

Fall 2022

OUT & ABOUT

Community. Connection. Belonging!

Issued October 2022



Newsletter



Anna-Maria gives a thumbs up! Find out why inside...

Anna-Maria's Gift

October is Community Inclusion month and a great time to reflect on CSCL's history and to celebrate the successes of the people and families we serve. CSCL's roots are found in the family movement and in the Sunshine Drive School, and CSCL is one of the oldest non-profit community living societies in the province. In the "Our History" section of CSCL's website, it reads: "Since its inception, the Society has endeavored to promote the inclusion of the citizens of Chilliwack who have a developmental disability into the fabric of community life. The Society began because a number of parents had a strong desire to develop resources in the community for their children with special needs. As a result, the

Society was formed and registered under the Societies Act of British Columbia in January 1954 making it one of the first agencies in the province formed for this purpose. In its formative years, the primary focus was a school for children since the provincial government had no mandate to provide an education for children with special needs." A wonderful example of inclusion in action is **Anna-Maria Keiner**. Anna-Maria is in her seventies and has lived through the community living family movement. Anna-Maria learned needlework at a young age while attending Sunshine

Drive school, and has always enjoyed arts and crafts. Anna-Maria is very creative and excels at fine detail work such as embroidery and cross-stitch. Today, she enjoys a life of full inclusion in her community, where she both works and has fun. Last Christmas, she received a needlework kit called "Garden Sampler" as a gift. Anna-Maria quickly got to work, and worked diligently on her quilt sampler for 6 months. The final result was a beautiful needlework picture of a bird. With encouragement, Anna-Maria entered her quilt sampler in Chilliwack's annual fair, where she competed against many other entries and won first place. She was very proud and says the whole experience was a lot of fun.



A Rising Star

Angela Vermeer

CSCL's is excited to share that one of our Outreach Team members, **Angela Vermeer**, (pictured left with Outreach participant, Shelby) has won the BC Community Social Services Awards of Excellence's Rising Star Award! This award was created to recognize the important work being done in the community social services sector. Many worthy nominations are received, showcasing outstanding work done by extraordinary individuals but her accomplishments stood above the rest and impressed both their member shortlisting committee and external judging panel. When Angela began her practicum at CSCL, while completing the Community Support Worker program, her intention was to work with children. Soon after she arrived, though, she realized her passion was in Outreach. As a single parent who experienced poverty and homelessness, Angela connected with and became a strong advocate for those who were in similar situations. She shows unwavering dedication to those she supports, often adjusting her own schedule and coming in on days off to ensure their needs are met. She has gone into homeless camps, shelters, and other locations to help vulnerable individuals in need of a listening ear and non-judgmental support. Perhaps Angela's greatest strength is her passion for supporting women with disabilities who are new parents. Angela actively works with new or expectant mothers to acquire the skills to parent safely and effectively. She is knowledgeable about infant development and has been involved with developing a parenting program specifically for mothers with developmental disabilities. In her four years at CSCL, Angela has cemented her position as a much-loved colleague who co-workers regularly turn to for advice and direction.



CSCL's Focus on...

During these past few years, the shortage of staff at CSCL has significantly increased (much like what other organizations, businesses and industries are experiencing). The COVID-19 pandemic has definitely impacted everyone affiliated with CSCL (Individuals, Families, Community and Employees). CSCL's Human Resources Department has always been focused on recruiting employees for the role of CSW/DSP. However, in the Fall of 2021, when the shortage of staff became critical – CSCL's leadership team made the decision to further increase its investment and focus on recruitment and retention activities.

Since 2021, these are the measures that have been implemented to address the need for more employees at CSCL.



Shauna Svekla is CSCL's Recruitment and Retention Specialist - seen here at a recent Job Fair in Chilliwack.

