

Imagine!

Get Curious with Curiko!

Contributed by the Curiko Team



curiko

Curiko is an online platform designed for EVERYONE, to spark meaningful moments of connection through reciprocal interactions between community members. We have a

shared vision – that *all humans* deserve a flourishing life, one that is made up of big and little moments of connection. Curiko is a tool that can be accessed by staff, families, persons served and community members – EVERYONE is welcome!

Our origins

Curiko comes from seven years of social research & development supported by the partnership between posAbilities, Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion (BACI), Kinsight, and InWithForward. The partnership developed Kudoz, Real Talk, Meraki, CoMakeDo and Neighbourhood Organizer, five solutions co-designed around a common goal: creating the conditions for flourishing lives and flourishing communities. Curiko brings these five solutions into one platform, and makes explicit our shared values, that are grounded in equality. Through Curiko, we can learn how to be in equal relationships, forging authentic connections with ourselves, community members, and the world around us.

What are experiences?

On the platform, you can check out online weekly group experiences that are joined, hosted and moderated by people *with and without* cognitive disabilities, such as [Offside with Bella \(Hockey Hangout\)](#), [Newsroom with Henry](#) and [Coffeehouse](#). We have recently partnered with special guest host (self-advocacy groups) within AiMHi from the Prince George Association for Community Living who proudly share [Laugh Out Loud!](#), [Every Voice Choir](#), [World Travel](#) and [Storytelling](#).

How can I get involved?

Participate

Join experiences hosted by self-advocates, staff and folks in the community sharing what they love on Curiko. Maybe you've always been curious about Hatching Chicks, Saving the Environment, Traveling the World Through Music, or How to Plan the Perfect Date. Visit www.curiko.ca and join whenever and wherever you want!

"The people leading the Zooms create a very accepting and supportive space. We greatly appreciate that the coaches offer so many Zooms to support mental health. Our daughter has been able to join a wonderful community geared to her interests and very much at her level. There is a balance of a predictable routine along with new things. Seeing our daughter happier and more fulfilled has given us a much greater peace of mind." – Chaia, Mom of a Community Member and a Community Member herself!

Host

Have an interest or a favourite hobby like dance, cooking, art or advocacy? Curiko is here to amplify the cool stuff you already do, and to help you reach a new and dynamic audience! Kelly, a team member from posAbilities, has a passion for Hip Hop and growing the dance community which he explores through hosting group and video experiences. Join us at our [Hip Hop Video Release Party on April 22](#) - come watch, learn and dance!

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Do you have a story for our quarterly newsletter or website?

Email: communications@posAbilities.ca or call 778-945-3344.



posAbilities.ca



Meet the artist

Get Curious with Curiko!

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"For me, I think it has helped me learn a lot that I've never heard before. Especially about the brain and relationships and other stuff. I feel that I've got new friends and I feel like I am part of a family." – Meghan, Community Member | Host of ["Book Club with Meghan: The Harry Potter Series"](#)

"I get to share about the things I love, such as hockey and self-advocacy while also waking up in the morning and feeling like I have a purpose! Having a purpose in life has allowed me to feel something I haven't felt in far too long... joy." – Bella, Youth Peer Coach

"As a Curiko Curator, my favourite part is getting to work with hosts. They often come in a little shy and unsure, but are open to growing. Over time you can see their confidence grow, meeting more people whose bodies and minds work beautifully different and connections are sparked over shared passions." – Allison, Curiko Curator

Moderate

Perhaps you or someone you support want to learn some facilitation skills and try their hand at moderating a Curiko zoom experience? Moderators help support experiences to make sure they run smoothly. Interested in learning more? You can sign up for [Moderator Training](#) – it's a great way to build confidence and make those important and much needed social connections!

