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Revised April 2026



## Welcome to Aspire Richmond!

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Aspire is a community living organization. We serve and support people with developmental disabilities and their families. We are here to share some of your journey as you grow, learn, struggle, and laugh together with family and friends.

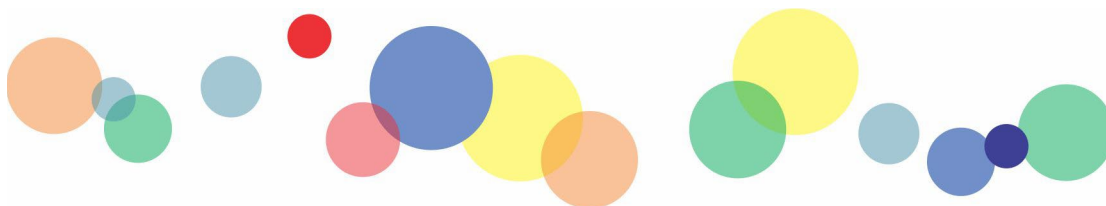
You will meet many others on your journey: friends, staff, volunteers, and other families. We hope you will take part in the community network that is Aspire.

This handbook will help you understand:

- Who we are and how we started
- What we do and what we believe
- Our policies on privacy, rights, advocacy, health and safety, and service quality
- What to expect from our programs

We believe that having the right information helps you make good choices.

Please take time to read this handbook and keep it nearby—you might want to refer to it later.



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# Who We Are

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Aspire is a non-profit organization that follows the rules of the B.C. Societies Act. We offer programs and services in the community for people of all ages with different abilities, and for their families.

The people we support are of all ages and have a wide range of abilities and circumstances. Some people live at home with their families and some live in homes supported or operated by Aspire. Some people have serious health care needs or other challenges as well.

We believe everyone has a right to be part of their community, feel valued, and be accepted for who they are. If families are well supported, then people within those families will be too.

We offer many kinds of help and resources to meet the needs of each person and family.

Aspire is made up of the people we support, their families, and others who believe in building an inclusive community. We follow a Constitution and By-laws that explain how we run things—like choosing our Board of Directors, holding annual meetings, and reporting on our finances.

Most of our funding comes from the provincial government. We also receive money from program fees, donations, and fundraising. Government ministries help decide who qualifies for services and, in some cases, they manage the waitlists. We'll talk with you during the intake process about how long you might need to wait for support.

## Our Vision, Mission and Values

Our Mission, Vision and Values guide our programs, activities, and decisions. They remind us, every day, of why we do what we do.

**Our Vision:** Thriving, connected, happy lives.

**Our Mission:** From infancy through adulthood, we support people with developmental disabilities to define, discover and advocate for their self-determined goals, passions and happiness.



We do this by:

- Amplifying the voices, needs and desires of the people and families we support.
- Treating all people with kindness, dignity and respect.
- Providing flexible programming and services that respond to the changing needs of individuals and families.
- Building the most inclusive, equitable, safe and diverse organization possible.
- Creating accessible conversations, events and spaces to inspire, educate and bring communities together.

Our Service Values are:



#### RIGHTS

supporting the rights of people with disabilities to full and equal citizenship



#### FAMILY-CENTRED

strengthening the importance of the family role



#### PERSON-CENTRED

recognizing the diversity of each person with unique plans and personal support



#### INCLUSION

supporting people to belong in all parts of community, including social, financial, spiritual life, and more



#### CHOICE

learning people's preferences, hopes and dreams, interests and decisions that define their life in small and big ways.



#### MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS

helping to grow the number of family members, friends and others in a person's life



#### GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

supporting the ongoing development of skills, abilities, and talents of each person



#### ADVOCACY

protecting the rights and interests of people and families



#### COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY

working with communities to welcome and include all people



#### LIFE LONG SUPPORTS

assisting people and families through the natural lifecycle

## Our Organizational Values are:



**MUTUAL TRUST**  
be sure of the reliability  
of people and systems



**RESPECT**  
the value and dignity of all is upheld  
by listening to and recognizing each  
other's contribution and opinions



**OPENNESS**  
freedom to share opinions and  
ideas without fear of punishment



**RESPONSIVENESS**  
planning for different  
situations and outcomes



**FAIRNESS**  
people are treated equitably



**CONTINUOUS LEARNING**  
offering ways to improve  
one's own work and the  
work of the team

We want to support you and your family to live the life you want – to fully take part in our programs and in the Richmond community.

## Our Philosophical Approach

### Person and Family Centred Practice

Your Life, Your Choices - At Aspire, our staff, caregivers, and volunteers are here to help and support you—but we know this is your life. Everything we do is respectful of the rights of individuals we serve. We support families to make your own decisions and choices, even when that means taking risks, changing your mind, or making mistakes. We are here to walk beside you, not to take over. Think of us as your partners, helpers, and guides—ready to support you in the way that works best for you.

### Planning

We help create personal plans for the people we support. These plans might include:

- A care plan to guide staff or caregivers in how to best support you or your family member
- A person-centered plan that focuses on your goals, dreams, and what's important to you

We believe planning works best when you and your family are involved. Your ideas, choices, and goals are at the heart of the process, and we're here to support you every step of the way.

## Supporting Families

We know that when we support someone, we're also supporting their family. Families often know their loved ones best.

Families can include:

- Immediate family
- Extended family
- Close friends and support networks

Families may need different kinds of help at different times in life. We're here to provide support, share helpful information, and connect you with other families.

If we can't offer the support you need, we'll help you find another organization that can.

## Celebrating Diversity

Richmond is a diverse community, with people from many different cultures, backgrounds, and life experiences. At Aspire, we celebrate and value this diversity.

