

Canadian Deafblind Association — BC Chapter

The 17th Deafblind International Conference

What an amazing opportunity! Sue Gawne, our Early Intervention Program Director, and I were so very fortunate to attend the Deafblind International Conference in Surfer's Paradise, Australia. It was a jam-packed week, beginning with the CHARGE Network Pre-conference and ending with a Gala Dinner. Sue and I were able to share information and network with so many professionals and individuals within the field of deafblindness from all over the globe! To see the possibilities and experience the cultures and much-varied levels of communication of such a diverse group was both humbling and inspiring.

The theme was 'Sharing the Knowledge to ACT: Accessibility, Communication, Technology'. I had the pleasure of participating in the Poster Presentation with Sheila McIntosh, of the Provincial Outreach Program for Students with Deafblindness (POPDB). Our poster highlighted the collaboration of POPDB and CDBA-BC, which bridges services between home and school for children with deafblindness.

Attending this conference has not only made our world broader, but also closer as we made connections that we will continue with moving forward. Sue and I are excited to participate with the CHARGE Network and work collaboratively on a new project to create a collection of videos based on relevant topics. The hope is to have this completed for the next Dbl Conference in 2023, which will be hosted by the Deafblind Network of Ontario!

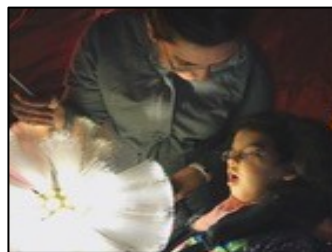
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What Happened This Summer?

With summer having drawn to a close, it is the perfect time to look back on everything that has happened. First of all, we are happy to announce that our Summer Recreation Program events were a complete hit this summer! The number of attendees for each event are growing and we would like to say 'Thank You' for making that happen. It is thanks to all the families and members attending that we continue to host events throughout the summer.

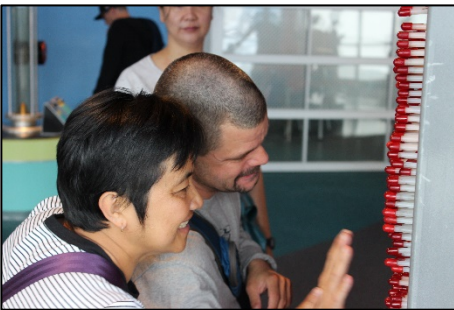
Earlier in the year, the Canadian Deafblind Association – British Columbia held its



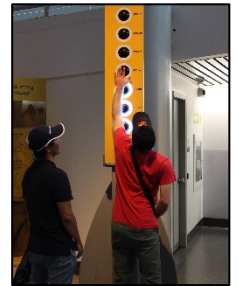
Annual General Meeting at Revs Bowling in Burnaby, BC. Accompanied by bowling, a sensory tent and pizza, who could resist? Families from the area came out to the event to further support and bring awareness to the Deafblind Awareness Month.

After setting up the sensory clinic in both Nanaimo and Abbotsford earlier this year, having it in Burnaby gave families another chance to experience it. Thanks to thoughtful development by coordinators and volunteers with the CDBA-BC, everyone enjoyed the tent.

Science World



With Science World being one of the most popular events in the Summer Recreation Program, we could not think of a better way to kick off the summer. With the weather being more on the “gloomy” side, we decided to enjoy our time indoors. For families and members who attended last year, they knew just where to go and what exhibits were their favourites. This time around, Science World featured a 1,800 square foot mirror maze in the heart of their “Numbers in Nature” exhibition. Families and members thoroughly enjoyed the experience, and are unsurprisingly looking forward to the next visit.



Pedal-Boating and the Burnaby Village Museum



With clear skies and the sun shining, it was a perfect day to be out on the lake, and that is exactly what we did! We started our day with some pedal-boating at Deer Lake in Burnaby and finished it off with a ride on the carousel at the Burnaby Village museum. Though the sun became too much for a few, it did not stop them from soaking-in all the fun that they could. If they weren't out on the lake, they were exploring the museum – taking a peek at Burnaby before it was modernized, sitting in old barber's chairs, grabbing some ice cream from an ice cream shop, and much more! With some families taking strides and trying new experiences, it was an amazing event.



