



THE KAMLOOPS

Self Advocate

NEWSLETTER



FREE! TAKE ONE! Serving people since September of 2013.

MARCH 2023

Welcome to March! Spring is just around the corner and we have another exciting newsletter for you! Of course, we are celebrating St. Patrick's Day. We've got some fun activities and articles with that theme. All of our regular contributors have their great articles for you.

There are some really great articles that continue last month's theme of disability representation in the media. We have some interviews with people who are highlighting the importance of inclusion in the media. We were excited to see an example of this in a new movie, 'Champions', coming in March. Check out the story about that!

We'd love to hear what you think about these stories. Maybe you've got a great story to share as well. Why not send us an email or a letter?

Inside this issue

- Feature Articles
- Movie articles
- Celebrating Disability Awareness and success stories and inclusion for all ! Written by people with Diverse Abilities.

Do you have a story idea or an event you think would be interesting for our readers?

Contact us at:

thekamloopsselfadvocate@yahoo.com

113-540 Seymour St.,

Kamloops, BC V2C 2G9

Office phone: 250-828-1344

We always look for writers and people to interview.

Please subscribe!

Each month you will receive a newsletter with interesting and inspiring content. Be sure to check out our online newsletter for bonus stories and articles!

KSA Facebook page: **The Kamloops Self Advocate Newsletter**

On the Self-Advocate Net site:

selfadvocatenet.ca

Interactive flipbook/newsletters
issuu.com/thekamloopsselfadvocate

Happy St. Patrick's Day!





The KSA has created a program to recognize and promote local businesses that are accessible and supportive of all members of the community. The businesses listed here are friendly, accessible, and great to deal with.

Ability Friendly Accessible Business Program

Horizon Dental Clinic

5 Bean Brewbar & Café

Brownstone Restaurant

All Around Gamerz

The Vic Downtown

Kamloops Film society

Kamloops Art Party

New Horizons Professional Support Services Inc.

Krystian's Corner

March 17th is St. Patrick's Day and on this day, people can drink green beer, wear green, go to St. Patrick Day Parades, or go to Irish-themed restaurants, such as Kelly O'Bryan's Restaurant here in Kamloops, where the staff wear kilts and people can have fun and eat great food. It is great to spend time with family and friends on this special day and act Irish, no matter if you have Irish heritage or not. You can still have fun and celebrate St. Patrick Day.

Many countries celebrate this special occasion. I have some Irish ancestry on my dad's side of the family, so St. Patrick's Day means a lot to me. It made me want to add the St. Patrick's Day theme, with different activities to do in March related to St. Patrick and

Ireland. In this newsletter you will find St. Patrick's Day jokes and poems.

It's also Irish Heritage Month in Canada which is a new Heritage Month. Let's celebrate Irish Heritage and celebrate what Irish-Canadians added to Canada. Canada is very diverse with different backgrounds and different cultures, heritages, family histories, and disabilities and abilities. Irish Heritage month in March is a special time to celebrate this history. And, for me, it's a special time to honor my dad and to celebrate his family history even though he is no longer here.

Some of the other articles I love include Ben's article, which talks about outreach support and community inclusion support and how you can live semi-independently in your own home. There are some more articles on media representation for those with diverse abilities. Media is changing for the better and the media is increasing diversity awareness. It's important for people with diverse abilities to be included behind the scenes and in front of the camera, to be included as models, actors and media creators, sharing their authentic stories and promoting what they can do, not what they can't do. I think the entertainment industry is getting better and improving by giving jobs to people with diverse abilities.

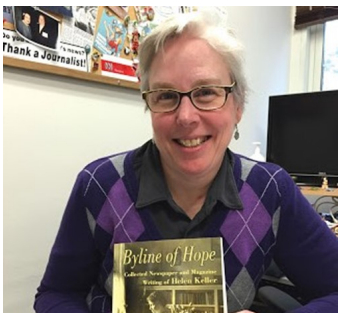
Media is a powerful tool for people with diverse abilities because it reduces stigma, discrimination, and bullying. It's important to see people like you with diverse abilities creating media and being seen in media and it's important to increase authentic inclusion. The movement is starting to include everyone in media, including those with diverse abilities.

Inclusion is all about listening and having a voice, adapting and being inclusive of all people. Inclusion is important. We need to celebrate inclusive employment, no matter if its in the entertainment business, in retail, self-employment, or in any other kind of work. Inclusion is also about having choices and living semi-independently with support. The world is starting to improve for those with diverse abilities in everyday society and in media.



**Special thanks to The Printing
Place for your continued
support of the Kamloops
Self-Advocate Newsletter.**





Disabled People Transforming Media Culture

by Krystian

Meet Beth Haller, an author who writes about people with disabilities creating media.

Why is it important to have disability representation in media?

It is important because that is how the average person learns about disabilities, through a disabled character in TV or film, a social media post, or an article in the news media. But many times these portrayals are inaccurate or stigmatizing, so more people with disabilities must be involved in the creation of mass media.

Why is creating media is important for those with disabilities?

It is empowering when people with disabilities can tell their authentic stories themselves.

