

Richmond Centre for Disability

(An organization originally founded in 1985)

A New Perspective on Disability



2008 Annual Report

Prepared for the RCD Annual General Meeting on November 18th, 2008

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The RCD is an accredited member of the Independent Living Canada

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the RCD is to empower people with disabilities to participate in the community to the level of their desires and abilities by providing information, resources, support and by increasing community awareness and accessibility.

VISION STATEMENTS

The RCD is a consumer centred organization committed to enabling all people with disabilities in making informed choices, creating opportunities, meeting their goals and reaching their full potential.

We offer an empowering, friendly environment where we work to provide quality services that lead to inclusion for people with disabilities and greater public awareness.

We strive to achieve our mission by being financially sustainable with secured corporate and government funding, revenue generating programs and proactive fundraising efforts.

LONG TERM GOALS FOR RCD

1. Capacity Building
 - ◆ To provide a consistent, flexible and extensible framework for both internal development and external outreach, to promote effective integration and program
 - ◆ To be compatible with organizational vision and mission, and nationally established principles, models and standards
 - ◆ To be capable of adaptation to meet emergent needs in the community
2. Public Profile
 - ◆ To be a champion in representing the interests of people with disabilities
 - ◆ To be a leader in creating awareness of disability issues
 - ◆ To be a friend to people with disabilities
3. Activities & Services
 - ◆ To optimize resources to design cost effective and coveted services
 - ◆ To develop a broad spectrum of services to fill community gaps and reach out to under-served groups
 - ◆ To focus on technology for service delivery, marketing and empowerment
4. Community Partnerships
 - ◆ To develop partnerships that are responsive to the needs of the community
 - ◆ To enable the RCD to identify, select and obtain resources appropriate to our developmental needs
 - ◆ To be cognizant about the needs of persons with disabilities



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The success of social service initiatives depends on factors other than money: well thought-out strategies, effective leadership, intact infrastructure, vision and perseverance, and sometimes, timing and luck.

The RCD's resource centre had successfully worked for 8 years and continues to meet the needs and interests of persons with disabilities – from increasing the number of people who are physically active by developing inclusive recreational activities to providing support to access of information and resources to empowering youth to be contributing members of the community. While the priorities and objectives of the RCD change depending on the needs, issues, opportunities and challenges at hand, what remains constant is the resilience of the organization to best meet the needs of persons with disabilities in our communities.

In 2008, we undertook a thorough internal assessment and strategic planning with all stakeholders to gain a better understanding of our current standing and the needs of our members and the communities, and how we can improve our capacities and power of collaboration.

A key finding was that, for many, the value of our existence goes well beyond services and activities, it extends into the learning and knowledge developed from our experience; and more importantly what the organization stands for and how we make our voices heard in the society.

This insight was important for us as a not-for-profit organization whose mission addresses complex social issues and requires solid community partnerships.

We have embarked on a long list of tasks this year; they are grouped under different streams of actions:

Organizational Focus

- ▶ New location of centre
- ▶ IL Program restructuring
- ▶ Cross functions of manpower
- ▶ Redefine the organization's position

Knowledge Development

- ▶ Build knowledge collaboratively and from the inside out
- ▶ Create platforms for managing knowledge
- ▶ Assure sharing of knowledge and experience internally and externally
- ▶ Monitor performance

Set Priorities

- ▶ Focus on demand and needs
- ▶ People oriented and participant driven
- ▶ Promote collaboration and partnership
- ▶ Foster community development

The RCD has an important and growing role both in the design and delivery of social services, and in the way in which we are improved and held to account. Our active Board of Directors pioneered many community initiatives, and our resource centre is critical to the community's ability to deliver support and meet the significant social challenges affecting people with disabilities.

