thriving. connected. happy.

Aspire RICHMOND VIEWS

May 2023

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Message from the CEO

It has been a busy Spring of preparation and anticipation at Aspire Richmond. As you may know, Aspire completed our CARF survey in mid-April, which is a requirement of our funders. Preparing for CARF is a tremendous amount of work in the months leading up to the survey and I really appreciate all the hard work of everyone.

The surveyors were blown away by the work that Aspire does every day. Our results were excellent, and it was noted at our Exit Conference that we are in the top 1% of organizations surveyed. I am truly grateful for everyone at Aspire; individuals, families, staff, and contractors. Thank you for all that you do! It's wonderful to work at an organization where even with a virtual survey, the heart of Aspire was able to shine through.

We will be notified in approximately 6-8 weeks of our final survey results. We can confidently say that we will receive the highest level of accreditation which is 3 years.

I appreciate everything you do every day to help the individuals we support live thriving, connected and happy lives.

Shannon Crofton, CEO

Message from the Board

CONGRATULATIONS to Shannon and the amazing Aspire team for an exceptional CARF review! The outstanding results are a true reflection of an organization that cares and is committed to our vision of supporting people with developmental disabilities to define, discover and advocate for their self-determined goals, passions and happiness.

Thank you as well to the many individuals, parents and community members who took the time to be interviewed by the CARF adjudicators. This is such an important process for the organization and your contribution to Aspire's success is greatly appreciated!

Did you know that Aspire Richmond Support Society is a registered society in British Columbia? That means we are guided by members and a board of directors. If you appreciate the work that we do for individuals with developmental disabilities and families in Richmond, consider joining as a member of Aspire! Memberships are up for renewal in April of each year, so it's a great time to spring into action and renew your membership today.

As always, thank you to everyone for your commitment and connection to Aspire, as we continue to bloom and grow in the community.

Annette Dela Place, Board Chair

MEMBERSHIP

Aspire RICHMOND
Thriving. Connected. Happy.

Aspire Richmond is a non-profit, member driven organization. We operate in part, by contributions of your membership fees.

It is time to sign up or renew your membership today!

Membership fees:

Single Membership:
$10/year
$100/lifetime

Family Membership (2 votes):
$15/year
$150/lifetime

Sign up or renew your membership online today!

604-279-7040
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Matthew and Matt complete the Vancouver Sun Run!

On Sunday, April 16th, Matthew and Matt from Outreach braved the cold and rainy conditions to compete in the 10K Vancouver Sun Run. They had to wait on the start line for over an hour, but this just made Matthew more revved up to start the race. When the gun went off, he fired on all cylinders! The pair had fun stomping through puddles and listening to brave musicians posted along the course. They finished in just over an hour!

We asked Matthew a few questions about his experience:

How long have you wanted to do the Sun Run?
I've wanted to do the Sun Run for a long time, and I love running with my friends!

How did you train for the Sun Run?
Many of the Special Olympics sports I do keep me in good shape, and Matt and I also did a few training sessions in the gym, and a running workout at Minoru Track.

How did the run go?
I didn't mind the rain; it was super fun! I really enjoyed the music tents at the start of the race, and also the musicians that played music at different spots along the course. I enjoyed pushing myself and saying hi to all of the volunteers along the course!

How did you feel after the race?
At the end of the race I felt fine, it was easy for me! After the race though, my body began to feel very sore, and it was difficult to walk up and down the stairs at BC Place.

What is your next athletic goal?
All I can say is that I'm definitely doing the Sun Run again in 2024, and hopefully with a big team from Aspire!

Synergy Welcomes Spring

To celebrate all the beauty of Spring, Synergy went to visit Queen Elizabeth Park, enjoying the hike, the flowers and greenery. The group also visited the Bloedel Conservatory, full of noisy parrots, tropical plants and brightly coloured flowers.