How can we increase accurate portrayals of the disability experience in media or the entertainment business?

People with disabilities should be a part of or consulting on all media productions. Directors, actors, writers, producers and a significant percentage of the production jobs should be people with disabilities, especially if the TV show or film has disabled characters or a disability related plotline. But even if the TV show or film doesn't have any connection to disability, it should consider adding it because 15% of people worldwide (about 1 billion people) has a disability. <https://www.wethe15.org/> Their stories deserve to be told!

In the news media and in advertising, people with disabilities should be contributors through writing, photography, design, and modelling.

The media and entertainment industries will have more accurate stories about disability when people with disabilities are involved.

Finally, if a person with a disability can't be hired as an actor, director or writer, they should be hired as a consultant to make sure the disability experience is portrayed accurately. For example, if a main character has autism and an autistic actor can't be found, the production should have an autistic person on set at all times to consult and make sure the autistic character is realistic.

How can we promote more inclusion in media?

People with disabilities can get training to work in certain kinds of media. My organization, the Global Alliance for Disability in Media and Entertainment (GADIM), has a list of training programs here:

<https://gadim.org/working-in-mass-media/>

Also, people with disabilities can write, take photos, and shoot video and post them online and on social media to illustrate to the world that they have contributions to make to media.

How can we reduce ableism, stigma, discrimination in media?

By hiring people with disabilities at all levels of media production. When media are created by nondisabled people who believe negative stereotypes and myths about disabilities, the results are ableist and stigmatizing representations.

How do you feel about people with disabilities creating media, for example The Kamloops Self Advocate Newsletter?

It's wonderful. It enables people who are self-advocates to make their perspectives heard.

How can people celebrate diversity in media? How can people promote more people with disabilities creating media?

The average reader or viewer of media should complain when nondisabled actors are cast to play a disabled character or when a disability topic is misrepresented in the media. If the media understand that readers and viewers want authentic and accurate representations of disability, they will begin to change.

What is your new book and how can people buy it when it is released?

Disabled People Transforming Media Culture. It will be published by an international academic publisher, Taylor & Francis, so will be available everywhere. It should be available by the end of 2023.

Description of it: "The book will tell the stories of all the disabled people who have been influential in creating modern mass media. They are mostly unknown in mainstream popular culture and media channels, but their work deserves to be highlighted because it is changing society's understanding of disability. From podcasters, to cartoonists, to web series performers, to writers, and beyond, these disabled media creators have forever changed the fabric of mass media."

What else would you like to add?

Visit the website of my organization, the Global Alliance for Disability in Media and Entertainment (GADIM), <https://gadim.org/> to find out more about our projects trying to change media representations of disability for the better.

Disability Media

By Krystian

Chelsea Temple Jones is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Child and Youth Studies at Brock University. She is researching the relationship between journalism and disability studies.

What do you do for research around disability media in Canada?

My research focuses on relationships between journalism and the field of critical disability studies. Sometimes this looks like asking disabled folks about their experiences with journalism, sometimes this means talking with disabled journalists, and other times it means thinking with disability communities about how to make media that they believe reasonably represents people who are most impacted by disability. For example, I helped organize a 2019 panel at an event in Toronto called “Crippling the Arts in Canada,” where disabled artists encouraged one another to make their own media to avoid misrepresentation by mainstream news outlets.

How can the entertainment industry increase acting jobs for those with disabilities?

One way to do this might be to try to avoid “cripping up.” The phrase “cripping up” refers to a non-disabled actor being cast, and going to portray, a disabled character. Media makers can avoid this by making sure that disabled actors are cast as disabled (and non-disabled) characters. Casting disabled actors would also help the entertainment industry honour the adages “Nothing about us without us!” and “leadership of the most impacted!”

How can the entertainment industry improve for people with disabilities?

This is a big question that a lot of people are trying to answer. One place to begin is with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which includes recommendations about awareness-raising. For example, the Global Alliance for Disability in Media and Entertainment (GADIM) was created to promote the inclusion of disabled folks in media, and in this way, they support awareness-raising across the industry in many ways.

Why is representation important for those with disabilities?

Representation is important for everyone; each person deserves to experience a reflection of themselves in the media they encounter. The same is true for people with disabilities. What’s more, people should be able to represent themselves in the ways they choose—and this goes for people with disabilities, too. This is why representation matters not just in who we see on screen, but also in audiences, production offices, writers’ rooms, and in every other facet of media production—from the early stages of an idea right to its execution.

How can the film and media industry reduce stigma, discrimination, and stereotypes around people with disabilities?

One way to reduce stigma, discrimination, and stereotyping is to make media accessible. This means thinking about disability at all stages of media production. Projects such as the website Making Accessible Media website are available to the public—including people working in entertainment industries. This website trains people around disability representation and in how to include disability in their projects, including media projects brought to us by entertainment industries. For example, this website is used by radio producers, filmmakers, and publishers to support them in designing projects that demonstrate awareness about disability and are as accessible as possible across many platforms. This might include training about including American Sign Language interpretation, live captioning, and accessible publishing formats among other useful skills. The more people get used to experiencing accessible media, the more normalized it will become.