We welcome people of all:

- Cultures, races, and religions
- Ethnic backgrounds and places of origin
- Abilities—both physical and intellectual
- Sexual orientations and gender identities
- Economic, social, and personal experiences

Here's how we support diversity and inclusion:

- We listen to many voices when making decisions
- We hire staff who reflect our diverse community
- We train our team to provide respectful, culturally aware services
- We translate some materials into different languages
- We work to keep our organization free from discrimination and harassment

- We make sure everyone has fair access to our services

Everyone deserves to feel welcome, respected, and included—and we’re committed to making that happen.

## How We Began

Aspire began like many community living organizations in B.C.—with parents who wanted better services for their children with developmental disabilities, close to home.

In the early 1980s, a group of parents in Richmond came together to form the Richmond Society for Special People. Their first program was after-school care for children and youth with special needs.

Over time, we grew and added more services. In 1988, we joined the BC Association for Community Living (now called Inclusion BC) to connect with other organizations across the province.

Since then, many important changes have shaped who we are:

- Large institutions for people with developmental disabilities were closed in B.C.
- New community-based options were created to support people in their own communities
- Services became more personalized, offering more choice and flexibility

Offering supports for people in their home community is still important to Aspire today. We continue to grow, listen to families, and build high-quality services using the best available knowledge and practices.

## Our Board of Directors

Aspire is guided by a volunteer Board of Directors. The Board is elected by our members each year at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and includes family members of those we support, self-advocates and other community members.

The Board’s role is to:

- Protect and promote Aspire’s vision, mission, and values
- Provide leadership and direction for our programs and services
- Make sure Aspire is doing its best for the people and families we support

To help with its work, the Board has special committees, including:

- The Executive Committee
- The Finance Committee
- The Inclusive Education Committee

## Our Staff and Volunteers

Aspire’s Board of Directors gives overall direction, but the day-to-day work is managed by our Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

The CEO is responsible for:

- Hiring staff
- Managing the budget
- Running programs
- Building relationships with families, staff, funders, and others
- Creating policies for daily operations
- Reporting to the Board

Our staff report to the CEO and are the people you’ll see most often in our programs. Many of them are part of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE). They are supported by our volunteers, and in some programs, by contracted caregivers.

Everyone—staff, volunteers, and caregivers—follows a Code of Ethics. This means you can expect to be treated with respect, dignity, courtesy, and fairness. And you can trust that our policies and expectations are followed.

An Organization Chart of Aspire’s leadership and staff is available at [www.aspirerichmond.com](http://www.aspirerichmond.com).



[Resources on the  
Aspire Richmond  
website](#)

# What We Do

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## Community Inclusion

At Aspire, we believe that everyone has the right to be part of their community—to participate, contribute, and feel like they belong. Helping people be included in their community is one of our main goals. We support individuals and their families or support networks to make this happen.

In all our programs, we:

- Focus on community inclusion
- Use person-centered planning to set goals based on each person’s interests
- Create activities that are meaningful and tailored to each individual
- Help people find ways to get involved, make friends, and give back to their community

Our staff and contractors plan activities that meet people’s interests. We want everyone to take part in community life.

## Advocacy

Advocacy means standing up for your rights and helping you get the support you need. We believe that everyone deserves a good life and a chance to be fully part of their community—and we’re here to help make that happen.

Advocacy can include:

- Going with you to meetings (like at schools or other agencies)
- Helping you understand and access community services (like health care)
- Supporting you in finding resources or talking to decision-makers
- Working with you to improve services and create positive change

We also help you and your family build your own advocacy skills, so you can speak up for yourself and support others.



Aspire promotes public education and awareness, including events during Community Living Month in October. These activities help families and the community learn more and become stronger, more confident advocates.

On a larger scale, Inclusion BC supports individuals, families, and organizations like Aspire. They help with:

- Advocacy and networking
- Conferences and training
- Sharing information and resources
- Public awareness and lobbying for change

Advocacy is one of the most important things we do—and we're proud to stand with you.

## Supporting Self-Advocacy

Self-advocacy means standing up for yourself and your rights. The self-advocacy movement is happening around the world – people with developmental disabilities are speaking up. People are taking leadership as self-advocates on issues that matter to them. Leaders in the movement talk about self-determination. This is the right to control your own life and make your own decisions.

Self-advocates have helped bring big changes in B.C., like:

- Moving from institutions to community living
- Changing how we talk about and describe people with disabilities
- Creating easy-to-understand information
- Helping shape the kinds of supports and services available

There are self-advocacy groups across B.C., including one here at Aspire! These groups:

- Share ideas and support
- Organize training and speaking events
- Work together to create change
- Have fun and make new friends

We encourage youth and adults with developmental disabilities to join our self-advocacy group and be part of the movement.

Aspire also supports families in helping their loved ones build self-advocacy skills.

We promote public education and awareness, including events during Community Living Month in October. These activities help everyone learn more and become stronger advocates.

At the provincial level, Inclusion BC supports advocacy for individuals, families, and organizations like Aspire. They offer:

- Conferences and training
- Information and resources
- Support for self-advocacy groups
- Public awareness and lobbying efforts

## Planning

Everyone is unique. We all grow and learn at our own pace, with different strengths, needs, and dreams. Families are unique too—with their own cultures, values, and experiences.

At Aspire, we use Person-Centred Planning to support individuals and families. This means:

- We focus on your strengths, interests, and goals
- We work with you and your support team to create a plan that fits your life
- We celebrate who you are and help build a vision for your future

Depending on your needs, you may have more than one type of plan. Together, these make up your service plan—and no two plans are exactly the same.

Some plan types include:

### Person-Centred Plan

A Person-Centred Plan is a personalized document created with your input—and, when possible, with help from your family and support network. It's designed to reflect your needs, preferences, and dreams, and guide the services and supports we provide.