"Coaching has given me the confidence to try new things including some things that are out of my comfort zone, like moderating and dealing with Handydart." – Katerina, Community Member | Moderator

"I learned that coaching can help me to improve my life skills, punctuality and technical support – especially as a moderator and that's beneficial for job-related skills! It helped me explore getting involved with others, connecting together with friends better and getting support." – Raymond, Community Member | Moderator

Curiko is a community where we're all equal and wonderfully different. *"This platform is so unique, in that it meets people where they are at, and welcomes them without judgement or bias into being a part of community. I know that as an immigrant to Canada, it was hard for me to build that support system and I wish I had a space like Curiko to help make that journey a bit easier."* – Aniya, Community Artist and Curiko Activation Design Lead. Curiko Director, Janey, also shares: *"Curiko wouldn't be what it is without all the contributions from wonderful community members that have really rallied over the pandemic to create moments of joy, connection, and learning that keep the community growing with a shared purpose of stamping out disability bias. We are excited to continue to collaborate and connect as we scale across BC and work towards human flourishing."*

We'd love to welcome you to the community – join us and get in touch!

"It's exciting to offer such a powerful tool that can be used in so many ways! As a coach, seeing shifts in perspective, being someone that is there to support, listen and encourage people to believe in their strengths and capabilities while offering the space to have beautiful moments of connection and belonging, is rewarding in so many ways."

– Tamsen, Curiko Organization Lead | Coach

Website: www.curiko.ca Email: hello@curiko.ca Phone: [604-862-5836](tel:604-862-5836)



Save the Date! INCLUSION Art Show & Sale

This year marks our 18th year of celebration and we're excited to host our very first hybrid show – both online and back in-person. Many of you are eager to get back to seeing one another, and we look forward to celebrating with you in-person on **Thursday, October 6 at Heritage Hall in Vancouver**. We also have the option to check out our show and purchase pieces online. We recognize that people have different comfort levels at this time, so we welcome you to join us in-person or from the comfort of your home.

Artist registration opens in June!

All artists with diverse abilities are welcome to register their paintings, pottery, glasswork, photography and more! Check out the pieces from last year's show: www.inclusionartshow.com

To join our registration list,
email us at: artshow@posAbilities.ca



Art Exhibition Shines Spotlight on Richmond Artists

Contributed by Irena Flego, Richmond Social Network

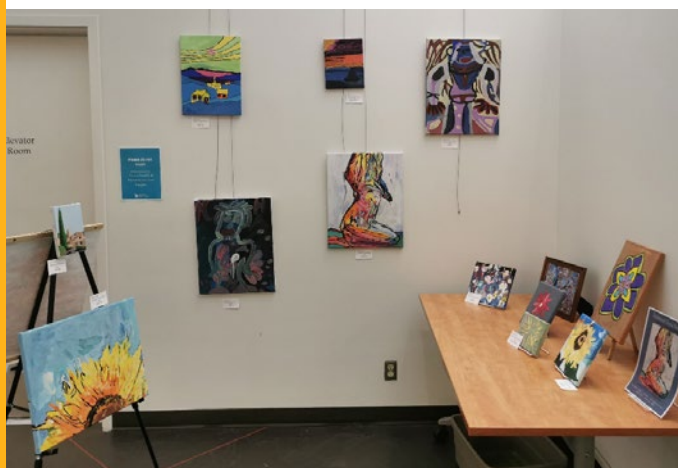
Richmond Social Network (RSN) Community Inclusion Program is proud to present an amazing art exhibition in collaboration with the Richmond Public Library.

It opened on March 10th with a music filled reception for friends, families and library patrons. A big thanks to Leon for doing wonders on acoustic guitar! The installation features 28 art works from 10 talented artists. Their pent-up energy blossomed during two years of pandemic quiet times, resulting in a great number of original pieces. Three large library walls are currently showcasing a variety of techniques used, including acrylic paintings, tapestries, mixed media, photography and paint by numbers. One of our artists, Paco, already sold three of his pieces! Community member, Biliana, shares: *"I was very captivated by the energy and colours of Paco's work. He has such distinct style - very honest and bold!"*

Thanks to the dedication and enthusiasm of Cullen, Paco, Audrey, Daisy, John, Leon, Ofa, Alex, Heather, and Bobby, the Richmond community now has the chance to enjoy their inspired and unique visual imagery. Big thanks to Ginny and Kelly from the library for collaborating on making this event possible.