Outreach and Community Inclusion (CI)

By Ben

What is the difference between Outreach and Community Inclusion (CI)?

Outreach Supports: Outreach Supports can be done within the home and/or out in the community. Outreach is a life-skill based service, so your staff are assisting you in learning different skills such as banking, budgeting, laundry, cooking, etc.

Community Inclusion: Support staff help to make meaningful connections with individuals and their communities in a variety of different ways. For example, individuals may get support to access things like TCC, going for walks or coffee, or other ways of connecting with people and services.

In both cases, services support individuals with diverse abilities to lead meaningful lives and to contribute to the community. The end goal is to be more independent.



Kamloops Hearing Aid Centre



Canadian. Hearing. Excellence.

Jan & Blaine Alexandre RHIP

jan@kamloopshearingaidcentre.ca

blaine@kamloopshearingaidcentre.ca

414 Arrowstone Drive Kamloops, BC

250.372.3090

1.877.718.2211

St. Patrick Jokes

What type of bow cannot be tied?

A rainbow

Why did the leprechaun go outside?

To sit on his paddy-o

What is a leprechaun's favorite type of [music](#)?

Sham-rock 'n' roll

What do ghosts drink on St. Patrick's Day?

BOOs

When does a leprechaun cross the street?

When it turns green

What would you get if you crossed Christmas with St. Patrick's Day?

St. O'Claus

What did the leprechaun say when the video game ended?

Game clover

What's a leprechaun's favorite cereal?

Lucky Charms

What do you call a fake Irish diamond?

A shamrock

When is an Irish Potato not an Irish Potato?

When it's a French fry

Why can't you borrow money from a leprechaun?

Because they're always a little short



St. Patrick Day Quotes

"May your blessings outnumber the shamrocks that grow and may trouble avoid you wherever you go."

Irish Blessing

"Wherever you go and whatever you do, may the luck of the Irish be there with you." Irish Blessing

"Here's to good Irish friends—never above you, never below you, always beside you."

"There are only two classes of people—the Irish and those who wish they were Irish." **Therese Duffy**

"Ireland is a land of poets and legends, of dreamers and rebels."

—**Nora Roberts**

"The amount of good luck coming your way depends on your willingness to act." —**Barbara Sher**

"A [best friend](#) is like a four-leaf clover: hard to find and lucky to have." Unknown

"Part of our Irish heritage is artfully combining fine food, drinks, [music](#) and conversation on this blessed day to make good times. And showing that our Irish hearts are open and loving, anyone can be Irish on St. Paddy's Day." —Paddy O'Furniture



I'll Wear a Shamrock BY MARY CAROLYN DAVIES

Taken from <https://rainydaypoems.com/poems-for-kids/holiday-poems-for-kids/ill-wear-a-shamrock-by-mary-carolyn-davies/>
St. Patrick's Day is with us,

The day when all that's seen
To right and left and everywhere
Is green, green, green!
And Irish tunes they whistle
And Irish songs they sing,
Today each Irish lad walks out
As proud as any king.
I'll wear a four-leaf shamrock
In my coat, the glad day through,
For my father and mother are Irish
And I am Irish too!



YouTube Videos

Go to YouTube and listen to these St. Patrick Day videos and have fun.

Saint Patrick's Day | History for Kids | Educational Videos for

Kids | Social Studies

St. Patrick's Day: Bet You Didn't Know | History

The History of Saint Patrick - a Short Story

Saint Patrick's Day Animated History

A Brief History of St. Patrick's Day

SHAMROCK BEAT : Irish Dance for Kids by

FunikiJam World Music

The History of St. Patrick's Day

What is St. Patrick's Day? - St. Patrick's Day

celebration for kids

I'm a Little Leprechaun - The Kiboomers Preschool

Songs & Nursery Rhymes for St Patrick's Day

St. Patrick's Day Song for Kids - Have You Ever Seen

A Leprechaun

St. Patrick's Day Dance and Freeze! | Jack Hartmann

How to Catch a Leprechaun 🍀 St Patrick's Day Read Aloud



Interactive Science:

Touch and TRY all the fun science activities.

Visit Tuesday to Saturday, 9:30 to 5:00.

For ages 2 and up.

Memberships available (they include free entry to Science World).

Easily accessible @ 458 Seymour Street, Kamloops. 250-554-2572 BLSCS.org



REGISTRATION
NOW OPEN

Environmental Voyagers

YOUTH SPRING BREAK CAMP



Creating a Better Tomorrow
for People Living With Disabilities



Archaeology Day + Roots and Shoots

MARCH 28

We will be joined by local Archeologist, Kim Christenson as well as expert flintknapper and member of the Bonaparte Indian Band Bert William, to teach us about archeology in Canada, learning to use a compass and flintknapping (making tools). We will end the day by learning how we can give back to environment through Jane Goodall's Roots and Shoots program.

Wildlife Park + Invasive Species Council

MARCH 29

On this day we will be heading to the BC Wildlife Park to learn more about wild animals that we share a home with here in Kamloops! We will also be joined by the Invasive Species Council of British Columbia to teach us what invasive species are and how you can help stop the spread of invasive plant and insect species when you're adventuring in the outdoors.