Your plan helps you:

- Set goals for your future
- Explore your interests
- Create a clear path to reach those goals

Before we create your plan, we take time to get to know you—this is called the discovery process. We encourage families, friends, and professionals to be part of the planning. We'll help make sure everyone can participate in a way that works for you.

A Person-Centred Plan is created within 3 to 6 months of starting services at Aspire and it is reviewed and updated at least once a year. We keep a copy of your Person-Centred Plan and, with your permission, share it with others who helped create it.

Person-Centred Plans follow a variety of formats, depending on what Aspire services you participate in:

- The F-Words Framework is used in Children Services
- PATH is used in Adult Services and for youth transitioning to Adult Services
- Lifestyle/Gateway Planning is used in Adult Services
- Vocational Plan is used in Employment Services

All of these plans lead to an action plan, or what we call measurable goals to help you live the life you want. These goals may be related to:

- Reaching developmental milestones
- Recreation and hobbies
- Education and learning
- Relationships and social life
- Work or volunteering
- Home and living arrangements

## Care Plan

A Care Plan is a document that explains the help and support a person needs in their daily life. It's made just for you and includes important details like:

- Emergency contact information
- Your daily routines and personal preferences
- Support for daily activities (like eating, bathing, dressing)
- Help with getting around in the community
- Any behavioral supports you may need

The Care Plan helps our staff understand how to support you in the best way, every day. It is made before you start receiving services at Aspire and it is reviewed and updated at least once a year, or sooner if your needs change.

## Health Care Plan(s)

Some individuals may need extra help with their health. A Health Care Plan is created for each serious or complex medical need. Medical Professionals are involved in creating Health Care Plans and they may include:

- Medical procedures
- Training for staff or caregivers
- Emergency instructions
- Details about the person's health needs and supports

Examples of Health Care Plans are:

- Nutrition Plans
- Guidelines for Medications
- Seizure Plan
- Allergy Plan
- Asthma Plan
- Bowel/Bladder Plan
- Or other Plans related to acute or chronic conditions

Health Care Plans must be ready before services begin at Aspire. They are reviewed and updated every year, or sooner if the person's health changes. They help keep individuals safe and ensures they get the care they need every day.

## Other Reports or Plans from Professionals

Depending on an individual's needs, they may have other plans developed by professionals. These may include Communication Plans, Behaviour Support Plans and Safety Plans.

## Programs, Supports and Services

We support individuals with developmental disabilities of all ages and at many life stages. Here's a quick overview.

### Services for Children, Youth and Families

- **Infant Development (IDP)** provides consultants who work with families. Giving resources, referrals, and support for children up to age three who have developmental delays or risk factors for later diagnosis.
- **Supported Child Development (SCDP)** is a community based early intervention program for families and child care centres. Giving practical information, resources, and strategies for the inclusion of children with disabilities in child care settings. SCDP consultants assist families to access child care in their community.
- **Child Care Programs (Seedlings and Treehouse)** are for children from birth to grade 7. Staff support developmental and personal growth in children to increase skills and independence. Staff support children needing additional support and typically developing children with age-appropriate activities.
- **Youth Connections** is an after-school program for youth with disabilities to attend recreational and social activities.
- **Family Respite** is support for parents with the daily responsibilities of caring for children or adults who have a developmental disability.

### Services for Adults

- **LIFE - Learn, Involve, Focus, Employ** - are supports and services for people to achieve their individual goals. Supports are provided in the community and at Aspire program locations. LIFE services include an Employment program for people who wish to seek employment.
- **Housing Options** include 3 different models of support
  - **Supported Living** is 24-hour staffed support for people who live in their own home with others.
  - **Independent Living** supports individuals to live independently with identified needed supports to ensure life-long success.
  - **Home Share** is community caregivers sharing their home and life with an individual who has a developmental disability. Matches are based on people feeling as they are valued member of a family.
- **Family Resources** provides information, resources, or support to family members who face the needs that come with having a family member with a disability.

# Rights, Risks, and Responsibilities

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## Rights

People using our services enjoy the same rights as all Canadian citizens. These rights are set out in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, and the *BC Human Rights Code*.

In 2010, Canada ratified the *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. Ratifying the Convention means we agreed to follow what it says. It is about human rights and changing attitudes towards persons with disabilities. Everyone has the right to make decisions for their lives based on their free and informed consent. Everyone has the right to be an active member of society.

The basic ideas of the convention are that:

- People are free to make their own choices.
- No one will be discriminated against.
- Disabled people have the same rights to be included in society as anybody else.
- Disabled people are to be respected for who they are.
- Everyone should have equal opportunities.
- Everyone should have equal access.
- Men and women should have equal opportunities.
- Disabled children should be respected for who they are as they grow up.

At Aspire, we believe in these rights and work hard to make sure they are respected. Together with our Self-Advocacy group, Aspire created our own Rights Statements. These are reviewed every year with you and/or your family to make sure you understand your rights and feel supported.

These statements below are available at [www.aspirerichmond.com](http://www.aspirerichmond.com).

# Children Rights Statement:

## I have the right ...



### TO BE SAFE

to be healthy  
to kindness and peace  
to be helped and informed  
to feel safe and be protected from harm and danger



### TO BE ME

to have choice  
to learn and make mistakes  
to understand and be accepted  
to say what I think and feel



### TO BE IMPORTANT

to love and be loved  
to be heard and understood  
to be valued and honoured  
to be cared for with dignity and respect  
to be as independent as I can



### TO PLAY

to have friends  
to use my imagination  
to learn new skills  
to belong and be included in community



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## Adult Right Statement:

### RIGHTS ARE RULES THAT MAKE PEOPLE EQUAL.

I have the right to be viewed as a person first.  
I have the right to feel safe wherever I go.  
I have the right to be heard and understood in my own way.  
I have the right to be asked about the help I need or want.  
I have the right to share how I feel and think.  
I have the right to receive information in plain language.  
I have the right to be spoken to directly in a way that shows respect.  
I have the right to make decisions about my life.  
I have the right to decide what information is public or private.  
I have the right to make mistakes and learn from them.  
I have the right to good healthcare.  
I have the right to have relationships.  
I have the right to access skilled supports in the community.  
I have the right to vote.  
I have the right to receive legal support if I need it.  
I have the right to have my ideas supported and valued.  
I have the right to give feedback about Aspire Services.