...Staff Recruitment

Measures Taken	Results
<p>Quadrupled our monthly budget with Indeed.ca (the number 1 job search tool for people looking for employment)</p>	<p>This resulted in CSCL being shown quickly in searches when job seekers searched up terms such as “Support Worker”, “CSW/DSP”, “Community Living”, etc. This increased the number of daily applications received.</p>
<p>Promoted CSCL’s Insight’s Program (3 day job shadowing experience for someone who is interested/curious in working at CSCL but does not have the preferred education or experience)</p>	<p>Since this program was introduced in 2018, CSCL has seen 2-4 people participate in the Insights Program each year between 2018-2021. During 2022, and the promotion of the Insights Program – CSCL has seen 29 people participate in the Insight’s program – with 27 of the candidates being hired.</p>
<p>Creation of CSCL’s Recruitment Video (which featured a CSCL employee sharing their experience working at CSCL) and implemented a Facebook Recruitment Campaign by contracting with a Marketing Professional</p>	<p>This is resulting in some new hires for CSCL. April - July 2022: The video was viewed over 25,000 times on Facebook. August - Present: The recruitment campaign was adjusted to include a few questions for viewers to answer (if they chose) once they clicked the video. Since August, there have been over 200 viewers who have answered the questions and CSCL's HR team has followed up with all of them, 23 expressed interest in employment, 6 have been hired thus far.</p>
<p>Creation of CSCL’s new Careers Website (specific around employment at CSCL, job vacancies and application form). Application form modified to only obtain bare essential information (making it easier for applicants to apply for employment)</p>	<p>January to the middle of June (and a bit in July & August) - before new career website application form was available) - there were 261 applications received over an 8 month period. From the middle of June to the end of September (since new career website rolled out) - there have been 199 applications received over a 3.5 month period.</p>
<p>Participated in Virtual and In-Person Job Careers and organized two CSCL Career & Info Fairs at CSCL (and one more planned, later in October 2022).</p>	<p>33 interviews conducted were from applicants who heard about CSCL via a job/career fair and 6 were hired. The career fairs have been very successful, seeing 15-25 people attend and has resulted in new hires for CSCL.</p>
<p>Implemented and is trialing the Employee Referral Program (employees refer people to apply at CSCL and if their referral is hired, the employee receives a financial award).</p>	<p>21 applications from July - September (3 months) have come from an Employee Referral, 4 Employees have received the financial incentive and there are more in the pipeline. CSCL's Leadership has decided to extend the Employee Referral Program for an additional 3 months (until the end of Dec. 2022).</p>

Library For ALL!!



September kicked off the start of the “Library for All” program at the Chilliwack library open for the entire community to attend. The Library, in partnership with CSCL, and a lot of hard work by CSCL’s Outreach Community Connector team, has developed an exciting new community program focused on inclusivity within the community of Chilliwack. The program is fun and educational as well - every week there is a new opportunity. From learning how to interact with animals like service dogs, to bringing out your inner artist and creating your own work of art; self-expression is always encouraged. The Outreach department makes sure that every voice

is heard, and that every person supported within the department has the opportunity to learn and delve into opportunities to be included, as well as to grow. The environment has been nothing short of amazing and gives a new light to support and growing social capital, as it also includes support from the community and not just CSCL. While this program was developed in partnership with CSCL, our ultimate goal is to see it operate independent of the organization, and grow into an inclusive opportunity for all community members, becoming a true example of Social Capital.

Meet the Board

with
Michelle Reilly



Michelle is a new Board member and works as a District Counsellor/Coordinator of Alternative Education for the Chilliwack School District.

Q: How has your experience working in the schools impacted your view of inclusive education?

A: When I first began teaching, almost 25 years ago now, I taught French as a Second Language to Middle School students. At that time, any student with a diagnosed disability was pulled out of French class and timetabled into a Learning Assistance class. As a result, my exposure and understanding of Inclusion was very limited. That all changed when my daughter was born. As my daughter's journey began to unfold, it became increasingly clear to me that our education system was not truly inclusive, as it purported to be. Rather, the practices in schools at that time, although thought to be inclusive, were stuck at an early stage in the

development of Inclusive education. In classrooms now, we are focusing on providing access points to curriculum so all our students can participate and learn in meaningful ways, interacting and benefitting from each other's contributions. It's an exciting shift and one that has the philosophy of Inclusion as its foundation.

Q: Your Favourite Quote is "A candle loses nothing by lighting another candle".