Come to Richmond, bring a friend and enjoy! The exhibition is on until June 10 at the Richmond Public Library Brighthouse Branch (7700 Minoru Gate, Richmond).

Stay in the loop on all things happening with RSN by joining our group on Facebook - @Richmond Social Network Community Inclusion.



Remembering Edna Chow

Edna Chow had a gentleness about her that people could see immediately. She was a quiet person and loved by her friends. She was a hard worker, always ready to volunteer her help in any way she could. Edna participated in many groups; such as Supper Club, Community Kitchen, Buddy Club, and the events with her Community Connector. She faced challenges in her life, but in facing these challenges she had developed a self-awareness that helped her rise above her struggles. She was a lifelong resident of Chinatown and Strathcona, and was proud of her Chinese heritage. Most people's first thoughts and words when thinking of Edna are that she was a lovely person with a great deal of kindness. Edna will be dearly missed.



#Limitless Out in Community!

Contributed by Rosemary Schwarz, Community Inclusion Coordinator, #Limitless

Holiday Hampers Bring Joy to Vancouver Seniors

This past holiday season, #Limitless participated in making hampers and cards for seniors in our community with funding provided through Neighborhood Small Grants. The cards were all made by participants and included a short bio, a photo and our program cell phone number.

We assembled the holiday hampers which consisted of a small cutting board, a tea towel, a seasonal mug, chocolate powder, biscuits, seasonal crackers, chocolates, and a candy cane mouse all wrapped up!

In January, we received several thank you phone calls from the seniors who received the cards and hampers.

I received an e-mail from Anne who is a practicum student at the South Vancouver Neighborhood House:

"The seniors we delivered the hampers to were all very touched by the beautiful holiday hampers they received. It was very special to be able to give a gift to those who otherwise may not have had one this holiday season. It's been a challenging time for many and this gesture put a smile on so many faces. Thank you so much for making this possible, we couldn't have done it without your efforts and the work of your youth. Thanks again for your generosity!" - Anne-Julie Tremblay, Practicum Student, UBC Bachelors of Social Work.

Flower Pots Bring a Smile to Local Businesses

#Limitless was also busy in the new year making flower pots for the community. Together, we went out and purchased the primula flowers, made and gifted eight decorated flower pots to local businesses. Rachelle decorated this pot and together with Claudia, dropped it off to Rath Art Supplies on Valentine's Day. Everyone enjoyed this activity and it was a great introduction to the upcoming planting season!

"Thank you! The flower pot you delivered just made my day. It was really touching and sweet. It's been wonderful to see how much small businesses are valued in our community, especially as we all struggle through COVID." - Theresa Frazao, Rath Art Supplies - 2412 Main Street, Vancouver.



The BEGINNING Conference is for artists that identify as having a developmental disability, caregiver/support workers, arts programming professionals, arts administrators/leaders, or others interested in envisioning a better arts/culture sector for artists with developmental disabilities are welcome to take part in this important conversation.

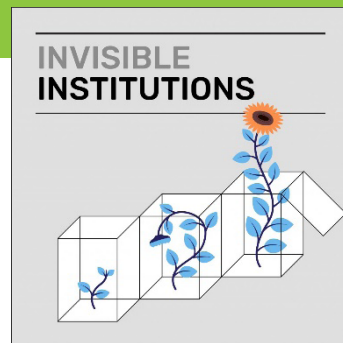
Registration – FREE for artists with developmental disabilities and caregivers. Use Promo Code: Vancouver2022. Registration for organizations/arts groups and conference details can be found [here](#).