### A RESPONSIBILITY IS SOMETHING I AM EXPECTED TO DO.

I have a responsibility to care for myself.  
I have a responsibility to care for others.  
I have a responsibility to ask for help when I need it.  
I have a responsibility to follow the law.



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## Risks and Responsibilities

Having rights also means having responsibilities. At Aspire, we ask individuals and families who use our services to:

- Respect the rights of others
- Follow our policies
- Take part in planning
- Make choices and decisions about their own lives

We're always here to offer support and guidance. We know families and support networks play a big role in helping individuals grow and make decisions.

Making choices sometimes involves taking risks—and that's okay. Everyone is different, and each person or family may find their own balance between safety and independence. We believe it's important for people to:

- Think for themselves
- Make their own decisions
- Learn from mistakes
- Ask for help
- Change their minds
- Try new things

Sometimes, individuals may make choices that are different from what their families would choose. When this happens, we listen to everyone's views and work together to find the best solution. We are committed to:

- Keeping individuals safe while they use our services
- Respecting family values and customs as much as possible
- Working with families to plan for and respond to situations that may involve risk

Aspire has processes in place to support individuals and families when facing challenges or behaviours that may involve risk.

# Supporting People Who Communicate Using Behaviours

Sometimes, people show behaviours that are hard to understand or respond to. At Aspire, we believe these behaviours are a form of communication, and we respond with respect, care, and understanding.

Our staff and caregivers are trained to use Positive Behaviour Support (PBS). PBS is a proven approach that helps us:

- Understand why a behaviour is happening
- Find ways to prevent challenging behaviours
- Teach new skills to help individuals express themselves
- Support people in a way that respects their rights, safety, dignity, and independence

The PBS Process includes:

- Assessing the need for a Behaviour Support Plan
- Building a Behaviour Support Team: We bring together the people who know the individual best—family, friends, caregivers, therapists, and staff.
- Person-Centred Planning: The team listens to the individual’s goals and dreams to help guide the support plan.
- Functional Behavioural Assessment (FBA): We collect information to understand what triggers the behaviour and why it happens.
- Behaviour Support Plan Development: Based on the FBA, we work with psychologists or behavioural consultants to get a Behaviour Support Plan in place to help everyone stay safe and supported. The plan may include:
  - Strategies to teach new skills
  - Safe and respectful ways to respond
  - Goals for improving the person’s quality of life
  - Safety Plan or De-escalation Plan
- Approval of the Behaviour Support Plan includes the individual, their family or legal representative, the Aspire Program Manager and Director.
- Monitoring Progress: We track changes in behaviour and progress toward goals. Plans are reviewed every year, or sooner if needed.

# Service Quality

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At Aspire, we're always working to get better at what we do. We call this Continuous Quality Improvement—it means we listen, learn, and make changes to improve our services. Here are some of the ways we monitor our work:



## Listening to You

You and your family know best how our services are working. We value your suggestions and take your feedback in many ways:

- We have an open-door policy. This means we welcome you to let us know when something isn't working.
- We send you surveys on a regular basis so we can make our programs better as a result of your feedback. This includes sending a survey to you after leaving Aspire, so we can check in and offer help if needed.
- We interview the people we support about how they feel about our services.

If you have any concerns, please tell us. We promise to listen and do our best to help.

## Focusing on Results

We want to know if our programs are making a difference. Each program has goals, and we measure how well we're doing in four areas:

- Effectiveness – Are we achieving the results we planned?
- Efficiency – Are we using our resources wisely?
- Service Accessibility – Is it easy for people to get the help they need?
- Experience of Service – Are people happy with our services?

We share our progress in an Annual Outcomes Management Report, available on our website: [www.aspirerichmond.com](http://www.aspirerichmond.com). We also summarize the results from the perspective of Quality of Life; this is called the Quality-of-Life Report Card.

# Meeting Standards and Regulations

Aspire follows rules and guidelines from:

- Government ministries
- Licensing bodies
- WorkSafe BC
- Accrediting organizations

We must follow these rules and guidelines in order to receive funding from the government. Aspire goes through a formal review, called Accreditation, that checks we meet high standards in areas like:

- Health and safety
- Individual planning and support
- Community inclusion
- Accessibility
- Financial responsibility
- Quality of services

Aspire was first accredited by CARF (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities) in 2005, receiving the highest level: 3-year accreditation. We've continued to earn this top rating ever since.

We also have a strong internal structure to keep things running smoothly:

- Staff report to Program Managers
- Managers report to Directors and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
- The CEO reports to the Board of Directors
- We have a Director of Quality Assurance to oversee service quality
- We follow written policies and respond to feedback and complaints

# Privacy and Confidentiality

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At Aspire, we take your privacy seriously. We follow provincial laws to keep your personal and family information safe and confidential.

Confidential information is anything personal or sensitive, such as:

- Medical, educational, financial, or psychological details
- Names, meeting notes, emails, reports, videos, or photos

We keep this information secure and up to date.



## Collecting Personal Information and Keeping it Safe and Accurate

When we receive a referral for services, we ask for some basic information. Once your application is accepted and we begin planning services, we may ask for more detailed information, such as:

- Medical and psychological reports
- Educational assessments
- Information from therapists or other professionals

We use this information to understand your family member's needs and strengths, so we can provide the best possible support.