Another fun Spring activity is cycling! Synergy is storing bikes in the garage at Catalina. This allows for more adventures with friends. Kelyn, Riley and Tom were able to head down the alley then over to the park for a fun ride. Looking forward to more sunny days and rides together.

Lisa Sarai, Manager, Synergy

Million Reasons Run with kids from Seedlings!

There is always something fun happening at Seedlings Early Childhood Development Hub. From Pajama Day (front cover) to Earth Day, there are so many ways that the children learn about their connection to each other and the world around them.

As such, the Seedlings Out of School Care program has signed up for the Million Reasons Run, a fundraiser to support healthcare for children across Canada! They have been successfully training at the Minoru Track in anticipation of the run and as a group, they added 22km to their goal in one afternoon alone!

Training and fundraising will continue throughout the month of May.

Emily Muller, Sr Counsellor at Seedlings Out of School Care

Go Seedlings Go!

Rights Statement Revamp

Everyone has rights, and communicating these rights so that they are accessible and understood is so important. This was the goal for Rhianna Coyle, Mark Downey and Kevin Moore, who spent over 4 months revamping the new rights statement for adults.

They met twice a month for 2 hours at a time to dismantle the old rights and make way for the new and improved rights. Their task was to make the new rights more accessible and easier to read, using fewer words so that more individuals could understand and apply them in their lives. Rhianna and Mark tirelessly brainstormed, collaborated and problem-solved throughout the process, while Kevin documented their process and guided their way to the finish line.

Together they presented the new rights to the Directors, CEO and self-advocates. Rhianna, Mark and Kevin were interviewed on the Rights Revamp project by a CARF Surveyor. The Surveyor was blown away by their dedication to the project and equally pleased to hear that Mark and Rhianna, as self-advocates, were paid for their time working on this project.

The next step is to create a booklet of the Rights for Adults with greater details about each right, visual supports for increased accessibility and ideas on how to implement and practice the rights in daily life.

Kevin Moore, Manager, Adult Respite

Rights are equally important for children as they are a vulnerable group that need support and protection to thrive. Aspire also updated the Children's Rights to ensure that they were clear and easy to understand for the youngest members of our programs. These statements are displayed in all Aspire child care centres at the children's eye level to bring this to their attention and inspire discussion.

Inclusive Education

Transition to Adulthood: Employment – Changing Lives One Student at a Time, Part 2

Reasons to Work

Over the years we have had the privilege of speaking to many high school students and self-advocates who have clearly explained their reasons for wanting to work – it is an opportunity to build friendships, learn new skills, and achieve a sense of accomplishment, competence, and pride! The website Happonomy, an organization that supports people to live flourishing and sustainable lives, states that the four most common reasons why work is important to ALL individuals is financial security, connection, personal growth, and contributing to a bigger goal. Young people today see work not just as a way to make money, but a way to build connection and a sense of belonging, which is important to having a positive sense of self and well-being.

The majority of young people want to work, yet as of March 31, 2019, only 24.2% of individuals supported by Community Living BC (CLBC) reported some employment earnings, with 82% of these workers reporting earnings below $10,000 a year.

Pre-Employment Skills

There are a wide variety of skills that can be taught to increase a young adult's ability to succeed in work/volunteer placements and paid employment which include: transit training, interview skills, resume writing, first and lasting impressions, work etiquette, perspective taking, team building and collaboration. Equally important is the Discovery process: A person-centred approach to gathering information about a person's gifts, talents, personal qualities, preferences, interests, and ideal conditions for employment.

Employment Supports – Where you can go for help

Impact Grant Researchers from the Canadian Institute for Inclusion and Citizenship (UBC) have partnered with Aspire Richmond's Youth Employment Program and several other community living organizations that support youth and adults with intellectual disabilities. The Impact project focuses on best practices that help youth aged 15 – 19 launch into the world of work. Students participate in part-time employment opportunities, while building their skills and confidence.