Ella Huang
Executive Director



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR 2008

- ▶ A snapshot of RCD as at end of September 2008:
 - 423 memberships
 - 6 board members
 - 14 full time and part time staff
 - 89 active volunteers
 - 645 newsletter mailing list
- ▶ The Centre was relocated to the new site on April 1, 2008 and Grand Opening was held on September 23, 2008, which enjoyed the attendance of over 200 guests.
- ▶ The organization changed its official name to "Richmond Centre for Disability", effective May 30, 2008.
- ▶ The RCD Board of Directors actively took the leads to represent the disability community by being their voices to successfully obtain more accessible taxi services, instrumental to the adoption of Universal Design Guidelines by the City of Richmond, negotiating for Accessible Pedestrian Signals and hosted All Candidates meetings.
- ▶ The total volunteer hours recorded from October 2007 to September 2008 are 7,802 hours.
- ▶ The RCD website registered record high page hit for July 2008 of 76,096; while Access Richmond website registered highest utility for June 2008 of 36,871.
- ▶ A Financial Literacy and Public Education Project was started in January 2008, and offered 26 training workshops on various topics since then.
- ▶ The RCD Chinese Support Group has registered 172 members from 114 families, as at end of September 2008.
- ▶ The RCD hosted the inaugural Annual International Wheelchair Curling Bonspiel in December 2007, with the participation of 3 International Teams, 3 National Teams and 2 Local Teams.
- ▶ The first Summer Recreational Project offered for July and August 2008 saw the average participation of over 100 participants weekly for the total 12 planned activities over the period.



RCD BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairperson:	Vince Miele
Vice Chair & Acting Treasurer:	Tom Parker
Secretary & Founding Member:	Frances Clark
Board Members:	Chris Feigel, Gabriele Lightfoot, Shawn Logan
City of Richmond Council Liaison:	Evelina Halsey-Brandt
City of Richmond Staff Liaison:	Alan Hill

Saying Thank You

We would like to recognize the contribution and appreciate the achievement of two Board Members who left us. RCD Board former Vice Chair, Arlen Johnson, passed away in November 2007; and T. N. Foo, former RCD Board Treasurer, passed away in August 2008. It is a tremendous loss to social services and our organization that they were no longer with us to provide their guidance and expertise.

2007-8 Accomplishments

The RCD Board of Directors focused its work on the most pressing issues facing persons with disabilities in the community by making its presence in various advisory committees and consultations relating to housing design, transportation, homelessness, poverty, community development, as well as health and safety; and by responding to City and community requests for our participation. Some of the key issues addressed included:

- ▶ In December 2007, the RCD representatives spoke in front of the Passenger Transportation Board Hearing to support increase supply and better quality of accessible taxi service. The RCD formed a panel with Vince Miele, Tom Parker, Frances Clark, Ella Huang and Eileen Kalshoven to emphasize the issue that existing taxi services were inadequate and/or below standard. The outcome led to the approval of a new company offering accessible taxi services.
- ▶ Tom Parker serves on the Universal Design Panel which has been instrumental to the City's official adoption of the Universal Design Guidelines in 2008.
- ▶ The RCD continued to act as the conduit for the Advocates for Sight Impaired Consumers (ASIC) to negotiate with the City of Richmond in the design and installation of Accessible Pedestrians Signals; some areas have been fruitful and some are yet to be discussed and come to consensus.
- ▶ Vince Miele was a member of the Spirit of BC Richmond Committee and the Provincial Assistive Equipment & Devices Committee; Viet Vu is on the Richmond Intercultural Advisory Committee; Rich Green is on the Slips & Fall Prevention Advisory Committee and Ella Huang on the Delta Richmond Family Council with the Community Living BC.



SERVICES & ACTIVITIES IN 2008

IL Services (October 2007 to September 2008)

Information & Networking

- ▶ An Information & Networking Coordinator is available to provide one-on-one services, responding directly to the needs of individuals and their families
- ▶ Total 2,106 client hours were delivered for direct services
- ▶ We provide, on monthly average, assistance to 540 individuals with information enquiries
- ▶ The average monthly page hit for RCD website is 67,762, representing a staggering increase of 47% from last year

Skills Development & Empowerment

- ▶ A Skills Development Coordinator is assigned to oversee the planning, development and implementation of this service
- ▶ 189 computer classes provided technology training to 1,574 students
- ▶ 486 English classes provided language training to 167 students
- ▶ 12 workshops were conducted for Disability Awareness and Sensitivity Training
- ▶ 3 courses of Life Skills Training were provided to 20 students
- ▶ 2 terms of Respite Provider Training were offered to 16 students
- ▶ Volunteer training included "Train the Trainers", "Positive Behaviour Support" for summer camp staff and volunteers, and "Community Volunteerism" for Youth Group
- ▶ 1,445 users visited the Community Access Point for computer and used the Internet for a total of 3,483 user hours; of which 493 users were provided with technology assistance
- ▶ 21 financial literacy workshops and 5 health literacy or disability related workshops were offered, which attracted a total of 293 people to attend