Chimp Giving Group to Support Ukraine

Our thoughts are with the people of Ukraine and all those affected by this crisis, including those worried about family and friends there. In the face of this ongoing conflict, our hearts go out to the people experiencing immense pain and hardship during this devastating humanitarian situation.

If you'd like to make a donation to support those in need in Ukraine, we've set up a giving group through Charitable Impact Foundation (Chimp). Donate [here](#).



Invisible Institutions Podcast

Contributed by Krystian Shaw,
Publisher/Owner of The Kamloops Self Advocate Newsletter

Meet Megan Linton, a neurodivergent, disabled researcher, writer and PhD student. She is the host, producer, and writer of the Invisible Institutions podcast.

When did the podcast start and what is it about?

The podcast began in the summer of 2021. We spent the summer visiting institutions, interviewing survivors and researchers, and learning how to record.

Invisible Institutions is a documentary podcast that explores the past and present of institutions for people labelled with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Canada. We journey to the grounds of current and former institutions, interview survivors, community activists, and experts, as they work together to expose the exploitation, isolation, resistance and survival facing people labeled with disabilities.

What are institutions and what is wrong with them? How can we get rid of institutions?

According to the deinstitutionalization taskforce, institutions are “any place in which people who have been labeled as having an intellectual disability are isolated, segregated and/or congregated. An institution is any place in which people do not have, or are not allowed to exercise control over their lives and their day-to-day decisions. An institution is not defined merely by its size.

Institutions prevent people with disabilities from accessing their rights, freedoms, and communities. Institutions prevent all of our communities from including people with disabilities.

We can get rid of institutions by:

1. increasing access to affordable, accessible housing
2. making disability income supports livable
3. expanding access to home care

How did you come up with the podcast?

The idea of the podcast really came from conversations with community, survivors and people living in institutions. The issues of exploitation and institutionalization of people labelled with intellectual/developmental disabilities are still really misunderstood and under-reported. Too many people with disabilities are institutionalized and too few people understand the stakes.

My Masters Research really looked at all the different places and experiences of institutionalized, and this is a way of getting all those stories into the world.

Why do you think people should listen to your podcast?

I think people should listen to this podcast to hear the amazing stories of resistance, persistence, and disruption of people with disabilities in Canada. These are important and difficult stories that we need to make space for to truly understand the experiences of disability in Canada.

What do you want people to know about your podcast?

There are 7 episodes, and each of them tell many different stories and histories.

You can find more information on our website: <http://invisibleinstitutions.com/podcast>

How can people find the podcast?

You can find the podcast wherever you listen to podcasts and music! Apple, Spotify, Amazon, Google & Podbean.

The Roots and Rhythms that Ground Us

Spring - a time to emerge from our cocoons to experience renewal in nature, and the pure joy of living! In the following pages you'll read our COVID-19 update, and other items that are of interest to individuals and families connected to adult services and children's services respectively. We have a number of learning events coming up, summer camps to plan for, and updates on political initiatives and promises to inform you of. As always, our work is grounded in our value of inclusion and we are in hot pursuit of our vision of good and full lives, for everyone. Thank you for joining us, and for all of your support.



Our Pandemic Update

As we move from pandemic to endemic living in 2022, we look forward to bringing back our group-based activities like Community Kitchens, Buddy Club, Skill Development Trainings and more! The dates for in-person programs and events will be shared through your program liaison at *posAbilities*, or you can check our event calendar at www.posAbilities.ca/events. On this calendar, you will also find online connection opportunities offered by Curiko ("Hip Hop lesson anyone?").

If you are visiting us and need a mask, please ask. We have N95, medical and reusable cloth masks at all of our locations. We know that each individual has their own risk levels to manage, and we are supportive of anyone who chooses to wear a mask or other PPE when accessing or providing our services. During these early days of eased restrictions, we recommend that participants continue to keep a clean mask with them for use as needed/desired.

