

Chilliwack Society for Community Living

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

November 1, 2006 – October 31, 2007



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Overview

The CSCL recognizes the importance of a comprehensive review of accessibility issues and the subsequent development and approval of a written plan to ensure that the barriers facing persons being served are addressed. The CSCL acknowledges that taking action to identify and remedy accessibility barriers within the Society is critical. However, it is also evident that most consumers face equally challenging barriers in the community.

The CSCL believes that the lives of consumers can be further enhanced through working with community to address external barriers. To that end, the Society continues its tradition of community involvement. The following events and activities demonstrate that commitment.

University/College of the Fraser Valley – Various Committees

The Executive Director sits on a number of Advisory Committees with the local University/College. These Committees address a wide spectrum of disability issues and identify training requirements for staff working in the disability field.

Chilliwack Child & Youth Committee

The CSCL ensures representation on this Committee through its Coordinator for Family & Individual Services. This broad-based Committee is intended to ensure a coordinated, multi-disciplinary approach to the delivery of community services for children and youth. The CSCL's involvement ensures that the unique needs and interests of children with special needs and their families are identified and incorporated into future planning. The CSCL's involvement extends to significant participation in planning the annual "Consultation on Chilliwack's Children" conference, Youth Matters and Strategic Planning for the Committee.

Community Transition Committee

The CSCL maintains active membership on this Committee, ensuring that children with special needs do not encounter barriers or gaps in service when making the transition from childhood to adulthood.

Practicum Placements

On an annual basis, the Society supports many practicum students from a variety of post-secondary educational institutions. This ensures that the students entering the workforce recognize the value of diversity and encourages them to include individuals with disabilities in their community activities.

The Society also provides speakers to a variety of classroom settings at both the high school and post-secondary levels. This is done to promote community awareness about the value of inclusion and the need to reduce/eliminate barriers.

Volunteer Placements

Continuing with its commitment to building inclusion at the broader community level, the CSCL encourages volunteers in many of its activities. This promotes the Society's belief that enhanced knowledge about individuals with developmental disabilities and their abilities will decrease community barriers.

Community Living Month

The CSCL promotes information and education about community living through several events held in October of each year.

Presentations

The CSCL responds to many invitations to speak to service clubs, students and other groups throughout the year. This provides another opportunity to address the philosophy of the organization and its commitment to inclusion for everyone.

In spring 2005, the CSCL committed itself to the "Mt. Kili Climb – 2006". This project was part of a provincial undertaking that we believed would change lives and the way others view individuals with disabilities. In February 2006, our Board Chair, Loren Tempel, together with Matt MacKay, a young man with a disability, joined others from across B.C. to climb Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, Africa. This was a journey that, quite literally, promoted inclusion from the top of the world, provided inspiration to others and clearly demonstrated that barriers can be overcome. Presentations and ongoing community partnerships will be sustained as a result of this project. Perhaps the most notable outcome of the climb was the strong relationship built with Promontory Heights Elementary School. The partnership is valuable not only for the overall public awareness but also because it provided the students with a visible role model who also happens to have a developmental disability. This is an image that they will carry with them throughout their lives.

Consumer Education

The CSCL supports the Chilliwack chapter of "People First" and provides funding assistance enabling People First members to attend training events and conferences that enhance their ability to participate as full citizens. For more than a decade, the CSCL has clearly recognized the need to have input directly from those it supports and has encouraged self-advocate representation on the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors is committed to the removal of barriers and will review and sign off an Accessibility Plan in November of each year. This plan will identify actions and establish timelines for the upcoming year. The Board will commit the necessary resources to ensure completion of the plan in its annual budgeting process.

Meeting Established Standards

The CSCL was achieved a 3-year accreditation through CARF in May 2005. Accreditation was selected as an additional measure of ensuring consumer-driven, quality services. The Society addresses the CARF Standards on Accessibility as set out below.

The leadership demonstrates accessibility planning that addresses the needs of the:

- a. Persons served.**
- b. Personnel.**
- c. Other stakeholders.**

Over the past 2 years, the CSCL sent out annual accessibility surveys to its members, consumers and their families, employees and other community groups. The response rate has been very low, less than 5%. Since there are many other methods in place for gathering information about accessibility concerns, it was decided not to conduct a survey for this year. The survey format will be redeveloped and the process reinstated for the 2006/07 Accessibility Plan.