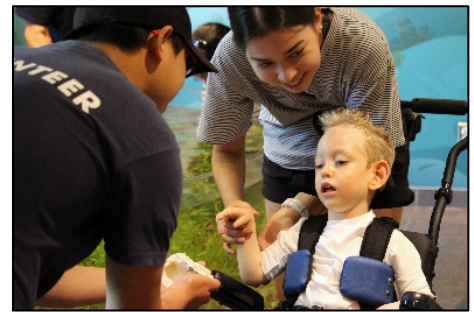
Galaxy Bowling



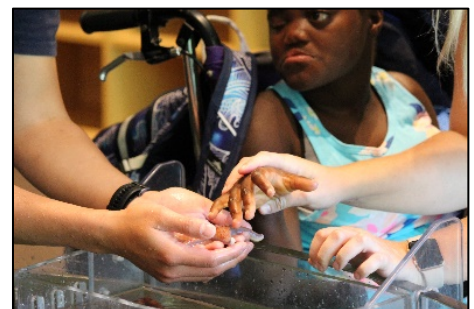
In an effort to include more families from the lower mainland, we hosted one of our events in Abbotsford's Galaxy Bowling Alley. It was a lot of fun to see everyone while giving families and members a chance to touch base with the CDBA-BC and to network with one another. While some chose to compete with one another, others just enjoyed the game as it was. The smiles that could be seen on everyone's faces definitely make this event one that we will continue to do every year. After many games and with everyone feeling accomplished, the event drew to a close.



The Vancouver Aquarium



Families from all over BC look forward to this event and mark it on their calendars when it is announced. With one of the largest turnouts yet, the CDBA-BC went forth to explore the Vancouver Aquarium's wet lab (Aquaquest). This event is an excellent opportunity for our families and members to get a hands-on tactile experience with animals from BC's marine life. With many families noticing a strong improvement in their child's responsiveness and overall interaction in the events around them, it was truly a worthwhile and fun event for everyone!



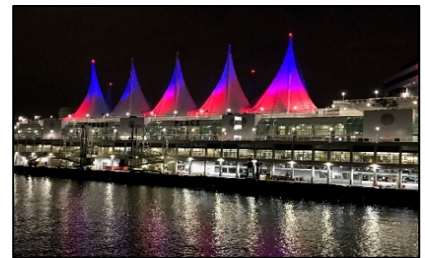
Bear Creek Park and Train



Bear Creek Park continues to never disappoint, offering a beautiful setting for chit chat, sharing stories and fun in the sun! The weather was beautiful again this year, allowing some of us to run through the water spray, while others blew bubbles and played on the swings. There was much chatter and laughter as we ate our lunches. To top it off, we all enjoyed the 'click-clack' of the train ride through the forest and tunnel. It is easy to see from the smiles on the faces that fun was had by all!



Deafblind Awareness Month



We have Helen Keller to thank for prompting us to celebrate Deafblind Awareness Month in June. Helen Adams Keller (June 27, 1880 – June 1, 1968) was an American author, political activist and lecturer and was the first person with deafblindness to earn a Bachelor of Arts Degree. She is renowned internationally for her perseverance and achievements and is an inspiration to us all. Thanks to the Intervention support of Helen's Intervenor, Anne Sullivan, Helen Keller was able to overcome the isolation in which she lived and learned to communicate and savour the wonderful moments and experiences this world has to offer.

Since 2015, we have celebrated Deafblind Awareness Month across Canada and this year in BC we saw the lighting in blue of several landmarks in June: BC Place Stadium, Vancouver City Hall, North Vancouver City Hall, South Okanagan Convention Centre (Penticton), Anvil Centre (New Westminster) and the Canada Place Sails. A group of staff and individuals with deafblindness from CDBA-BC and the Deafblind Planning Committee gathered for dinner and a photo-op at the Anvil Centre and at the Canada Place Sails.

Our AGM was once again paired with our Family Bowling Event to kick off the month and this year we also offered the opportunity for individuals to explore our Sensory Tent. This month's events continue to delight many in BC and across Canada as we celebrate deafblindness awareness!



Eyes That Never Lie (Villanelle)

You stare into eyes that will never lie,
listen for sounds he will never speak;
a broken doll that can only cry.

At first you thought you would rather die
than live in a life so bleak;
you stare into eyes that will never lie.

Long nights of questioning why;
a twisted God's will you seek.
A broken doll that can only cry.

A turn of the wrist, a tearless sigh,
a gentle kiss upon his cheek;
you stare into eyes that will never lie.

A language of movement you begin to try
as into his world you peek;
A broken doll that can only cry.

Love begins to grow, to fly
as you learn of the two, who's weak.
You stare into eyes that will never lie;
a broken doll that can only cry.

Written September 24th, 2003[©]

John Mail

This Summer at a Glance!