We do not share your information with anyone outside Aspire without your permission. Sometimes, we are required to share certain information with government agencies that fund and oversee our services, like Community Living BC (CLBC) or the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD). However, we only share what is required by law. If you have questions about how your information is used, please contact Aspire's Director of Quality Assurance.

You may ask to see the information we have on file at any time. It is important to keep your information current; we do our best to include you when we review the information we have on file. This gives you the opportunity to provide updates if anything changes or correct anything that is not accurate so we can adjust our services to meet your changing needs. Please be sure to give us copies of new reports or information that may impact the services you receive.

# Consent

At Aspire, we respect your right to make decisions. That's why we ask for your consent for many things, including:

- Consent to provide service.
- Consent to share information.
- Consent for program field trips (for child care).
- Consent to photograph or video (depending on the program).
- Consent for Communication and Information Technologies.
- Consent for Safe Release (for Out of School Care)

We will always explain what we're asking and why. You can say yes or no. You or your family member can withdraw consent at any time. Just let us know, and we'll explain what that means. In some cases, withdrawing consent may affect the services we can provide, but we'll talk with you about it.

As part of making decisions for themselves, we support adults to give their own consent. Under B.C. law, adults are assumed to be able to make decisions unless proven otherwise. How someone communicates does not affect their right to make choices.

Some adults may have a Legal Representative, Guardian, or Committee who helps make decisions. If you're unsure about this, talk to your Program Manager.

We make sure our staff and caregivers understand each person's legal status and respect their rights when it comes to decision-making and consent.

# Health, Safety and Well-being

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At Aspire, your health, safety, and well-being are very important to us. Everyone has the right to a safe and supportive environment—physically, emotionally, and mentally. Here are some of the ways we make sure that happens:

## Emergency Preparedness

Every program responds to emergencies, such as a fire or earthquake, in ways that meet the needs of the individuals being supported.

## Medication Safety

We make sure the staff and caregivers who give medications are trained. Medications that go with an individual to their program must follow safety protocols. The Program Manager will share these protocols, when needed.

## Standard Precautions

Staff, volunteers, and caregivers are trained to protect themselves and others from risks related to blood and bodily fluids. We work with families to reduce these risks.

## First Aid

All staff and contracted caregivers are trained in First Aid.

## External Monitoring

We are regularly inspected by:

- The local Fire Department
- Building inspectors
- Community Care Facilities Licensing (for licensed programs)

We also report to WorkSafe BC and to provincial government ministries for following provincial health and safety rules.

## Planning for Safety

We work with individuals and families to plan for health or safety risks and come up with ways to address them. We update and revise plans as individuals' situations and needs change over time. We make sure all staff and contractors know about changes so they can respond.

## Reporting Abuse

If we suspect a child or youth under 19 is being abused or neglected, we are legally required to report it. If we suspect an adult is being abused or neglected, there is not a legal duty to report, but we believe it is our moral responsibility to report it.

We have many policies and procedures in place to follow in the event a report is needed. If this happens, we take direction from:

- Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD)
- Community Living British Columbia (CLBC)
- Community Care Facilities Licensing (Child Care or Supported Living, where applicable)
- Police

We also use the following resources:

- BC Handbook for Action on Child Abuse and Neglect for Service Providers
- Adult Guardianship and CLBC information on the CLBC Website
- Community Care Facilities Licensing: Child Care or Residential Care

# Your Relationship with Aspire

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Just like any community, people have different roles. Things work best when everyone helps out in ways that feel right for them.

Most of our programs are funded by the government, but we wouldn't be able to offer the same level of service—or many of the extra supports—without help from volunteers, community support, and fundraising.

Each year, we host fundraising events and also receive support from others who organize their own events to help us.

## Getting Involved

There are many ways you can be part of our community—if you'd like to!

- **Become a member of Aspire** – Membership is low-cost and gives you a voice at our Annual General Meeting (AGM), where you can vote for board members and help shape our future. Visit our website at [www.aspirerichmond.com](http://www.aspirerichmond.com) for the membership application.
- **Volunteer in our programs** – Help out with open houses, picnics, training sessions, meetings, and more. Talk to your Program Manager to learn how.
- **Donate or help fundraise** – You can make a tax-deductible donation, choose where your gift goes, or donate equipment or services. Visit our website at [www.aspirerichmond.com](http://www.aspirerichmond.com) for ways you can give.
- **Join our Board of Directors** – Help lead and guide our organization. Talk to your Program Manager if you are interested.
- **Attend Aspire Events** – we host special events throughout the year where families, individuals we support, staff, and volunteers can connect in a relaxed and friendly setting. Attending these events provides opportunities to connect with other families.

Some of these activities take a bit of time and effort, but they come with great rewards. You'll meet other families, build a support network, learn new skills, and share your



own experiences. You'll also help strengthen community inclusion and support the services your family member relies on.

We hope you'll get involved in whatever way works best for you!

## Ongoing Communication

Just like any strong community, good communication helps everything run smoothly. When people stay connected, they know what's going on, feel heard, and know what to do if they have questions or concerns.

We know life can get busy, and things can change quickly. That's why we make a real effort to keep in touch with you.

We're committed to keeping families informed. Here's how we share updates:

- **Website** – Visit [www.aspirerichmond.com](http://www.aspirerichmond.com) for news and information.
- **Newsletter** – We send out regular updates with stories, events, and more.
- **Social Media** – Follow us to stay connected.
- **Email Updates** – You may receive occasional messages with important news.

We share updates about our programs, training opportunities, upcoming events, and activities. You'll also hear stories from the people we support, families, staff, and community partners.

As technology changes, we'll keep exploring new ways to stay in touch—and we'd love to hear your ideas and feedback too!

## Expectations

Good relationships work best when everyone knows what to expect.