Peer Support & Recreation

- ▶ A Peer Support & Recreation Coordinator is assigned to oversee the activities
- ▶ Most activities are offered weekly; total average attendance on a weekly basis is 147 participants

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Average Attendance</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Average Attendance</u>
Chess Club	4	Social Group	20
Creative Arts Club	12	Table Tennis	8
Friday Frenzy	15	Tai Chi	16
Knitting Club	8	Toast Master	10
Martial Arts & Self Defence	13	Yoga	10
Singing Club	20	Walking Club	11



RCD Centre Projects (October 2007 to September 2008)

Access Richmond – Accessibility Project

- ▶ The website is currently hosting 121 listings of businesses and destinations in Richmond; this represented 35 % increases from last year's listings
- ▶ The average monthly page hit is 33,016; over 2 folds increase from last year
- ▶ 15 businesses were surveyed or underwent re-survey

Accessible Parking Permit

- ▶ 1,063 Accessible Parking Permits were issued; the monthly average was 89, which was the same as last year

Fundraising Events

- ▶ 4 meat draws at the Pioneer Pub and 3 raffle baskets draws were organized to bring new fundraising resources

Children Summer Camp

- ▶ 54 children and youth, between 6 and 18, joined the 8-week summer camp
- ▶ 11 camp staff and 19 volunteers were recruited

- ▶ Volunteers contribute a total of 1,123 Volunteer Hours, that represented 59 average hours per volunteer over the 2 month of July and August 2008

Tax Return Services

- ▶ 15 sessions of Tax Return Services were provided from February to April 2008
- ▶ 32 individuals with disabilities and/or of low income were assisted for filling out tax forms at no cost

Wheelchair Curling Bonspiel

- ▶ 3 International Teams (Great Britain, Scotland and Norway), 3 National Teams (Canadian National Selection Camp) and 2 Local Teams (Vancouver Island and Richmond) joined this inaugural event in December 2007

- ▶ Several of the players prior to this competition took part in the 2006 Paralympics, in Torino, Italy, where Canada won the gold medal

Youth Leadership Project for Youth with Disabilities

- ▶ 11 youth were recruited; and 8 successfully graduated from the second round of the project
- ▶ Total 44 mentoring meetings were conducted to provide support to participating youth
- ▶ Youth, mentors, peer mentors and youth leaders took part in 86 workshops, gatherings, elective activities and support group meetings
- ▶ The project won the 2008 Allan Simpson Award from the IL Canada



CAPACITY BUILDING IN 2008

Relocation & Official Name Change

- ▶ The new location of RCD is about 4,000 sq. ft. with full accessibility and high visibility
- ▶ There are a total of 7 parking spots for the premise, 3 of which are designated accessible parking space
- ▶ An official name change to "Richmond Centre for Disability" can better reflect our organizational positioning in the community and depict what we are representing

Strategic Planning

- ▶ The current Strategic Plan has been revised as a consequence of the Strategic Planning Session conducted in March 2008
- ▶ Goals and strategies were updated for the development of the RCD programming structure and growth of financial sustainability
- ▶ A new Communication Committee has been established to report and make recommendations directly to the RCD Board
- ▶ The Fundraising Committee has been back in focus for long term planning for financial sustainability

Partnership & Community Involvement

- ▶ The RCD actively participated in various community events such as AGM, advisory group and discussion forum, job fair and information presentation
- ▶ We formed various partnerships with Government and services providers to fill any identified service gap, for instance Sports Combo and Beyond Graduation Youth Initiative

The Richmond Centre for Disability (RCD) would like to thank the volunteers and staff for their effort to maintain the high standard of services offered. It is the dedication and commitment of countless volunteers, efficient staff and effective board governance that make the RCD a strong, successful and growing organization.

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