Outdoor Survival Day

MARCH 30

Outdoor Survival Day is all about engaging and connecting with nature while learning valuable life long skills. Local business *Adventuring Into Life* joins us to teach us outdoor survival skills such as building shelter, filtering water, navigation and more!

Bring backpack with lunch, extra socks, water bottle, hat, bug spray, sunscreen and waterproof jacket.

\$100 for 3 days with a People In Motion membership (\$10 annually). Camp days run from 9am - 3pm and is designed for youth aged 12-18 years old. To register for camp or for any questions please contact: programs@peopleinmotion.org | 250-376-7878 ext 1

182B Tranquille Rd. Kamloops BC V2B 3G1

Brahms' Requiem

APRIL 1
SATURDAY • 7:30PM
Sagebrush Theatre

 **KAMLOOPS
SYMPHONY**
kamloopssymphony.com
Tickets: 250.374.5483



Awareness Days

March 17th St. Patrick's Day
March 21, 2023, Down Syndrome Day
Irish Heritage Month in Canada

An Evening with Sarah Slean

MARCH 10 & 11
FRIDAY & SATURDAY • 7:30PM
Sagebrush Theatre

 **KAMLOOPS
SYMPHONY**
kamloopssymphony.com
Tickets: 250.374.5483



Thorgy & The Thorchestra



MARCH 30 & 31
THURSDAY & FRIDAY • 8:00PM
Sagebrush Theatre



KAMLOOPS SYMPHONY
kamloopssymphony.com
Tickets: 250.374.5483

issuu.com/thekamloopselfadvocate

check us out. you
will be glad you did.



we are on issuu now which is more interactive with flipbooks similar to flipping through a newspaper and is an international website too and a search bar where they can find different publishers and different papers similar to mine.



The Kamloops Self Advocate Newsletter would like to offer our condolences to the families and friends of Turkey for their loss. There was an earthquake in Turkey. We are sorry to hear about the tragic news and we wish you well.

Blazers Report


by Andrew

With a month left and a half of the regular season, the Blazers are in 1st place in the B.C. Division with 66 points. The blazers are looking forward to the playoffs and making a good run during the playoffs. But as I mentioned in one of my earlier articles, they are the hosts of the 2023 Memorial Cup presented by Kia and will be automatically into the tournament, even if they lose 4 games in one of the playoff rounds. Please look forward to my reports during the Memorial Cup.



**Enhancing Each
Day for Each
Individual.**



Committed to improving lives
of BC individuals for 30 years.

☎ : 250-828-1508

info@TCSinfo.ca
102-1450 Pearson Place
Kamloops, BC. V1S1J9
www.TCSinfo.ca



media representation

V	E	M	M	M	O	D	E	L	E	D	F	A	P
C	I	C	E	F	O	N	R	N	H	S	C	R	H
V	S	R	N	D	P	V	N	O	D	O	O	B	A
D	A	E	X	C	I	T	I	N	G	D	M	L	P
C	I	P	S	A	O	A	R	E	U	N	P	T	P
B	A	V	S	F	R	N	O	C	S	O	A	N	Y
E	R	C	E	N	C	E	E	N	L	I	S	E	D
I	S	B	N	R	Y	R	W	I	C	S	S	R	A
N	U	L	D	G	S	E	E	E	R	I	I	E	L
G	C	A	N	E	B	I	S	V	N	V	O	F	G
S	C	S	I	S	A	C	T	O	R	E	N	F	E
E	E	T	K	I	E	L	O	Y	N	L	D	I	S
E	S	N	W	O	N	K	G	N	I	E	B	D	O
N	S	E	M	P	L	O	Y	E	R	T	N	E	O

NEW ERA
ACTOR
BEING SEEN
BLAST
CARE
TELEVISION
COMPASSION
GLAD
MOVIES
DIFFERENT
DIVERSITY
SUCCESS
BEING KNOWN
EXCITING
MODEL
EMPLOYER
HAPPY
KINDNESS
MEDIA
PRODUCER

Play this puzzle online at : <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/5034716/>

No-Bake Mint-Free St. Patrick's Day Dessert

This no-bake mint-free St. Patrick's Day dessert is kid-friendly and quick & easy to make!

<https://niftymom.com/2015/03/no-bake-mint-free-st-patricks-day-dessert/>

Ingredients

- 1 Box of Vanilla Instant Pudding
- 3 Cups Milk (or amount called for on pudding package)
- Green Food Coloring
- Crushed Oreos
- Whipped Cream
- Green Sprinkles (optional)
- Candy Melts (optional)

Instructions

- 1.If making topping decorations with candy melts, do that first. Once they are melted, placed them into a sandwich bag, clip a corner (very small), and piped some shamrocks and designs on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Place in the freezer and they will be hardened by the time you are done with the recipe.
- 2.Make pudding, make according to packaging.
- 3.Once the milk and mix are combined, add a couple of drops of green food coloring. It doesn't take a lot. Let set for about 5 minutes.
- 4.Layer pudding and crushed Oreos in a bowl or dessert cups.
- 5.Top with whipped cream, sprinkles, etc.