As a family member, here's what you can expect from our staff, caregivers, and volunteers:

- You and your family will be treated with respect, dignity, fairness, and courtesy.
- We will follow our mission, values, and Code of Ethics.
- We'll provide planning and support that fits your needs.
- We'll communicate openly and regularly with you.

- Our team will keep learning and improving through training and professional development.
- We'll meet or exceed government and accreditation standards and always work to improve our services.

Here's what we ask from you:

- Share with us the information we need to support your family member well.
- Follow the program policies.
- Treat staff, other families, and individuals with respect, dignity, fairness, and courtesy.
- Take part in orientation and training, if appropriate, to help staff and caregivers understand your family member's needs.
- Communicate openly with us and let us know if you have concerns.
- Be involved in planning for your family member.

Some programs may have additional expectations, like specific staff qualifications or levels of parental involvement.

## Problem Solving and Complaints

We work to prevent and manage concerns or problems as they happen. We believe good communication is the best way to solve problems. Our staff are trained to handle concerns respectfully and effectively, and we work hard to stay connected with families, caregivers, and the people we support.

If you have a complaint, we want to hear about it. We'll do our best to resolve the issue quickly and make sure you're getting the support you need.

Your privacy is protected, and making a complaint will not affect your access to safe services.

### Who Can Make a Complaint?

- Anyone using our services
- A family member or representative
- Anyone concerned about the services we offer

If you would like help filing a complaint you can ask a family member, staff member, or anyone you feel comfortable with to help you. We can also support you to find someone to help. A person assisting you in this type of situation is called an advocate.

## How to Submit a Complaint

We encourage you to speak up as soon as a concern comes up. It's best to try to resolve things directly with the people involved.

We'll go over our complaint policies with you during your orientation, and you can ask for a copy anytime.

If you have a concern, please talk to your Program Manager. If it's not resolved, you can find more information about our complaint process at [www.aspirerichmond.com](http://www.aspirerichmond.com) in the Feedback section. You'll also find links to the complaint processes for our funding agencies and the Richmond School District.



[Aspire  
Richmond  
Feedback Page](#)

# Resources

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We know your role can sometimes feel overwhelming. Your Program Manager is a valuable Resource if you have any questions.

## Aspire Family Resource

The Aspire Family Resource Manager is available to support you as you navigate everyday challenges and explore available services. Here's how the Family Resource Manager can help:

- Share information about local and provincial services and supports
- Assist with transitions, like starting kindergarten, moving from child to adult services, or when an adult child leaves home
- Help you connect with other families and support networks
- Provide advocacy when needed
- Offer books, articles, and other helpful resources

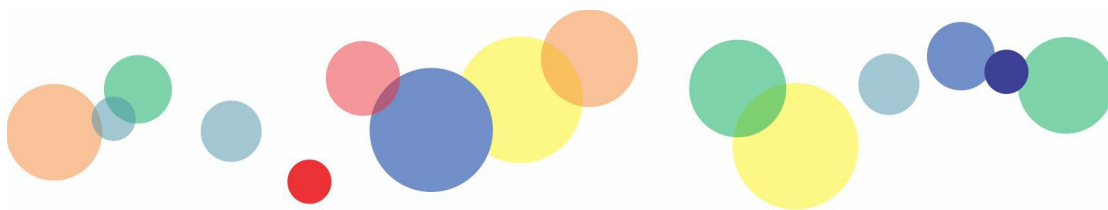
If we're not able to provide the support your family member needs, we'll work with you to explore other options and refer you to other community organizations that may be able to help.

## Other Helpful Resources

There are many other services available to support you and your family. Here's a short list of some key organizations:

- **[Ministry of Children and Family Development \(MCFD\)](#)**  
Provides funding and decides eligibility for children's programs like Infant Development and Supported Child Development. Also offers childcare subsidies and support for childcare spaces.
- **[Community Living British Columbia \(CLBC\)](#)**  
Supports adults with disabilities through programs like LIFE Services, Respite, Supported Living, and Home Share. CLBC also offers planning support through its Richmond office.
- **[Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction](#)**  
Offers income assistance and BC Disability Benefits for people 18 and older. Benefits may include monthly financial support, medical and dental coverage, and bus passes.

- **TransLink HandyDART**  
A door-to-door transit service for people who use wheelchairs, scooters, or need help using public transit.
- **Advocate for Service Quality**  
Helps individuals and families who are unhappy with services provided by the provincial government or funded agencies.
- **Representative for Children and Youth**  
Supports young people (up to age 24) by making sure their voices are heard and their rights are respected during important decisions.
- **Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee of BC**  
Offers guidance on guardianship, health care consent, and Representation Agreements for adults who can't make decisions on their own.
- **Nidus Personal Planning Resource Centre**  
A non-profit that provides information about personal planning, including Representation Agreements.
- **Family Support Institute (FSI)**  
A province-wide organization led by families, offering support, training, and networking for families who have a member with a disability.



# Supported Living

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## What We Do in Supported Living

Aspire has been providing Supported Living services for over 40 years. We are proud to be a trusted provider in the City of Richmond. We currently operate several supported living homes in different Richmond neighbourhoods.

We support adults with developmental disabilities to be included in the Richmond community. We do this by providing:

- Safe and supportive living arrangements
- Help with daily life skills
- Support for recreation and leisure
- Opportunities to build relationships
- Support for personal growth and community involvement

Our supported living homes are places where individuals can:

- Feel at home
- Be respected and valued
- Take part in daily life
- Build independence

Each home is like an extended family. This includes the individuals who live in the home, their families and support networks, and the Aspire staff.

Supports are individualized and person-centred. This means each home reflects the needs, preferences, and personalities of the people who live there.

