

# CHAP<sup>®</sup> Connections

Winter 2003

CHAP<sup>®</sup> Program — [respiteservices.com](http://respiteservices.com)

Volume 1, Issue 1

## In Your Hands



In your hands, you are holding the 1<sup>st</sup> of our CHAP newsletters! We hope to keep CHAP workers informed as to upcoming events, workshops, other CHAP workers' experiences and family perspectives. This newsletter is an opportunity to share your stories, pose any questions and stay connected.

### PROGRAM GROWTH

Through a partnership of agencies providing and having an interest in respite, for families who have a member with a developmental disability, funding was secured from the Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services to develop the CHAP Program. In two years, 2 coordinators have

become 3, quarterly orientation sessions have increased to once per month and two databases have grown into a website. Skill development opportunities are now available through [respiteservices.com](http://respiteservices.com) agency members.

CHAP began with the amalgamation of two worker databases, Geneva Centre for Autism and Bloorview MacMillan Children's Centre. By centralizing the registries it was hoped that connections would be made easier, more people would become familiar with respite support and the number of workers available would increase.

Since its beginning CHAP has grown significantly in the numbers of families and

workers registered. In 2000, 142 families were transferred to the CHAP database. This is in comparison to 273 families registered in 2001, and 427 families in 2002. Currently, there are 678 families active in our registry.

128 workers were transferred to CHAP. In July 2001, 88 workers joined and in 2002, 228 workers.

CHAP continues to grow and the need for workers to provide in-home support to families is on-going. As CHAP workers, you play an essential part in providing opportunities for people to become more active in their communities and in giving caregivers a much needed rest.

## A Parents Perspective

When I meet with a worker, the first thing I look for is how quickly the person responds to my first call, since most of the time I have to leave a message. If they take a long time to respond, or not at all, then I will not consider this person unless there is a good, valid reason for the delay.

At our first meeting, I focus more on the compatibility of the person's personality with that of my son. Someone can have excellent training and experience but if they do not have a good personality fit then it is likely they will not have success or it will take a long time to build a rela-

tionship. On the other hand, someone who has the right fit and has good basic knowledge and some experience, may be a better candidate. The ideal person has both the personality and excellent experience and demonstrated success.

When the worker first meets with my son this tells me a great deal about how things will work out. The first visit is about an hour. I have a good conversation with the worker and later with my son to determine the level of success of the meeting.

After this, I look for proactive and commitment on the part of the worker. They should show enthusiasm and have lots of ideas (rather than asking me what they should do). They must always be on time for sessions with my son. And they must show the ability to quickly develop a good relationship so that my son will look forward to each visit. Their sincere sense of commitment is very important.

We know what a person thinks not when he tells us what he thinks, but by his actions.

Isaac Bashevis Singer

## News and Bulletins

### WE NEED YOUR HELP!

respiteservices.com will be hosting a Respite Information Fair for caregivers, agencies and professionals to share information on respite options available to parents. We are offering families childcare and are in need of people to facilitate activities and watch over the children. If you are interested and available to provide support please contact a CHAP coordinator. The fair will take place on Friday, April 11 from 6-9 pm and Saturday, April 12 from 10am-4pm.

**We're out there!** CHAP coordinators have been busy recruiting new workers for our ever expanding family registry. We attended several career fairs at Toronto Universities. You can help too. If you have friends or family who would be interested in gaining valuable skills while working at a rewarding job tell them about CHAP and encourage them to send a copy of their resume. Recruitment is ongoing and new people can join at anytime.

**We are getting a new look!** Thanks to the generosity of Stirred Creative, respiteservices.com and the CHAP Program are having new brochures and posters designed. A special thanks to the CHAP workers and registered friends for volunteering their good looks for our photos.

**The CHAP Program is in York Region too!** For those of you living in York Region the new York coordinator, Karen Delong, will be introducing herself soon and will now be connecting you to families. If you live on the border of York and Toronto and would like to continue to support families in the GTA, let the Toronto coordinators know and your information will be kept in our database too.

**We are moving!** The CHAP Program and respiteservices.com office will be moving to a new location at the end of June 2003. Our new home will be 112 Merton Street in Toronto.

**New Workshop Series!** A series of skill building workshops will be available June, 2003 to workers through respiteservices.com. Workers will be able to enhance their skills related to providing respite support and will receive a certificate indicating workshops completed. This will be a great addition to your portfolio!

## A CHAP Workers Story

Through the CHAP program, I have connected with two wonderful young women that live in my local community: "Susan" and "Jennifer".



"Susan" and I used to travel around the city to attend a number of cultural and community events. Since meeting her one year ago, she has become increasingly active in her local community and doesn't have as much time as she used to for these entertaining diversions. Fortunately, our "companionship" has quickly evolved into a great friendship that continues to thrive. We still meet for dinner or coffee a couple of times each month.

friends. "Jennifer" and recently celebrated our first year of hard work and realized goals together.