Champions

By Krystian

This is a must-see movie and will be in movie theaters on March 10th. There should be more movies like this. It's important to see people like you in media or creating media.

It's important to celebrate and support media representation. We can do that by going to movies that celebrate disability awareness and that have disability plotlines, with actors who have diverse abilities.

It's important to see people like you in movies, to feel less alone and empowered.

COMING SOON

Releases March 10, 2023

A former minor-league basketball coach is ordered by the court to manage a team of players with intellectual disabilities. He soon realizes that despite his doubts, together, this team can go further than they ever imagined.



St. Patrick Trivia

Question: St. Patty's Day is celebrated annually on March 17, which is the anniversary of what?

Answer: Saint Patrick's death, not his birthday, like some people assume.

Question: What iconic structure turns green to celebrate Saint Patrick's Day in England?

Answer: The London Eye

Question: In the 17th century, green became associated with St. Patrick's Day. What color was associated with the holiday originally?

Answer: Blue

Question: Up until the 1970s, what used to be closed in Ireland on St. Patrick's Day?

Answer: Pubs

Question: Three-leafed shamrocks were believed to be used by Saint Patrick to explain what?

Answer: The Holy Trinity

Question: What do places like Argentina, England, Norway, Turkey, New Zealand, Canada, Moscow and India have in common?

Answer: They all celebrate St. Patrick's Day

Question: In 2020, the St. Patrick's Day parade was canceled in NYC for the first time in how many years because of COVID?

Answer: Over 250 years

What object associated with St Patrick's Day is said to bring on good luck? The Four-Leaf Clover

According to Irish Trivia, what is hidden at the rainbow's end? A pot of gold

Where was the first St Patrick's day parade held? New York City



Taken from <https://readywillingable.ca/blog/stories/yellowknife-coffee-shop-celebrates-everyday-diversity-and-inclusion/>

Yellowknife Coffee Shop Celebrates Everyday Diversity and Inclusion

Posted on July 21, 2021



Diverse cultures, races, religions, sexes, disabilities, creeds bonded together as distinct parts create an inclusive work environment where everyone can contribute based on their unique strengths. In 2009, the current owners of the *Javaroma Gourmet Coffee & Tea*, a coffee shop in Yellowknife imagined a friendly place where people could have good conversations over a good coffee. Today, this café is a must-see for Yellowknife residents who feel like they are welcomed in an environment that represents their community: tightly woven and rich in its diversity. Among the skilled baristas which produce the highest standard of coffee experience, Annie Strus has been working in the café since March 2019. Like her colleagues, Annie prepares the orders, delivers customer service, and helps clean the dining room. She was the second candidate hired through the *Ready, Willing and Able program (RWA)*; a national program that makes employers aware of the benefits of hiring neurodivergent candidates and provides access to talented candidates with an intellectual disability or on the autism spectrum.

A dream comes true.

Javaroma owner, Rami Kassem explains that his commitment to diverse hiring is part of the culture of his company which has always looked to hire people with atypical backgrounds. Rami points out that by hiring the candidates through RWA – and their local delivery partner, Employability/[Inclusion NWT](#) – he could be sure that they were not ‘employees apart’, but rather gradually integrated into the various tasks all *Javaroma* employees perform. Rami stated, “Annie was a customer of the café before she became our employee. Her dream was to work here, and we were able to make it a reality. We wanted her to evolve in an environment that gives her the opportunity to progress, in the same way as other employees.”

In terms of Annie’s on-the-job performance Rami explains: “The café offers several types of coffee and Annie refers to recipes (if needed) to prepare coffees according to the company standards. We have put in place strategies that help her respond to customer orders quickly. She also overcame her shyness, as part of the job is speaking to customers to ensure they are satisfied with their service. Customers love it. Employees too. Annie does social activities with her colleagues outside of work hours.”

Positive impact on customers

Like over 73% of other businesses who have hired via RWA^[1], *Javaroma* has reported receiving great positive feedback from customers/clients regarding their commitment to inclusion. Rami says that one of his clients came to offer Annie a bouquet of flowers to show her appreciation for the work she does. He adds: “The impact on the customers is undeniable and this is good for business. Some customers come to the café only because they want to encourage companies that hire in an inclusive way.”

Rami concludes by saying that his company is like a small ‘version’ of Canada; somewhere that offers everyone a chance to prosper. Rami says “We have people of diverse backgrounds, visible minorities, allophones, people with diverse backgrounds, etc.” He also points out that employers must be open to inclusive hiring and never forget that everyone may one day find themselves in a situation of disability: hence the importance of creating inclusive work environments. Overall inclusive hiring is simply good for business all around: “The employees referred by RWA are loyal, and their attitudes are exemplary.”



"DIVERSITY IS BEING INVITED TO THE PARTY;
INCLUSION IS BEING ASKED TO DANCE."

VERNA MYERS, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION EXPERT



Kindness and Compassion with Lisa Felepchuk

By Lisa Coriale

Can you tell me a little bit about yourself?