Richmond is a diverse community. The people we support come from many cultural, ethnic, and family backgrounds, and have a wide range of abilities. We work hard to respect and honour individual values, cultural traditions and family perspectives.

We believe strong partnerships with families are essential to providing good support.



## Where and When

All Aspire supported living homes are located in Richmond. Support is provided every day of the year, 24 hours a day, depending on the needs of the individuals.

Our goal is to make sure each person has the right level of support, at the right times, to live safely and comfortably in their home.

## Our Staff

All staff have Community Support Worker qualifications or equivalent training and receive ongoing training in areas such as:

- Person-centred planning and goal setting
- Aspire values and ethics
- Positive behaviour support

Some staff may have extra training to meet the specific support needs of the individuals they support. We work carefully to match staff skills and personalities with the needs and preferences of each individual. If something is not working well, we are open to talking about it and making changes when needed.

We believe Aspire's Supported Living homes are strong learning environments. They are a place where new staff can learn and grow. We also believe the adults who live in our homes are excellent teachers and guides.

For this reason, we welcome practicum students. This allows students to gain real-life experience while being supported by experienced staff.

The Program Manager is responsible for the overall day-to-day operation of the home and for supervising the staff who work in the home.

## Eligibility and Entering Supported Living

The provincial government decides who is eligible for staffed supported living and how urgent the service need is. They provide the funding for the service. To access Aspire Adult Supported Living Services, an individual must have a referral from Community Living BC (CLBC).

## The Intake Process

Once a referral is received, we begin the intake process. This helps everyone understand the individual's needs and whether Aspire is a good fit. The intake process includes:

- Meeting with you and your family member to explain Aspire's philosophy and provide an overview of the service
- Gathering information about the individual such as their physical needs and daily support needs
- Talking together about what supports and resources the individual needs and how well these match what Aspire can offer
- Providing a tour of the home or homes
- Completing intake forms and required consent forms
- Completing parts of the care plan

After the intake process, we look at whether one of our homes can meet the individual's needs and wishes and if the supports we offer are appropriate at this time.

At the same time, the individual and their family decide whether they would like to move forward with Aspire. This is a shared decision-making process, involving the individual and Aspire. Being a part of the individual's support network, you are a part of this decision-making process.

## If Aspire Is Not the Right Fit

If the individual chooses not to accept services, Aspire will share information about other possible resources.

While Aspire is committed to supporting eligible individuals, there may be times when services are not available due to funding limits, space availability or other circumstances. Individuals may also choose to be placed on a waitlist while waiting for appropriate services or funding to become available.

## The Assessment Period

If the individual chooses to move forward, we begin an assessment period. This is a time for visiting the home and meeting staff and other individuals living in the home. It is also a time for Aspire to:

- Learn more about the individual's specific support needs
- Complete and refine the care plan
- Begin planning how and when the move will happen

## Supporting a Positive Transition

Moving into a new home with new people is a big change. It can be exciting, but it can also bring worry or anxiety for both the individual and their family. Aspire works closely with individuals and families to make sure:

- Privacy is respected
- Safety and personal security are supported
- Personal preferences are honoured, for example: bedroom layout and personal space

The assessment period is flexible and may last up to six months. At the end of this time Aspire and the individual make a final decision together. If services continue, we move into the transition period, where the moving plan is finalized and steps are taken to make the move as smooth as possible. This may include a gradual move into the home and extra training or preparation for staff.

Our goal is to support a transition that feels respectful, comfortable, and well-planned for everyone involved.

## Family Involvement

Families and support network members play an important role in the lives of adults with developmental disabilities. Your involvement and support make a real difference.

Families are often involved in many ways, such as:

- Taking part in planning
- Helping with big decisions, like moving to a new home or starting a new program or job
- Visiting regularly
- Including your family member in family activities
- Getting to know their friends, roommates, and staff
- Keeping an eye on how services are working
- Speaking up as an advocate when needed

## Supporting Independence

Along with being involved, it is also important to support your family member's independence. This means encouraging them to:

- Make their own choices
- Take part in decisions about their life
- Build self-advocacy skills

This can sometimes be challenging. It often means adjusting as your family member grows more independent and allowing them to try new things, take some risks, and make mistakes and learn from them.

Supporting independence is about finding a balance between:

- The care, love, and protection you provide
- Allowing your family member to become their own person

Aspire is here to support you through this process. Our Family Resource Manager can share helpful resources and connect you with other families who are experiencing similar transitions.

## Staying Connected with Aspire

In addition to supporting your family member, we encourage families to get involved in Aspire activities when possible. This can help you:

- Learn more about community living
- Learn about advocacy and self-advocacy
- Connect with other families on a similar journey

## Health and Safety

The health, safety, and well-being of the people we support are always our top priority. Everyone has the right to live in a safe, secure home that supports their physical, mental and emotional well-being. Aspire works hard to protect health and safety in many ways:

- Homes are regularly inspected by Licensing authorities and the Richmond Fire Department
- Staffing levels follow licensing rules and are based on each individual's support needs
- Homes are kept clean, safe, and well maintained
- All staff, practicum students, and volunteers are trained in:
  - First Aid
  - CPR

- Abuse recognition
- Responding to emergencies and critical incidents
- First Aid kits and earthquake kits are available in all homes and in Aspire vehicles
- All staff, students, and volunteers complete a criminal record check
- Smoking, alcohol, marijuana, and illegal substances are not allowed inside the homes
- Staff follow standard safety practices when providing personal care
- Staff are encouraged to keep vaccinations up to date, including Hepatitis B and Influenza (flu)
- We have clear policies, procedures, and regular staff training in areas such as:
  - Violence prevention
  - Accident prevention
  - Emergency response
  - Workplace health and safety
- Emergency preparedness includes regular fire and earthquake drills
- Medications are carefully documented, and staff help arrange:
  - Medical appointments
  - Dental appointments
  - Specialist appointments
- Casual staff are available to cover shifts when regular staff are sick or on holidays
- Each individual has a care plan that includes safety considerations, such as:
  - Personal safety needs
  - Response plans if someone goes missing
- When required, staff have Class 4 driver's licences
- Staff-owned vehicles used for transportation carry business-class insurance

There is a manager on call 24 hours a day. In the event of an emergency, accident, or a 911 call, Aspire responds promptly and appropriately. Required reports are completed for the relevant licensing and government funding agencies, and families or support network members are notified as soon as possible.