A: Yes, the act of supporting one person can transform others to act. At its root, when we support others we create a sense of empowerment, benefitting us all. This philosophy is really core to building capacity and sustainability, to developing independence and to create change. I see this at CSCL. Never have I encountered such a welcoming, inclusive, friendly, supportive, committed group of people! Both my daughter and I are truly grateful to be connected with CSCL.



Free Little Library at Mathieson Submitted by Aleksandra Paleczek

When CYS Senior Support Worker Ben Gross asked me if we could do something with books being donated from one of the local elementary schools, I instantly imagined a little library providing access to books for Sunshine Drive and the surrounding local community. The day before, while supporting a youth at a thrift store, one of the volunteers was showing us photos of the beautiful woodworking projects that her husband was creating. We chatted and soon there was a sturdy, beautifully-built little library donated to the Mathieson Center. Our Associate Director, Dan, and CYS summer employee, Nick, installed the post and book house. This month we filled it with books and activity bags and registered it with Free Little Library, a website that is part of a network of thousands of free libraries all over Canada and the US. The free library is open for anyone to take a book or leave a book. If you are around Mathieson Center, make sure to check out the library and grab a book or an activity bag, it is located on the front lawn beside our Mathieson sign.

Staff News!

There have been some changes to CSCL's Driver's License requirements making it easier to hire staff for certain positions. Check each Job Posting for more details.

Congratulations to Nicole Howard and Katrina Both for their new Manager positions in Staff Supported Homes.

Congratulations to the Be Kind, Be Calm, Be Safe Award Winners:

July Winner: Amanda Houniet
August Winner: Shannan Brown

The Be Kind, Be Calm, Be Safe Award has been officially retired as a CSCL Award.

Be Kind
Be Calm
Be Safe

Sunshine Garden Glory

With the "Growing Season" now over, here is the "Glorious" Year in Review from the Sunshine Community Garden.

77 Gardeners are now active with the Garden with 27 on a waitlist. The highlights of the year were the completion of the new arbor and the new accessibility-friendly shed; the addition of limestone to major walkways for accessibility; the 10-year anniversary celebration commemorated by the planting of several fruit trees; the start of an Accessible 'Food Forest' and the Introduction of 'FunDay Monday'. Also, 1,200

square feet of garden space was dedicated to food bank growing and along with gardener donations 105 coolers (hampers) of fresh vegetables were donated to CSCL's REV and Outreach services, Salvation Army food bank, Bowls of Hope and Ruth and Naomi's Mission. The year did end on a "sad" note as long-time Garden Coordinator, Brad Holek, has retired. Many thanks again Brad for all your work!

A Fun Summer at CI!

Participants at CSCL's Community Inclusion Services had a busy summer this season! Here are some stories from CI...

In September, CI participants joined a volunteer group called Cycling Without Age (or Barriers) at the Sunshine drive location. The weather could not have been more perfect for individuals to have a ride on a Tri-Shaw bike. For those unfamiliar with this type of bike it has seats in the front and a cyclist in the back similar to a rickshaw bike. Some of the comments from individuals were: It was so fun it was bumpy I wanted to go faster what a blast. The day was perfect not too hot and not raining and everyone seemed to enjoy the event. Flowers and a card were

given to the two volunteers Sally and Kathy to thank them for coming out. Last April a group of individuals got together to volunteer with the Vedder River cleanup society. In late July the group got an invitation to join a barbecue to thank all volunteers for their helping out with this very important activity. It was a fantastic time of music food and a boat ride on Cultus Lake. Participants said they would love to keep volunteering every year helping out with taking care of our rivers and streams.



Ashley, Karena and a Tri-Shaw volunteer share a laugh

Child & Youth News!

CSCL's Child & Youth Summer programs ended with a bang! CYS hosted a weekend summer wrap up BBQ for all registered children youth and families and the turnout was great. We had a bouncy castle, some face painting, games and everyone had an amazing time. We are already looking forward to next summer of amazing activities, fun and laughs.



Brad Says Bye...Sort of

Sunshine Community Garden Coordinator, Brad Holek, is stepping down from his role.