Aspire Richmond The Youth Employment and Employment Services Program work with youth and adults who have developmental disabilities so that they can gain meaningful employment.

S.U.C.C.E.S.S. A Social Services agency funded by the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia. Its purpose is to help all Richmond residents and employers successfully enter B.C.'s labor market along with other supports and services.

WorkBC Provides direct access to the world of work in British Columbia. Its main goal is to help all British Columbians successfully enter B.C.'s labour market by helping people find jobs, explore career options, and improve skills.

Employment Works Offers employment preparedness training and support, combined with job sampling and hands-on work experiences for autistic youth, adults, and persons with disabilities.

Ready, Willing & Able Is a national initiative that supports employers in hiring people on the autism spectrum or with an intellectual disability.

Skills Training & Employment Program Empowers autistic youth and adults (ages 15-30) with skills and work experience to better prepare for successful employment.

Community Living BC is the provincial Crown corporation that funds supports and services to adults with developmental disabilities, as well as individuals who have a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) who also have significant difficulty doing things independently.

In addition, there a several job search websites that make looking for a job on your own easier.

Stories from families and self-advocates

Tommy at Pony Pals Therapeutic Riding Association

"Tommy is delighted to work as a horse care personnel at Pony Pals Therapeutic Riding Association in Delta. He began as a volunteer, proved he was well suited to the work, and was offered a paid part-time position a few years ago. It fits perfectly with his life-long love of horses and his preference for dynamic, physical work. His regular work schedule gives him a solid plan for each week and each payday is a source of excitement. At the barn, he has found a "work family" who appreciate him for his skills and treat him with respect. He looks forward to every workday knowing that he is in a safe place where he can learn new skills, excel at the ones he has already mastered, and contribute to the place he considers a second home."
Monique MacIntyre,
Mother of Tommy

Joa

"Through Explorations – Pathways to the Future, Joa learned the importance of setting employment goals and how to discover his dream."
Lisa Sugihara,
Mother of Joa

"After graduation, I have been able to work with my best friend, buy clothes where I work at a discount, and have money."
Joa

Lucy

"Lucy landed a job through the KPU Access program; she has been working one day a week for the past 4 years. She is very happy to have a job; to do something that is useful, to feel valued and to be part of the work force."
Marie Murtagh,
Mother of Lucy

Jason

"Work is so important for Jason, as it makes him feel valued like his peers and he can see the trajectory of his life. Jason also feels good about earning money so he can go out for lunch with his friends, buy the clothes he likes and save for his future. To Jason, working is just a part of life!"
Candy Gubbles,
Mother of Jason

"I get excited when going to work. I enjoy the camaraderie of my work mates."
Jason

Inclusive Education Submission
Co-written by:
Eve Minuk – Past President, Aspire Richmond; Inclusion Support Team, Richmond School District

and

Kate Campbell – Inclusion Support Team, Richmond School District.

2nd Avenue's Renovations

Spring is a great time to tackle long awaited projects and refresh our spaces. This is exactly what we did as we began renovations towards the end of March at 2nd Avenue.

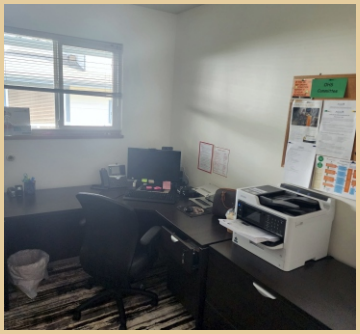
We removed an old murphy bed as it was no longer being used, and painted and updated the room to create a bright staff office space. Sandy's washroom was also updated. There was a major clean out of the garage, which had items buried from years and years, as is often the case with garages. Outside, we began landscaping, as it has been some time since the yard was last tackled. Our goal in making these changes was to create a more welcoming environment not only for the individuals, but the staff and families who come to 2nd Avenue.

We hope this momentum will continue as we look forward to more renovations occurring at 2nd Avenue in the near future.