Information for this plan have been gathered from:

- Monthly Supervisors' Reports
- Monthly Site Inspections
- Individual Service Planning meetings (both individuals served and their families/friends) and
- Staff Meetings (all programs).

The Accessibility Plan has been developed in direct response to the concerns and suggestions raised through these inclusive processes.

It must be recognized that the CSCL does not have the capacity to address all the identified issues, recommendations, and impacts to establish priorities. The Executive Director is designated as the official person responsible for the implementation of the plan.

- a. **Accessibility plan(s) address identification of barriers in the following areas:**
 1. **Architecture.**
 2. **Environment.**
 3. **Attitudes.**
 4. **Finances.**
 5. **Employment.**
 6. **Communication.**
 7. **Transportation.**
 8. **Any other barrier identified by the:**
 - a) **Persons served.**
 - b) **Personnel.**
 - c) **Other stakeholders.**

Each of the above barriers is included in all documents involving accessibility. The annual plan addresses these areas in detail and establishes action plans for those issues identified as a priority. *(See written plan included in this report.)*

A status report is written at least annually about the identified barriers that includes:

- b. **Time lines for the removal of barriers.**
- c. **Actions for removal of identified barriers.**

This is the fourth, consecutive annual Accessibility Plan. The completed Plan is submitted to the Board for approval and quarterly Status Reports (January, April, July, October) are provided. The approved Accessibility Plan is forwarded to staff in all program areas, providing them with the opportunity for ongoing input regarding the Society's progress in terms of addressing accessibility barriers.

In addition, the Society includes information about its Accessibility Plan in its semi-annual newsletter with a request for feedback and posts the Accessibility Plan and Status Reports on its website.

Implementation of accessibility plan(s) addresses the integration of persons served into their communities of choice.

The CSCL is an active advocate for inclusion for the individuals being served. The clearest measure of this can be found in the successful implementation of Personal Lifestyle Plans where goals are set, barriers identified and plans developed and implemented to ensure success for each individual.

Requests for reasonable accommodations are:

- a. Identified.**
- b. Reviewed.**
- c. Decided upon.**

Accommodation requests are identified and reviewed:

- Upon admission.
- During annual Personal Service Planning.
- Through Monthly Site Inventories, Monthly Supervisor's Reports and Monthly Program Reports.
- By special request.

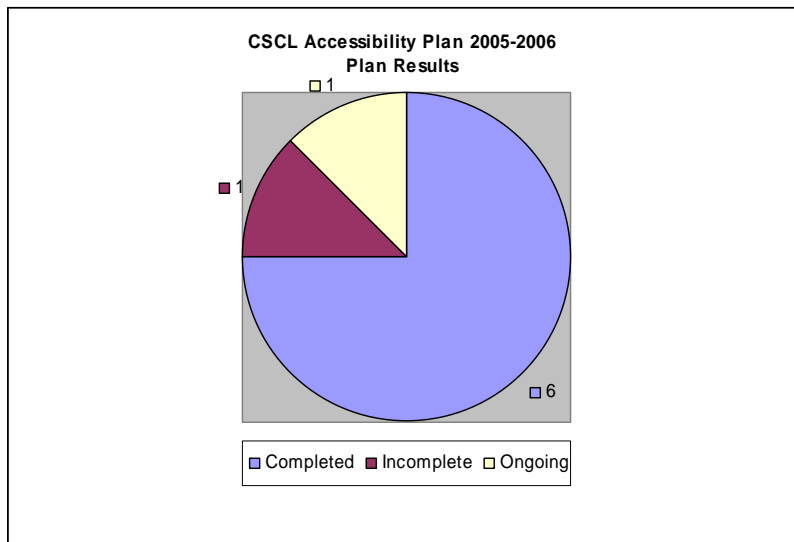
Over the past year several requests for accommodations were approved including the installation of additional grab bars, tracking systems and a modified oven.

Summary of the 2005 – 2006 Accessibility Plan

The 2005 – 2006 Accessibility Plan was adopted by the CSCL Board of Directors at a regular Board meeting in December 2005. The Accessibility Plan identified barriers and specific solutions in the following broad categories: Architecture, Environment, Attitudes, Communication, Finances, Employment, and Transportation. Status Reports were provided for Board review in January, April and July 2006 with a final report at October 31, 2006.

Status

The status of each of the “specific solutions” is indicated on the October 31st Accessibility Plan Status Report, which is included as an appendix to this document. Eight (8) Specific Solutions were identified and approved by the Board of Directors as part of the Accessibility Plan. The outcomes are displayed on the following chart.