My name is Lisa Felepchuk and I'm a writer and editor originally from Toronto, Ontario. I've worked in the lifestyle editorial realm for the last 13 years and it's where I met my partner, Coleman Molnar. We quit our desk jobs in 2016 and moved into a vintage

camper van in 2016 together and travelled and worked from our van for two years. Currently, I'm living in beautiful Vancouver, BC.

What do you do for a living?

My partner and I own and operate a boutique media company and work from wherever there's wifi. We're writers by trade and contribute to a variety of national print and digital publications and also do content marketing and social media management for brands and businesses.

What does kindness and compassion for yourself, and others mean to you?

Compassion and kindness is such an important part of human existence. I think it's something that I learned from my parents at a young age. My mom worked in the corporate world during her career (my dad stayed home and raised us—not very common in the 90s!) and people always asked her “What's in your water?” as if she was taking something that just made her extra kind and friendly. But I think the compassion and kindness that she showed to just about everybody is what helped her excel at her role in the corporate world. Even as a child, I was very aware that people considered my mom caring and positive, and I think that deeply influenced me. I think kindness and compassion is such an important part of a person and as an adult, I like to surround myself around people who also value these traits.

Why is it important to show kindness and compassion to others?

Showing kindness and compassion to others is a form of respect. I feel understood and valued when someone shows me kindness and compassion, and I want for others to feel the same. Kindness is infectious. When someone does something nice for you, even if it's something small like bringing you a hot drink when you're having an off day, it's something you remember and want to pay it forward. Plus, I think being kind and compassionate is so much easier than being mean and negative.

How do you show kindness and compassion to others?

I'm much more of a listener than a talker, and I think being able to sit and simply listen to someone is so powerful. Listening really shows compassion and kindness as you're taking a genuine interest in someone else's life. Sometimes people don't want advice—they just want that human connection of being heard. Complimenting someone when they do a great job at something or encouraging them to keep persevering are ways I show kindness and compassion to others. Also; being understanding when something isn't going my way is another way to show compassion and kindness.

How can people show compassion when they are in the community?

I think when people are out in the community they can show compassion by putting themselves in other people's shoes. For example, if the cashier at the coffee shop seemed rude, maybe she received some bad news earlier in the day and that's why she forgot to say “thank-you” or smile. You never know what people are dealing with behind closed doors and I think it's important to give one another some grace just because our own expectation may not have been met. Humans are complicated, but at the end of the day, we all just want to be treated with respect.

What are some ways people can show kindness and compassion to people with diverse abilities?

I think people can show kindness and compassion to people with diverse abilities by treating them as equals. From what I know about spending time with you, Lisa, is that you're someone who is passionate about writing, values her family and enjoys a good hot chocolate! And do you know what? These are commonalities we both share. I think some folks lose sight of the fact that people with diverse abilities are human beings who also have opinions and passions and dreams.

When we think about being kind to ourselves, it involves all areas of our lives, including the physical, emotional, and mental pieces. How can people keep their mental health in shape?

For me, my mental health and overall happiness is deeply tied to my productivity. Whenever I file a writing assignment, finish a meeting with a client or complete a fitness class I immediately get a serotonin boost. So, I think writing a To-Do list and making sure to accomplish one thing each day, no matter how small, is really important to feel good mentally. Getting outdoors and enjoying this beautiful province is also a great way to improve mental health. Same with Face Timing a friend.

Continued on next page



Kindness and Compassion continued

What does being kind to yourself look like?

I think being kind to yourself is to be patient. Also; not comparing yourself to others. It's so easy to look at what other people have and in turn feel like what you have isn't enough. I certainly have days where I catch myself feeling like I'm not keeping up with my peers, but I try to practice gratitude every day, even if it's something small like mindfully picking one thing that happened during the day I'm thankful.

What would you say to those people who have negative views or attitude towards people with diverse abilities?

I would tell people who have negative attitudes towards people with diverse abilities that their actions are deeply harmful and hurtful. I would ask them to consider why they have such a narrow perspective and ask them to imagine what their life would be like in the shoes of the person they are looking down at. I think ignorance can come from a lack of education and so, in certain situations, there is an opportunity to educate and enlighten someone who might have a negative outlook towards people with diverse abilities and change their perspective



Thomas the Tank Engine welcomes friends with autism

Taken from: https://www.npr.org/2022/09/07/1121476913/thomas-and-friends-tank-engine-peppa-autistic-same-sex?fbclid=IwAR2k1CetKbCEu_oKtySyAXVq8VB5cnTOzTbft57UmkupszeR7T7nLLw0rMw

fbclid=IwAR2k1CetKbCEu_oKtySyAXVq8VB5cnTOzTbft57UmkupszeR7T7nLLw0rMw

...beloved children's TV shows are adding diverse new characters that reflect real people more fully: *Thomas & Friends* will have its first autistic train character.....

Bruno the Brake Car — a new character voiced by a child actor with autism— is about to roam the rails on the Island of Sodor, joining Thomas the Tank Engine in the long-running *Thomas & Friends*.

Bruno is set to debut in his first episode on Monday, Sept. 12, in the U.S., and later this month in Canada and the U.K. The U.S. version of Bruno is voiced by Chuck Smith, a 10-year-old from Toronto, Canada. In the U.K., the role went to Elliott Garcia, a 9-year-old from Reading, in southeast England.