Melinda Epifano, Manager of Supported Living

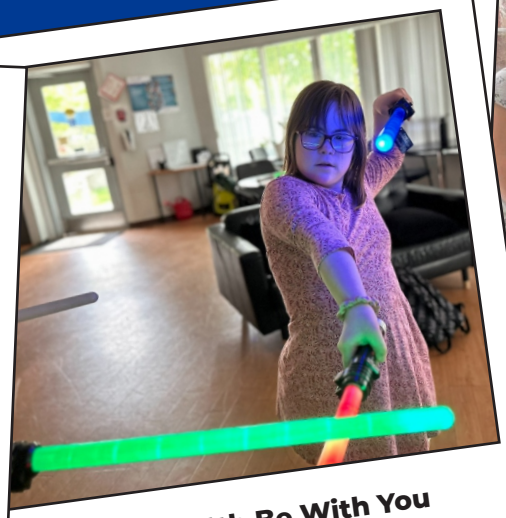
Before

After



Aspire Photo Album

Running the Sun Run



May the 4th Be With You

Earth Day at Seedlings

Easter at Pendleton

Earth Day at Seedlings

Aspire RICHMOND
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SPRING FLING

Dance Party

All Ages
All Abilities
All Dancers

Saturday
June 3, 2023

Seedlings ECD Hub
6380 No 3 Rd Richmond
doors open at 6:30pm
dancing 7:00 - 10:00pm
www.aspirerichmond.com

Tickets $15
includes one complimentary pop

Scan/Click here to buy your tickets or call 604-279-7040

signature mocktail cash bar, light snacks and DJ playing music from various genres

ASPIRE UPCOMING EVENTS

May 8 – 31 Children's Art Exhibition at Brighouse Library featuring works by young artists from Seedlings Early Childhood Development Hub.

May 18 ConecTra's Abilities Expo - The Adventure Awaits
This free event held at the Roundhouse Community Centre in Vancouver brings together exhibitors, vendors, resources, guest speakers, and more to further enrich the disability community's well-being and connectedness. Check out the Aspire booth!

June 3 Spring Fling Dance Party!
Open to anyone and everyone. Get your tickets now!

Plus, save the date for these upcoming events with more information to come…

- **September 7** Aspire Family Picnic
- **September 11** Annual General Meeting
- **October 3** Employer Appreciation Breakfast and kick-off to Community Living Month
- **October 3 – November 3** Benefit of Possibilities Scavenger Hunt
- **November 4** – Benefit of Possibilities Scavenger Hunt wrap party

Virtual Presentation Series 2023

Richmond Parents For Transition

Check Out Our Series

January 26 7pm-8:30pm

Supported Decision Making

An alternative to guardianship; allowing a person with a disability to make their own decisions with support from trusted people, instead of someone else making decisions for them.

CLICK HERE TO WATCH THE VIDEO

March 30 7pm-8:30pm

Individualized Funding

Enables individuals to use money allocated by CLBC to create innovative service options, providing choices about how supports and services are provided. Services are directed/managed by you and/or your family, or host agency.

CLICK HERE TO WATCH THE VIDEO

April 27 7pm-8:30pm

Day Programs Revisited

Opportunities to learn about what you can expect from a day program supported by Aspire Richmond. We will show last year's video, and chat with self-advocates, parents and staff.

CLICK HERE TO WATCH THE VIDEO

June 22 7pm-8:30pm

Mental Health/Wellness

Learn where and how to get the help you need to support mental wellness in the lives of your loved ones.

For registration, please contact
ddomes@aspirerichmond.com
Links will be sent out closer to the date of presentations

WE ARE HIRING!

Visit our career site for job openings
www.careers.aspirerichmond.com

Aspire RICHMOND
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Thank you Richmond!

Treehouse Early Learning Centre is honoured to be a finalist in the

Best of Richmond as presented by the Richmond News

in the
Best Daycare / Preschool category