Renovation of the small bathroom at Jasper House was not completed due to the health concerns of one of the residents in the home. While this remains an identified accessibility issue, and will form part of the 2006/07 Accessibility Plan, the ability to complete the work rests with the individuals in the home.

Supported Employment made some movement toward promoting the program with youth and their families who are eligible for services. However, they were unable to focus on the issue due to staff changes and recruitment within the program.

Architectural Barriers

The CSCL closely monitors its buildings and property to ensure accessibility for those receiving services. Several of the buildings are aging and were constructed during an era when accessibility, particularly for individuals in wheelchairs, was not a requirement. As a result, these building do not meet the Society's more recent requirements for accessibility. Minor renovations to improve accessibility in these building are completed on an ongoing basis including the addition of safety rails, ramps, lighting, etc. In addition to those items identified in the 2005/06 plan, the following improvements were made:

Adult Day Services

Installation of grab bars	\$	52.00
Installation of range to expand cooking program		691.00
O/C various recreational items		939.00
REV set up including tracking, hospital bed		9,000.00

Adult Residential

Chadsey bathroom renovation	\$	3,000.00
Chadsey installation of additional grab bars		126.00
Taylor House bathroom renovations, flooring and upgraded bed for resident		1,900.00
Wilmada flooring replacement		10,400.00
Improvements to Alexander to support residents		50,000.00

Total Cost of Accessibility Improvements \$ 76,108.00

In addition to the above, the CSCL spent \$187,000.00 to renovate and furnish the Mathieson Centre in order to ensure accessibility for children and youth. The Society also purchased the Alexander Apartment building, specifically to ensure safe housing and support for a number of individuals, for a cost of \$684,604.00.

Identified Barriers – Architectural

Wheelchair Accessible Respite

Wheelchair accessible respite is not readily available in the community. Several individuals are driving to Abbotsford to access a program there. The accessibility issue is often coupled with high health care requirements. (*This item is also addressed as part of the 2006 Strategic Plan.*)

Solution

1. Initiate further discussion with CLBC to stress the need for the service.
2. Prepare/submit additional proposals.
3. Support the affected families and individuals to lobby for a local service.

Anticipated Cost/Funding Sources

Unknown - CLBC

Person(s) Responsible

- ❖ Executive Director
- ❖ Family & Individual Services Coordinator

Completion Date

October 31, 2007

Identified Barriers – Architectural

Jasper

One of the bathrooms is not accessible to the individuals living in the home. Access to the remaining bathroom is directly through a resident's bedroom creating privacy issues for both individuals.

Solution:

1. Renovate the small bathroom to allow total accessibility.

Anticipated Cost/Funding Sources

\$10,000.00

- Jasper Reserve Funds

Person(s) Responsible

- ❖ Supervisor, Jasper House
- ❖ Adult Services Coordinator
- ❖ Manager, Finance & Administration

Completion Date

October 31, 2007

Taylor

Individuals living in the home require additional physical support in the small, upstairs bathroom.

Solution

1. Add grab bar in the bathroom as required.

Anticipated Cost/Funding Sources

\$250.00

- Operational Funds

Person(s) Responsible

- ❖ Supervisor, Taylor
- ❖ Adult Services Coordinator
- ❖ Manager, Finance & Administration

Completion Date

February 28, 2007

Environmental Barriers

There were no environmental barriers identified for the 2006/07 Accessibility Plan; however, part of the cost associated with the Alexander was the replacement of windows and installation of window air conditioners in several units. This was in direct response to the needs of persons receiving support in the apartment.

Attitudinal Barriers

The CSCL continues its commitment to ensuring that the individuals receiving support do not face attitudinal barriers. Consumers are supported to contribute to the community through a wide variety of volunteer activities with other non-profit organizations.

The CSCL concluded a major public awareness campaign in 2006 with the Mt. Kili Project. The project saw an individual with a developmental disability and a non-disabled support person climb to the top of Mt. Kilimanjaro in February 2006. This is part of a provincial project that “promoted inclusion from the top of the world”. As previously mentioned, this project provided many publicity opportunities, but more importantly, the chance to build new partnerships and encourage people to think differently about the abilities and gifts that individuals with disabilities can offer to the community.

There are no barriers identified for the current plan.