"Bruno is a Brake Car, and he is a new friend for Thomas and his friends, and he's also autistic, like me," Garcia said in a news release sent to NPR. "He is funny, smart, and he's a very relaxed character. He can get really overwhelmed, he can get worried, and he uses comedy to get past situations."

On 'Thomas,' Bruno will show his emotions

Thomas & Friends is produced by Mattel Television, which says the Bruno character was developed with the input of autistic writers and advocacy groups, including the Autism Self Advocacy Network, Easterseals Southern California, and the U.K.'s National Autistic Society.

The TV show's train engines often cope with setbacks as they keep up with Sodor's passenger and freight schedule. The show's producers say nuances in how Bruno faces those situations might help autistic kids see themselves in the character, from his sense of humor and attention to detail to his dislike of loud noises.

"He can flap his ladders to tell you if he's upset or if he's really excited, so he can use his items to show you how he's feeling," Garcia said. "His ear defenders, I do relate to, because if there's a really loud noise, I can't cope. I can get quite worried about things, I have to think of new strategies, same as Bruno."

"Bruno is a joyful, pun-making brake car" who helps other trains keep heavy cargo loads stable and likes to stick to schedules, Mattel said as it announced the character.

It's the latest move to add diversity and representation to stories about Thomas the Tank Engine, the plucky train that the Rev. W. Awdry created for his son in 1945. Looking to modernize the show, its producers have in recent years worked toward gender balance and included characters from Asia, Africa and Australia.



New funding supports more accessible taxis

Taken from <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2023MOTI0009-000119>

British Columbians who use wheelchairs or have other accessibility needs will soon see more accessible taxis on the road with the launch of the Passenger Transportation Accessibility Program (PTAP).

People who depend on wheelchair-accessible taxis often experience longer wait times or lack of service. The program will help offset the extra costs that taxi owner-operators face in providing wheelchair-accessible vehicles, which will help to increase the number of accessible taxis available.

“Promoting equity in passenger transportation is an important way that we’re working to build a better, stronger future for all British Columbians,” said Rob Fleming, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure. “By investing in a more inclusive transportation network we’re helping people participate more fully in their communities by connecting with friends, attending appointments and getting to work.”

Approximately \$3 million of funding is available for the first funding stream under this program, which will provide rebates to eligible taxi owner-operators for costs associated with maintaining their wheelchair-accessible taxis. Applications opened on Jan. 27, 2023: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/transportation/funding-engagement-permits/funding-grants/passenger-transportation-accessibility-program>

Over the next two years, the ministry will launch three additional funding streams that will focus on reducing the cost of operating, purchasing and converting wheelchair-accessible taxis, and providing training to better support the passengers who rely on them.

“Supporting industry’s efforts to provide better, more timely services for people with accessibility needs helps address barriers many people face every day,” said Dan Coulter, Minister of State for Infrastructure and Transit. “In line with our commitments under the Accessible British Columbia Act, this funding will help industry meet the needs of clients and make getting around easier and safer for everyone.”

The launch of the Passenger Transportation Accessibility Program follows the passing of Bill 40 in the fall of 2022, which established new responsibilities and authority for the registrar of passenger transportation to support passenger transportation accessibility.

The accessibility program will be funded using revenues collected from the per-trip fee that came into effect in September 2019 as part of the Province’s efforts to introduce ride hailing and to modernize the taxi industry.

The per-trip fee was created to offset the regulatory costs and impacts of enabling ride-hailing operations, and to help alleviate the impact that ride hailing has on the availability of wheelchair-accessible vehicles.

Unlike ride-hailing companies, taxi companies may be required as part of their operating licence to reserve a portion of their fleet for accessible vehicles.

Quotes:

Mohan Kang, president, BC Taxi Association –

“One of the BC Taxi Association’s goals is to increase the number of accessible taxis on the road and this new program is going to do just that. The funding will help our members with important retrofitting and maintenance costs so they can provide the important accessibility services people across the province depend on.”

Carolyn Bauer, spokesperson, Vancouver Taxi Association –

“With the removal of some financial barriers, this is a great opportunity for the industry here in Vancouver to get more people where they need to go. I look forward to supporting our members and working with the Province as PTAP gets going.”

Neil Belanger, CEO, BC Aboriginal Network of Disability Services –

“Disability impacts everyone, and everyone has a right to be an active and included member of their community. Service improvements that increase equity for all people requiring transportation accommodations not only makes our communities a better place to live, but British Columbia a more welcoming and accessible province. These improvements will make better services available to B.C.’s Indigenous peoples, who experience higher disability rates than the non-Indigenous population of our province. This is an important and vital step the province is taking to improve the quality of life for some of British Columbia’s underserved populations.”



Making Dreams Come True

By Krystian

I work in partnership with Community Living BC which supports adults with developmental disabilities as well as individuals who have a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and who also have significant difficulty doing things on their own.