## Transportation

Being part of the community includes getting around and taking part in activities, programs, and, for some people, work opportunities. Aspire supports individuals to learn how to travel safely and independently. This may include learning how to use

public transportation, including HandyDART, if a person uses a wheelchair or needs extra assistance.

Aspire staff may also provide transportation using staff-owned vehicles or Aspire vehicles.

Our goal is to support people to participate fully in their community while using transportation options that are safe, appropriate, and suited to their individual needs.

## Individual Records and Reports

Once an individual is accepted into Aspire's Supported Living Services, we create two types of records:

- A paper file
- An electronic file in a secure system called ShareVision

These records help us support your family member well. The file may include:

- Care and support plans
- Emergency information
- Activity schedules
- Notes on goals and progress
- Daily notes written by staff

The information is updated regularly and shared only with staff who need it to provide good support.

## Privacy and Confidentiality

We take privacy very seriously. All personal information is treated as confidential and kept secure, even after a person leaves Aspire. We protect information by:

- Storing paper files in locked cabinets
- Protecting electronic files with passwords and access controls

Only appropriate staff can access these records.

Individuals living in a supported living home have the right to review their file by asking the Program Manager and can ask for corrections if something in the file is not accurate.

Aspire also meets all reporting requirements set by our funders. Individuals receive copies of required reports and may choose to share them with family and support network members.

When the individual leaves Aspire, records are stored securely according to government requirements for at least seven years. Records remain accessible if needed after services have ended.

## Critical Incident Reporting

A critical incident is a serious or unusual event that happens while services funded by Community Living BC (CLBC) are being provided. Aspire prepares critical incident reports when required. A critical incident may include:

- Injuries needing medical care
- Allegations of abuse
- Unusual or aggressive behaviour
- Medication errors
- Serious illness
- A missing person
- A 911 call
- An unexpected death

These incidents are reported to Community Living BC (CLBC) within required timeframes and documented in the individual's file. All critical incident reports are kept on file and are reviewed each year by the Program Director to look for patterns or areas where follow-up may be needed.

## Finances

Individuals living in Supported Living Services receive Disability Benefits from the provincial government. These funds are used to cover personal expenses such as clothing, personal care items, and recreation and community activities. The provincial government requires that a portion of the Disability Benefit be paid to Aspire to help cover room and board and household costs.

The Program Manager can explain how much is paid and how the payment is arranged.

## Learning to Manage Money

For many individuals, learning how to manage money is an important life skill. Money-management goals and supports are included in each person's Individual program plan. Depending on the individual's interests and abilities, staff may help with:

- Banking
- Shopping
- Making personal purchases

Our goal is to support as much independence as possible.

## Keeping Money Safe

Cash belonging to individuals is kept safe in a locked cash box in each home. Financial files and records are kept ensuring transparency, safety, and proper use of funds. This includes:

- A financial information sheet
- Records of cash use
- Records of banking transactions done with or for the individual

## Communication and Keeping in Touch

Good communication with families and support network members is very important. It helps support the individual's well-being, strengthen relationships, and encourage independence.

We understand that every family is different. Some families prefer frequent contact, while others prefer less. We work with you to find the type and amount of communication that feels right for you.

Here are some of the ways we support and encourage open, two-way communication:

- We share important updates and changes as they happen
- We invite families to take part in planning meetings
- We contact families right away in the event of an emergency or critical incident
- We ask for your feedback through our annual satisfaction survey
- We have an open-door approach and encourage you to raise any questions or concerns

- We offer support to help resolve concerns or conflicts involving the individual, staff, and/or family

Please let us know how you would like to stay involved and which of these options work best for you.

## Leaving Supported Living Services

Sometimes life changes, and an individual may leave Aspire's Supported Living Services. This can happen for many reasons, such as:

- The home is not the right fit
- Moving to a different home or community
- Wanting to try a different living option
- Moving out of Richmond

## Planning Your Transition

Whatever the reason, Aspire is here to help make the transition smooth and positive. We work with the individual and their family to help plan next steps and support the move to a new living arrangement.

We create an exit summary that describes the individual's experiences in the home and important information to support future planning. With permission, we can share this summary with new service providers and work with the individual, you and other supports to help with the transition.

## Staying Connected

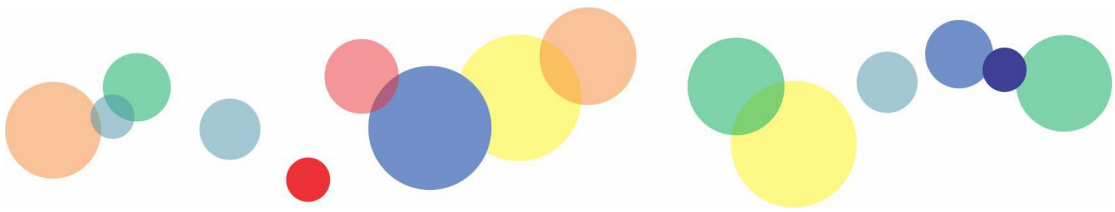
After your family member leaves Aspire Supported Living services, we may contact you to complete a short survey. This helps us learn from your experience and improve our services.

We also enjoy staying in touch. You are always welcome to check in or drop by to let us know how you are doing.

# Notes

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