After nearly five years, Brad has accomplished a lot. He oversaw a large expansion in the number of beds available, where the number of gardeners went from just over a dozen to 77 currently, with a waitlist of 25 people. He is a big believer in how important a community garden is. "For people that don't have the space at home, it gives people the chance to get the hands in the dirt and to meet people." He noted that it

helped a lot of people through the pandemic, as it was a way to have a sense of community in a safe way. When asked what he would miss the most, Brad said "Oh, the people, no doubt about it. But I'm not going far. I still have my plot." Brad will also continue to help in maintaining the orchard, another accomplishment he is proud of. "When new people come on they say it feels like a village."

Board Update

CSCL's Board of Directors is elected by the Membership every year at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

CSCL's Board of Directors has reconvened their work after a summer hiatus. The first meeting held on October 3rd at the Mary St Boardroom saw eight board members and three staff in attendance.

Following a shared meal, the board reviewed and approved reports including the organization's annual Accessibility Report and Plan. Continual improvement of our own, and contribution to our community's, accessibility



Mike Robinson, CSCL President

remains a focus for CSCL. Additionally, board members received an update on the current state of provincial bargaining for our collective agreement with unionized employees. The meeting was

rounded out with scheduling the board's committee meetings for the fall, including Finance and Property Planning committees.

CSCL By The Numbers:

1 2 3

As of October 1, 2022

of
Individuals

Supported:

651



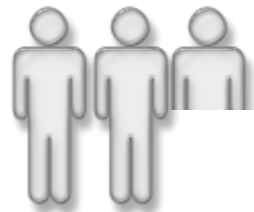
of
Employees:

360



of
**Active
Caregivers:**

241



39%



60%

1% Self Describe



0-18
33%

19-29
28%

30-49
26%

50-64
6%

65+
7%

Serving Communities in:

- Chilliwack
- Sardis
- Hope
- Yarrow
- Agassiz
- Harrison
- Deroche
- Greendale
- Cultus Lake
- Sunshine Valley



CSCL Reports

Measuring Up!

A random survey of progress updates from CSCL's official Plans and Reports:

CSCL Risk Register:

Individuals - Medication Errors: Implementation of standardized medication training for Contracted Caregivers (follow through of action initiated in previous Risk Management Plan) Caregivers will receive consistent guidance about best practices for medication administration. There will be a reduction in the number of medication errors.

Employees - Employment Practices: Implement use of Employment Contracts (to replace employment letters) for all excluded personnel. Improved clarity of employee/ employer relationship; averaging agreements where applicable; ensure compliance with all employment standards.

CSCL is
100%
Non-Profit

10
Services

56
Service/Program
Options

ONLINE PRESENCE:



1600 Likes



727 Followers



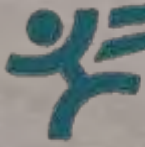
638 Followers



13678 Views



476 Followers



Caregiver Award



Congratulations to Doris McLeod (pictured) who received the latest CSCL Caregiver Award for excellence in her role as a CSCL contracted caregiver. Doris' nominator(s) wrote:

"Doris and her husband, Patrick, are a couple that really care about the individual they are supporting and his well being. They are constantly teaching and encouraging him and exposing him to new environments that he really enjoys. They introduced him to some new hobbies and fun activities and they are always going out together on their days off. The person they are supporting has shown an interest in going to church with them and he really enjoys the music once there. Doris sits with him often and explains his finances. Everything is recorded and very easy to read."



STAR Award

Congratulations to Kelly Oberholtzer (pictured) who received the latest CSCL STAR Award for excellence in her job as a CSCL employee. Kelly's nominator(s) wrote:

"Kelly is the most energetic, fun, loving person that truly enjoys every minute that she is on shift. You can always see her engaged and having fun with the individuals. She is always looking at new ways of learning and enhancing the individuals lives. You certainly know when Kelly is in the house because you can hear her having fun from one side of the house to the other.

Kelly was able to create a safe and comfortable way for an individual to communicate. She really took the time to know what would work and found the perfect program. This was amazing work and will provide the individual to now have a voice when he did not before. Purely AMAZING work."

CSSL Events...



