search for profiles (resumes) posted by attendants.

For Attendants

- After you register or login, you can create, edit, and cancel your profiles (resumes). You can search for job ads posted by consumers.

Other services offered by PIC (Project Information Centre):

- PIC is the centralized point of access for individuals who are applying to Attendant Service projects and programs operating in the city of Toronto.
- PIC provides information and referral for housing, homemaking, and personal support services in the GTA.
- PIC maintains an Online Directory of Attendant Service projects located throughout Ontario.

For enquiries about CAR online or about other services offered by PIC, call (416) 599-2458, ext. 34; email pic@cilt.ca; or visit www.cilt.ca.

Barbra Schlifer Offers Two New Groups

A Group for Women who have Experienced Partner Assault - Closed Group

Location: Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic

Facilitator: Tina Bhinder

Day: Thursdays

Time: 1:00- 3:00pm

Length: 14 weeks

Dates: April- June, 2005

Description: A group for women who have experienced abuse in their intimate relationships; to provide a safe and supportive environment where women can explore the impact of violence on their lives, and to discover ways to move beyond the abuse. Some topics to be discussed include:

- defining abuse
- managing stress
- "How could this have happened to me?"
- healthy ways of coping
- dealing with the temptation to return to the abuser
- healthy relationships
- self-esteem
- dealing with feelings

- letting go
- self-care

Open Group for Women Survivors of Trauma

Facilitators: Allyson Gilbert and Nicole Biros

Location: Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic

Day: Friday

Time: 2:00-4:00pm

Length: 6 weeks, ongoing

Dates: February 4, 2005 - April 22, 2005

Description: An introductory group for women who have experienced trauma. Information about referral sources, psycho-education around the impact of trauma and emotional support for current life situations. Participants will receive information about how different community agencies may address their needs. Participants will be given the opportunity to develop self-care practices and learn various methods of healthy coping.

***If you are interested in participating in either of these two groups, or if you would like more information, please call Nicole Biros at (416) 323-9149 x234.

Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic is a free counseling, legal, interpretation, information and referral service for women who are survivors of violence. You can check out their website at www.schliferclinic.com.

United Nations International Day of Disabled Persons

The United Nations International Day of Disabled Persons is an annual day of observance, held on December 3, with the aim to build a better understanding of the needs, rights, talents and contributions of over 600 million citizens with disabilities throughout the world.

This year's international theme was "Nothing About Us Without Us." In celebration of the day, the Canadian Association of Independent Living Centres held their 3rd annual national kick-off event in Ottawa and broadcasted it live over the Internet.

CILT invited its members and volunteers to join staff to celebrate the day by

watching the live webcast together from our office in Toronto. We had a large turnout and the event was a great success!

If you weren't able to participate in this year's celebration but would like to see the webcast, you can view the archived version by logging on to CAILC's (Canadian Association of Independent Living Centres) website at www.cailc.ca. Click on "International Day of Disabled Persons" on the homepage and follow the links.

Access2Entertainment

The Motion Picture Theatre Associations of Canada and the National Advisory Council of Disability Organizations have developed a program that will provide discounted admission to the support person accompanying a person with a disability to member movie theatres across Canada.

Application for the Access 2 Entertainment Card must be verified by a Registered Health Care Professional as defined in the application form or by presenting a copy of an authorized client identification card from a recognized disability service provider (for example the CNIB client identification card) and the applicant must be a client/patient of the authorizing health care practitioner/service provider.

Participating Theatre Chains:

Famous Players

www.famousplayers.com

Rainbow Cinemas

www.rainbowcinemas.ca

Cineplex Galaxy LP

www.cineplexgalaxy.com

Magic Lantern Cinemas

www.magiclantern.ca

Empire Theatres Capitol Theatres (Yellowknife)

www.empiretheatres.com

Theatre Near You

Landmark Cinemas (Burnaby, Surrey, New Westminster, BC)

www.landmarkcinemas.com

Terms and Conditions

- The application form must be submitted by a person with a disability or a legal guardian on his or her behalf.
- The applicant must be identified as having a disability by a registered health care professional or recognized service provider and he/she must be a client/patient of the authorizing health care professional/service provider.
- The applicant must present the Access 2 Entertainment Card along with personal identification at the movie theatre Box Office when purchasing his or her own movie ticket.
- The person with a disability and support person must attend the movie together.
- The discounted admission fee for the support person will be free or no more than \$3.00. Prices may vary from theatre chain to chain.
- This program is administrated by Easter Seals / March of Dimes National Council on behalf of the Motion Picture Associations of Canada. Please allow 4 to 6 weeks for processing of your application and delivery of your Access 2 Entertainment Card.
- This card shall be valid for a period of 5 years from date of issue after which a renewal application form must be filed with Easter Seals / March of Dimes National Council.
- Misuse or abuse of this card shall result in the immediate termination and confiscation of the card and its privileges.
- These terms and conditions are subject to change without notice under the authority of the Motion Picture Theatre Associations of Canada and the National Advisory Council.

Peer Links is also available on audiotape.

Articles on products, agencies or services are for information only and are not meant as endorsements.

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and may not reflect the views of CILT.

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