Connecting with families through CHAP has been a very positive experience for me. Of course, finding a suitable fit between the innumerable families and workers out there is always a challenge under any circumstances. However, networking through CHAP makes the process manageable. Endurable. Even hopeful. Of course, I could have just been lucky. But I don't think so. Not entirely anyway.

"I tell you and you forget. I show you and you remember. I involve you and you understand."

Eric Butterworth

## Upcoming Events and Workshops

Jan 20–Mar 14, 2003

Event: **Snoezelen Training**

Agency: Bloorview MacMillan Children's Centre

Feb 12–May 23, 2003

Event: **Autism Workshops**

Agency: Geneva Centre for Autism

Mar 10, 2003

Event: **Behaviour Management**

Agency:

Mar 18, 2003

Event: **CHAP Orientation**

Agency: respiteservices.com

Mar 24, 2003

Event: **Intro to Total Communication and Programming**

Agency:

Apr 1, 2003

Event: **Feeding Tube and Seizure Care**

Agency:

Apr 3, 2003

Event: **Recreation Resource and Integration**

Agency: Variety Village

Apr 10, 2003

Event: **1-2-3 MAGIC**

Agency: Bloorview MacMillan Children's Centre

Apr 16, 2003

Event: **CHAP Orientation**

Agency: respiteservices.com

Apr 17, 2003

Event: **CPI–Non-Violent Crisis Intervention**

Agency: Bloorview MacMillan Children's Centre

Apr 30, 2003

Event: **Emergency First Aid Course**

Agency: Bloorview MacMillan Children's Centre

May 13, 2003

Event: **CHAP Orientation**

Agency: respiteservices.com

Jun 18, 2003

Event: **CHAP Orientation**

Agency: respiteservices.com

June 2003

Event: **"NEW" Skill Building Workshop Series**

Agency: respiteservices.com

Jul 15, 2003

Event: **CHAP Orientation**

Agency: respiteservices.com

Aug 13, 2003

Event: **CHAP Orientation**

Agency: respiteservices.com

**CHECK THE WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE WORKSHOPS/EVENTS!**

If you would like to attend an event or have further questions, please contact Natalie Blackwell at [nblackwell@respiteservices.com](mailto:nblackwell@respiteservices.com) or 416 422 7045 ext 7.

# Community Helpers for Active Participation

## Helpful Tips

Knowing where to find helpful information when supporting a person with a developmental and/or physical disability can be a daunting task. You might be asking yourself: Who? What? Where? There are a number of excellent places to choose from in the local community. Check community newspapers, phone books, parks and recreation catalogues or ask the caregiver and the person you are working with about fun activities of interest.

You can also find community-based agencies that are conducting programs for both children and adults in and around the community. Connecting with any one of these agencies will not only give you helpful information on their particular program but also answer general questions you might have about other programs and services. Please go to [respiteservices.com](http://respiteservices.com) for a list of agencies.

Here is a list of some of the places/agencies that can be helpful.

### Your Local Community:

Parks and Recreation

Toronto Island

Royal Ontario Museum

Canada's Wonderland

Water Park

Ontario Science Center

Movie Theater

Local YMCA

Community Center

Theme Parks

Toronto Zoo

Skydome

### Bloorview MacMillan Children Center:

The center has a number of community-based programs that can be accessed by members of the community. Some programs however require you to register with the center. Please call and inquire at 416 425 6220.

Snoezelen/Pool Program

Active Living Center

### Helpful Web sites:

**Inclusion.com:** is a web site geared toward inclusion and integration. The web site gives useful information on resources and upcoming events geared toward inclusion.

**Toronto.com:** list various activities in and around the Toronto area. Sections listed are: Around Town, Visiting the City, Get Out, and Discover

These are just a few areas where fun and exciting activities await you!!



## Things to Remember

### Workers registered with CHAP are reminded to:

- \* Contact a program coordinator with any changes to your information including availability, contact information or attendance at a workshop or training session. Also, as soon as you have agreed to work with a family. Include the family's name, date, times and days you will be working.
- \* Contact families as soon as you hear from them regardless if you are available to accept the contract. Parents appreciate a yes or no answer as opposed to no answer at all.
- \* Notify parents immediately once you know you are not available for a scheduled time. Parents rely on you to be there and may need to make other arrangements if you are not able to come.
- \* Keep track of the date and hours that you work
- \* Sign an agreement stipulating hours of work, rate of pay and pay schedule
- \* Give parents at least two weeks notice if you plan on ending your contract with them
- \* Check the family classifieds for new families you may be interested in connecting with



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**We would like to hear from you.** Let us know what you think about the newsletter. Do you have information to share with other CHAP workers? Do you have any questions you would like answers to? Have you discovered a great resource that other workers may want to know about? How often would you like to receive the newsletter? Please forward your comments to a CHAP Coordinator to be included in the next issue.