BINGO Wednesdays!

Did you know about ZOOM BINGO

Come join us for BINGO every Wednesday, hosted by the gang at Vanmar! Email them for more details!



CSSL Photo Contest

October 2022

Submit your "Bucket List" photo entries and win prizes for a chance to become the Photo of the Year!



Zoom into Connection!

Have a great idea for a Zoom activity?

Send us your ideas to help everyone stay connected to community, family and friend!



CSS Awards of Excellence

October 26, 2022

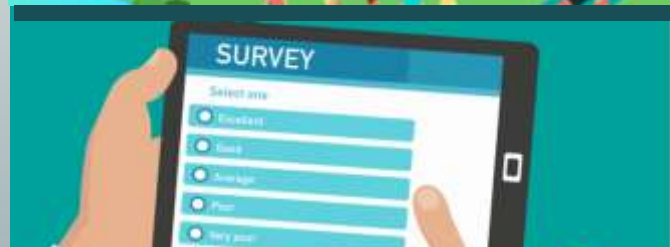
To honour "Rising Star" - Angela Vermeer, Outreach Support Worker at CSSL



Community Inclusion Event

Friday, October 21, 2022 - 5:00pm

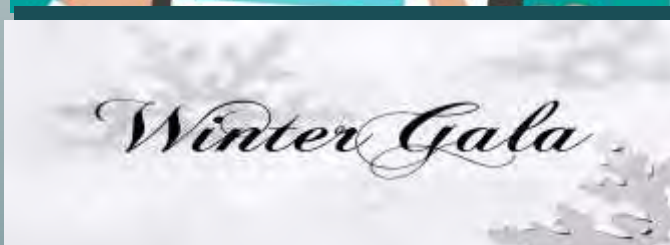
Friday, October 21st - 5:00pm at the Evergreen Hall; tickets on sale now! Phone 604-726-7726



Survey Month

November 2022

Surveys for all Individuals receiving services from CSSL will be conducted in November



Staff Winter Gala

Saturday, November 26 at Harrison Hot Springs

CSSL's Winter Gala is back! Are you ready for a night of fun, food and friends?!! Get your tickets now!

Matt's Journey in Advocacy

It's hard not to smile when you're talking with Matt Yeomans. His enthusiasm for life and helping others shine through in every conversation. Matt knows he is a likeable guy, and he brings this to his advocacy work, using his charm to open doors and talk about disability rights. He is the president of the Chilliwack chapter of People First, a rights-based self-advocacy group for people with developmental disabilities. Matt is also part of the editorial board for CLBC's "Diverse Abilities" magazine and sits on the CLBC Upper Fraser Community Council. Matt is hoping to join the Self Advocate Leadership Network in order to reach more

people. Matt's accomplished a lot in the past year, and there are many more opportunities headed his way. Near the end of October, he will be on the UVIC radio (CFUV 101.9 FM) talking about his sobriety and his story, and he has been asked to come on a podcast with



the Umbrella Society (www.umbrellasociety.ca). Matt is just getting started – his goal is to be in a position to help mentor other self-advocate groups, and to eventually have paid work as a peer mentor. Matt says he pours his heart and soul into advocacy work and he wants to help people like himself. He goes on to say, "I'm glad my life is here. It's opened my eyes up to a lot of different things. Having the proper support and people in my life – that inspired me to push forward. I learned there's more to life than drinking. I haven't touched a drink for 2 years and 8 months. I'm going to focus on my goals and people that want the best for me."

Chilliwack Society For Community Living

Supporting adults with developmental disabilities, children and youth with special needs and their families since 1954.

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Email info@cscl.org
Web www.cscl.org

"Our Vision is for a community that welcomes and includes everyone."



Follow us on Social Media:



Your Voice!

Many thanks to Julie Unger, Natalie Karam, Dan Celella, Danielle Cross, Jodie Dessau and Aileen Mathews for their contributions to this edition.

And, of course, Anna-Maria Keiner for gracing our cover!

Do you have something to say? Let's hear from you!

Please contact Jeff Gilbank at jeff.gilbank@cscl.org for your comments, editorials, and/or newsletter ideas.