



The British Columbia Lions Society  
For Children with Disabilities



January 28, 2021

## **BC Lions Society Quarterly Update January 2021**

### **Easter Seals Virtual Camps**

In 2020 we were unable to run our regular Summer Camps due to the pandemic, however we were able to successfully create and deliver a virtual camp, Camp@Home. Through interactive, fun and social online activities and programs, campers of all ages and diverse abilities learn with trained counselors through role-playing game adventures, crafts, drawing, cooking and more. This program has been an outstanding success. The feedback from participants and parents was so great that we are continuing to offer online classes and social events throughout the fall, winter and spring.

We are now planning for our Spring Break Virtual Camp and registration is now open. We have committed to provide these online camps, classes, social events and themed events throughout the year, to continue to provide social connections and learnings for campers while also providing respite for parents and caregivers.

Through the unfortunate situation the pandemic has brought us, we have realized a new and valuable programming stream that addresses socialization and isolation for the children, youth and adults with diverse abilities that we serve.

### **Easter Seals Summer Camps**

Our hope is to operate all three of our locations, Camp Winfield, Camp Squamish and Camp Shawnigan in person this summer, depending of course on what the Provincial Health Order will deem allowable. Our plans may have to once again pivot to an online format, but our planning is full steam ahead until we receive confirmation.

A summer camp tradition for over 50 years, BC Lions Society offers one of the best nature-based, outdoor summer camps for children, youth and adults (to age 49) with diverse abilities. It is a place where campers can explore and develop their abilities in a safe, warm, fun and supportive environment. A place they can just be themselves. A wide range of programs are offered during the 5 night program including swimming, sports and games, arts and crafts, canoeing, big swing rides, trampolines, camp fires, life skills and so much more.

Our summer camps have a 3:1 camper to staff ratio to ensure our campers are well looked after during their stay with us. We have a well-equipped health facility at each Camp that is staffed by registered nurses.

Funding support is needed to help us deliver camps whether in person or online.

3981 Oak Street, Vancouver, BC V6H 4H5 | 604.873.1865

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## **Capital Campaign – Camp Shawnigan**

Planning for our Capital Campaign for the redevelopment of Camp Shawnigan is underway. Plans are in the works to replace the existing Camp Shawnigan infrastructure and redevelop it into a carefully designed and fully accessible camp and community space.

The plans will include fully accessible cabins to be used for our camp programming and private vacation, conferences and rentals outside of our camp/programming seasons. Fully accessible community facilities including a dining hall, outdoor amphitheater and program and recreational spaces. These facilities will be able to be used for public rentals for corporate retreats, special events, family reunions, weddings and community gatherings. Fully accessible additional amenities will include swimming beaches, docks, a pool, sports and recreation amenities to name a few.

Stay tuned for more news and how you can be involved with this project!

## **Easter Seals House**

Families of children and adults with diverse abilities often require a number of services to enhance the health, well-being and life quality of their child and family. Respite care is one such service. Most families with children need help from time to time to care for their children while they take care of household chores, go to appointments, or to just take a break for their own self-care. To help these families, we're happy to announce that Easter Seals House will be open for respite stays during this time of the COVID pandemic. We understand the enormous challenges the COVID pandemic has put on families that have someone with diverse abilities in their household, and so, during this time, we are opening up our suites to families who are looking for, and needing, a night of respite.

For \$68/night, they will have their own private studio apartment that includes a kitchenette, two twin beds (or combine to a King bed), full bathroom and WIFI. They will also have access to laundry facilities, and the option of underground, secured parking for \$10/night. All COVID health and safety protocols are in place at Easter Seals House, so everyone can feel safe and welcome during their stay.

Easter Seals House is a home-away-from-home for families and adults who travel from out of town to Vancouver for medical treatment. Located just minutes from hospitals, it is a lifeline for thousands of families throughout BC and Yukon to help relieve them of the stress and financial burden of finding somewhere to stay in an expensive, and unfamiliar city.

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### **Compass Program**

In February, we are proudly launching the Compass Program, delivered this spring online, the program aims to help young adults with diverse abilities live as independent, empowered adults, by giving them the tools and learnings to be substantially more prepared for school/work, independent living and a successful transition to adulthood. Some of the many items that will be covered in this program are education options and funding, employment skills and traits, health and wellness maintenance, housing needs and personal life strategies.

This 16 week program begins February 8<sup>th</sup> and is targeted towards youth aged 17-25 with diverse abilities who are aging out of child supported programs. The program is designed to cultivate skills and foster courage, confidence and independence.

### **Parent Program**

We have created a virtual program for parents of individuals with diverse abilities to get together and talk, parent to parent. With many programs and services being cancelled in local communities during the pandemic, this is a new way for parents to be able to connect. Topics will range from the challenges of dealing with COVID-19, isolation in homes, programs and strategies that are working, and other issues of importance that families bring to light. This online platform program is parent led and moderated by Easter Seals staff. Registration is now open.

Thank you so much for the support, we are truly grateful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Beck".

Lisa Beck  
President & CEO