I work in Partnership with CLBC by doing Welcome Workshops and presenting in partnership with CLBC staff and a parent of a person who receives services from CLBC. I help families and transitioning youth coming into adult services to know about government services. We talk about the money situation and what each part of government gets and what money CLBC gets as a crown agency. I talk about what supports I get in my adult life from CLBC and the parent talks about services they have for their adult son or daughter while CLBC staff talks about eligibility and applying for services. I love getting paid by a contract with CLBC and working in the field by helping people with diverse abilities and their parents to know what to expect from CLBC. One cool thing we do is we play a game about picturing what their son or daughters' life might be like as an adult. CLBC funds services and supports and also connects people to the community.

My dream has always been to give back to society either by my newsletter or helping people with diverse abilities like me and giving back. Since I got a lot of supports in my life, I want to return the favor. I am glad to be working with CLBC and with my newsletter called The Kamloops Self Advocate and working directly with people with diverse abilities either by sharing their stories or helping people by doing presentations like Welcome Workshops. I want to keep working by doing Welcome Workshops and my newsletter for years to come. I love working with CLBC because it's a fun job and is rewarding and makes me feel good by giving back for all the support I have got in my life since I was a child and now as an adult with CLBC. I love doing good work for the community and helping society out by doing things I am very passionate about.



Spring Crafting

By Tami

I have learned a new type of craft, it is called embroidery. Embroidery is when you use a needle and thread to create a picture on a fabric canvas. Another self-advocate taught me to embroider and I really enjoy it.

I was surprised by how relaxing I found my new craft to be. I find embroidery to be more relaxing than colouring. I find embroidery relaxing because I have to focus on the craft so I am not thinking about all the other things I need to do. I might poke myself if I am not focused or if I'm thinking about other things. I was happy to learn this wonderful craft that I now love.

It's always good to try something new because you might end up enjoying it more than you thought you would. I always thought colouring was my favourite, but now I realize that I also love embroidery. If I wasn't open to trying something new, I would never have known how much I love to embroider! It can feel scary to try something new, but you won't know if you like something unless you try it.

Saint Patrick's Day Craft: Popsicle stick hat

What you'll need: Craft sticks, glue, black paper, yellow paper, green paint or a green marker, card stock.
Directions:

#1 Put 6 popsicle sticks beside each other then glue another popsicle stick along the bottom of the 6 sticks.

#2 Glue the popsicle sticks onto a piece of cardstock.

#3 Paint the popsicle sticks green.

#4 While your paint is drying, cut a rectangle out of black paper, a small square out of yellow paper, and an even smaller square out of black paper to make the belt for the hat.

#5 Glue the small black square onto the yellow square. Then glue the squares onto the middle of the black rectangle.

#6 Glue your belt onto the popsicle sticks right above the brim of the hat.

#7 Enjoy your new craft.



Fun Science at Home by BIG Little Science Centre

Amazing Air Pressure Excitement; Floating Ping Pong Balls and MORE!

Materials:

Hair Dryer
Ping-pong ball
Other lightweight balls
Balloon
Toilet paper roll
30 cm or greater round dowel or solid tube

Safety:

Be careful to keep your face out of the air flow.

Let's Go:

Set the hair dryer to cool, point it towards the ceiling, and turn it on high.

Carefully put the ping-pong ball into the centre of the air stream and let go, slowly. With luck, the ping-pong ball is now floating above the hair dryer and staying there. Yay!!!

If it fell down, try again in a slightly different place, higher or lower. Keep the hair dryer steady. This might take a few tries to find the sweet spot. Once floating, try walking slowly while continuing to hold the hair dryer straight up. Did the ball follow you?

Crazy Variations:

Try to float a balloon, or other light balls instead of the ping-pong ball.

Can you float an empty toilet paper roll?

Is it possible to float a sponge or other non-round object? Or heavier ones? Try them out.

To go really crazy, place a roll of toilet paper on your dowel, with the paper feeding off the top. Blow across the top of the loose paper and watch it take off across the room.

Want to go even bigger? Use a leaf blower for the balls, toilet paper and other items.

Why does this happen?

Moving air creates a place of lowered air pressure. The air next to the moving air rushes in to fill the space and gets carried along; this creates lift. This lifting movement is part of why airplanes are able to fly. With the toilet paper, the moving air pulls the paper along and it unrolls. For the ball, the downward pull of gravity balances the push of the air upwards, to cause the ball to float in place. Thanks to a Swiss scientist named Daniel Bernoulli for explaining this.

BIG Little Science Centre would love to see your photos and stories of your floating objects.

<https://blscs.org> 250-554-2572 blscs@blscs.org [Facebook](#) [Twitter](#)

BIG Little Science Centre is open for visits Tuesdays to Saturdays, 9:30am to 5:00pm.



Having the Support of Family and Friends

By Riley

I've been very lucky to have a supportive family. If you don't grow up with a supportive family, there are other people you can find to support you. Family and friends can create a support system.

Why is that important? Because having a support system helps us get through times of trouble. You can talk to them and lean on them for support. We learn to get through hardships with the support of friends and family and eventually know that everything will be all right.

If you are having trouble finding support, you could talk to your CLBC facilitator. Opening up to someone can be hard, but it is worth it in the end.