Financial Barriers

The fact is that many of the individuals supported by the CSCL live below the poverty line and struggle financially on a daily basis. The CSCL is fully committed to assisting individuals wherever possible and provided the following support over the past year.

Request	Cost
Adult Day Services	
- Sponsorship for activities/medications, etc.	\$ 75.00
- Maintain pool for consumer use.	6,725.00
Adult Outreach	
- Provide a community access program for adults living at home with aging parents.	\$ 470.00
Adult Residential	
- Assistance with Activity fee sponsorship.	\$ 2,066.00
- Assist with medication costs for individuals on a restricted income.	14,544.00
- Vacation sponsorships (including staff time).	12,500.00
Independent Living	
- Community access funds.	\$ 682.00

No new financial barriers have been identified and the CSCL will continue to address the financial issues facing the individuals receiving support as they arise and as Society funds permit. Additionally, as part of the ongoing provincial effort, the Society will actively advocate to address the poverty issues facing this population.

Employment Barriers

The CSCL continues to offer a successful Supported Employment Program for adults with developmental disabilities. The program is funded by Community Living B.C.

Individuals face a number of barriers to employment including:

- A lack of post-secondary education, especially for skills-based training.
- Inadequate transportation to outlying areas and limited hours of operations.
- Limited suitable employment base in the community and limited employer knowledge in regard to creating options for individuals with disabilities in the workplace.
- Few readily available wage subsidy or training incentive programs for employers.

In addition, due to limited funding and staffing, the program can only accept those individuals who can become independent on a job site within a limited period of time. This means that consumers who require ongoing support to maintain either competitive employment or a volunteer position are not eligible for the service. While the CSCL recognizes that this is a substantial obstacle to employment, there are currently no funding options available to change this reality.

Identified Barriers – Employment

Lack of Awareness for Eligible Consumers

SEP staff note that there is a lack of awareness about the program and its services (this is an ongoing item from the 05/06 Accessibility Plan).

Solution

1. Promote the program to the staff, eligible students and their families at the high school level.

Anticipated Cost/Funding Source

N/A – can be completed as part of the program's responsibilities.

Person(s) Responsible

- ❖ SEP Staff
- ❖ Executive Director

Completion Date

June 30, 2007

Communication Barriers

The CSCL is aware of the communication challenges faced by many of the individuals receiving supports. Over the past several years, the agency has enhanced much of its written material to make it more understandable. The organization also responded to consumer and family complaints about the main office telephone system by reprogramming the voicemail system to make it more user friendly.

Over the past year, the CSCL had its Client Handbook transposed to video at a cost of \$3,425.00 to maximize understandability for consumers. There are no barriers identified for the current plan.

Transportation Barriers

The CSCL continues to provide service throughout the greater Chilliwack area including Yarrow, Greendale, Sardis, Rosedale, Agassiz and Harrison. There is extremely limited public transportation to the outlying areas. This, combined with limited hours of operation, prevents individuals from accessing work, social, recreational and educational activities and appointments. It is particularly difficult in the evenings and on weekends. The only wheelchair accessible service operates within the time restrictions noted above; but, in addition, cannot respond to "on demand" requests for service. Even when scheduled, individuals may experience lengthy waits or times on the vehicle in order to get where they need to go.

The CSCL owns a fleet of vehicles, many of which are aging and require significant repairs on an annual basis. As the number of individuals receiving support increases, so do the numbers requiring specialized wheelchair accessible vehicles. In the past, programs have shared vehicles but this is no longer an option. Every effort is made to replace aging vehicles within existing budgets and available donated funds. Over the past year the agency committed to the following transportation purchases.

Item	Cost
Adult Day Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Purchased new wheelchair van. - Purchased HandyDart tickets to enable individuals to access services. 	\$ 8,500.00 450.00
Chadsey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Purchased new wheelchair accessible van. 	\$ 32,315.00
Supported Employment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Replaced client's bike (stolen from locked bicycle stand at back of Mary St. building) to ensure access to employment. 	\$ 350.00

Identified Barriers – Transportation

Wheelchair Accessible Transportation

Despite the purchase of several additional wheelchair accessible vehicles there continues to be a need for reliable wheelchair accessible transportation for CSCL participants.

Solution

Purchase an additional wheelchair accessible vehicle.

Anticipated Cost/Funding Source

\$40,000.00 - CLBC

Person(s) Responsible

- ❖ Manager, Finance & Administration Services
- ❖ Executive Director
- ❖ Board of Directors

Completion Date

October 31, 2007