

Stakeholder Update: Services to Children, Youth & Families

November 17, 2020

Re: A Message from Kavita Kamat, Clinical Director of Laurel Behaviour Support Services

We're Here to Serve You!

Hello everyone,

We hope you are all keeping well and staying safe. As we head into the Winter season, and formally, the second wave of the pandemic, we would like to share with you our most recent service updates. In this letter, you will also find summaries and links to other information that is important to know as we travel this journey of supporting children, youth and their families. If we can leave you feeling supported, inspired and hopeful, we think it will add to our collective resilience, and make us stronger!

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8. [Inspiration! – Thoughts, Stories, Poems and a Little Humour. Watch “Pandemic Moments” Brought to You by Stage Door Theatre](#)

1. Staying Safe in These Times – Our Commitment to You



Behaviour Consultants are part of a team of Essential Service Workers at *posAbilities*. We have been confidently providing in-person service to all individuals and families who feel safe doing so since mid-August, and have a detailed safety plan in place that includes wearing masks and other Personal Protective Equipment as needed.

We start every workday that included in-person visits with a personal health screen, including a temperature check, and reporting how we are feeling; and we will ask you the same screening questions before we enter your home. Please contact your consultant if you or your family member is unwell, and plan to reschedule the visit.

We are also checking in with families on how they would like to receive services (in-person, remote or hybrid). Family preference guides how we deliver service and we recognize that preferences could change and our team is flexible and will adapt accordingly.

At this time, the Public Health Orders issued on November 7 for the Vancouver Coastal and Fraser Health Authorities do not impact our ability to serve you in-person, if that is your preference.

We will continue to be guided by provincial, regional and local health authorities, and other related government agencies each step of the way. Although we don't plan to take a step back to virtual service only, we will always align our practices with advice from public health officials.

If you have any questions about our services, including our safety plans, please reach out to your Behaviour Consultant.

2. Find Family Support Here



From the desk of Angela Clancy, Executive Director of the Family Support Institute of BC (FSI), we received an email outlining the results of a recent family survey focused on the pandemic experiences of families/advocates who have disabilities.

Collectively with Community Living BC (funder of adult services), Vela Canada (supporter of microboards), and Inclusion BC (advocates), the partners are developing support calls to address the primary needs that have surfaced:

- a break from caregiving; and
- knowledge that their loved one (particularly those with fragile health) will be safe if they access such respite.

Join a conversation and be part of the solution, and find the support that you and your family needs.

- FSI's "**Sharing Recipes for Respite**" gathering - Thursday, November 19 and 26 at 12 noon. For more info and to register, click [here](#).
- Vela Canada's "**Family Solution Circle**" - Tuesday, November 24 at 7pm. For more info and to register, click [here](#).

Survey says...Learning about the Impact of COVID-19 on Mental Health

Over 1,000 autistic advocates/caregivers/family caregivers from across Canada participated in a survey of their pandemic needs and experiences. [Click here](#) for more information of survey results, and recommendations for government and service providers.

3. Free Mental Health Resources for the Whole Family



Look on the [Laurel](#) or [posAbilities](#) websites and you will find a series of themed "COVID-19 Care Kits" that include information on mental health resources for all ages and abilities.

In an emergency, contact your local crisis line for immediate assistance:

Visit: <https://www.crisislines.bc.ca/>

Call: Anywhere in BC – 1-800-SUICIDE (1-800-784-2433) or Mental Health Support Line - 310-6789 (no need to dial the area code)

On November 12, BC's Representative for Children and Youth, Jennifer Charlesworth released a research report that explains how the impact of COVID-19 disproportionately impacts the mental health of children facing various challenges. To learn more about the pandemic's impact these Children and their families, read the full report, found [here](#).

4. Online Trainings – Develop Skills through PEERS®, LINK! and Triple P®



PEERS® is a Social Skills Program that brings individuals with diverse abilities together to connect and build friendships. The focus is to develop and strengthen friendship skills and teach important social behaviours. The program uses an evidence-based approach to teach social skills paired with opportunities to practice through role play, and fun and creative activities.



LINK! Safety, Relationships, Sexuality – Children and youth with diverse abilities have few opportunities to receive sexual health education that is sufficiently adapted to meet their needs. Misinformation and lack of accessible sexual health education increases their likelihood of engaging in behaviours that may put them or others at risk. Let us fill in that gap with LINK! Training for parents/caregivers wishing to support their child’s education is included. Ask your Behaviour Consultant

for details or give us a call at 778-945-1435.



Triple P® is an evidence-based positive parenting program that aims to make parenting children easier. The occasional tantrum or daily defiance? Choose how much positive parenting you need, and how you do it. Triple P® is for every parent with a child (up to 12 years of age) and helps you to: raise happy and healthy kids, promote your child’s development, teach new skills, manage misbehavior effectively and create healthy routines.

***** These trainings are available as a fee for service option and families can use their autism funding to access it. LINK! and Triple P® can also be accessed in a 1:1 format.***

5. Things to See and Do This Winter – Virtually and In-Person



Access hundreds of fun activities and learning experiences in person and online via Kids Out and About - Vancouver! Publisher Debra Ross curates things to do in Vancouver and surrounding Metro Vancouver communities, then distributes updates through a free [weekly e-newsletter](#). The website goes much further afield. Check it out here and download the [Ultimate Parent Survival Guide](#)! We also have activities and self-advocate educational materials

[online here.](#)

6. Zoom in to Your Monthly Youth Leadership Chats with BC People First



BC People First members 16-29 years of age are invited to join in Zoom conversations about all things related to self-advocacy and disability rights related in BC! To learn more and to become a member (it's free), please email bcpfcoordinator@gmail.com and let them know your name, why you are interested in joining and questions you may have. The next meeting is on November 18, from 6:30-7:30pm, held on Zoom. Your host Conrad will be excited to meet you!

7. Supporting Children in Hospital or Other Health Care Settings During COVID-19



The BC Health Minister Adrian Dix, announced a change to the **COVID-19 Essential Visitors Policy** in May. This change allows family members, or essential support person(s) to accompany people with disabilities in hospitals and health care settings. *However, not all front line staff are aware of this.* If you need to enter the hospital and want to be fully prepared, we recommend bringing the [Essential Visitors Tool Kit \(951 KB\)](#) and asking for the triage person's manager if you are not permitted to provide support. You may have to continue to work your

way up to someone who is familiar with this policy so that you can accompany the person who needs support.

8. Inspiration! Thoughts, Stories, Poems and a Little Humour



Watch: Watch this 5 minute video with **Al Etmanski** and learn about [The Power of Asking for Help](#)



Listen: [Podcast 'Good for All'](#): Episode 1. "An Innovation Mindset", Episode 2. "The Artists of Inclusion" and **coming November 18 - Episode 3. "Transitioning to Adulthood"**



Enjoy: [Poetry Reading](#) – 'Dada Ji' by Roshni Kashyap and Anjalica Solomon, speaks to the themes of family, love and grief. Watch all three videos in this series, co-created by poets with diverse abilities!



Watch: Lastly, watch Stage Door Theatre's "**Pandemic Moments**" and enjoy 5 minutes of pure fun! Watch video [here](#).

Stay connected, stay informed!

I would like to leave you with our thanks for being so supportive during this pandemic. We know it has not been easy, and we sincerely appreciate all that you do to keep yourselves, your loved ones and by extension, our team members safe.

Sincerely yours,
Kavita Kamat, M.A., M.Ed, BCBA
Clinical Director, Laurel Behaviour Support Services