One thing that has not changed, is that we would ask anyone who is feeling ill to stay home from their program, and guests to please reschedule their visit or meeting with our team members. If a participant feels ill while attending the program, we can send home a Rapid Antigen Test Kit with them, or assist them in using one. We also recommend taking advantage of the opportunity to get your own free Rapid Test Kits, and to take a test as soon as you have symptoms that may indicate you have COVID-19. To learn more about where to get them and how to use these tests, please [click here](#).

Vaccine Passports will be discontinued on April 8, 2022, however individual businesses reserve the right to continue to request proof of vaccination. As we ease into community, we encourage everyone to maintain full vaccination status, and to get boosted when advised by public health officials.

These changes are just in time for the Easter holiday, and other cultural festivals. We are grateful for the opportunity to gather together with you in our programs, and to participate in more community activities. We are also hopeful that we can host our Annual Picnic in the late Summer and Camp Sasamat in September. Stay tuned!

At this time, masks are optional in most of *posAbilities*' homes, programs and office settings. Exceptions include programs serving individuals who are at high risk of serious illness should they contract COVID-19, or those who have [travelled internationally](#) (This includes quick trips across the border).



COMMUNITY LIVING
BRITISH COLUMBIA

UPDATE CALL

Support as Restrictions Lift

The lifting of public health restrictions impacts the health, safety and comfort of us all. We know many individuals and families are thinking through how to adjust their lives during this time. We welcome you to [read this email from Community Living BC \(CLBC\)](#) with some things to think about as you adjust. For more information, join CLBC's next COVID-19 update call for individuals and families on **Tuesday, April 19, from 1-2pm**. Deputy provincial health officer Dr. Daniele Behn Smith will be online to answer your questions. To register for the call, contact clbc.administration@gov.bc.ca

NOTHING ABOUT US
WITHOUT US

NOTHING ABOUT US
WITHOUT US

AUTISTIC

DISABLED
IS NOT A
BAD WORD



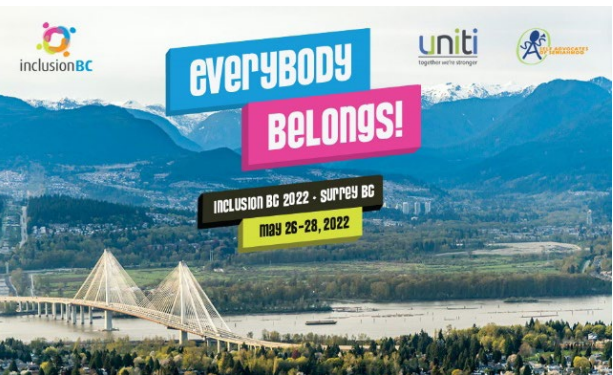
April, Autism and Acceptance

This April, we celebrate World Autism Awareness month. As a community, we are moving forward from a place of raising awareness to one of promoting kindness. Along we way, we are carving a path to full inclusion.

Here are some ways you can support:

- Amplify #ActuallyAutistic voices. Retweet, reblog, repost, share and interact.
- Check out Autism BC's video playlist that introduces autistic leaders like Nicole, Lucas, Jake and Jenny to the community. [Watch here](#).
- Join [Made by Autistics Marketplace](#) on Facebook to purchase from Autistic people this month. Many folks on there would be overjoyed to have your support.
- Wear some Autistic-related merchandise. Pins, patches, stickers, lanyards and more are available online from [Retrophiliac](#) by Margaux Wosk, an Autistic artist [here!](#)

Merchandise from [Retrophiliac](#) by Margaux Wosk



Inclusion BC Conference - Registration Open

We hope that you will join us at BC's premier learning event for intellectual disability, inclusion and diversity. This conference provides a unique opportunity to connect with the latest information and resources on inclusion and diversity. Early bird deadline - April 15!

Dates: May 26-28, 2022

Place: Sheraton Vancouver Guildford Hotel (Ask for the conference rate).

Fees & Program Info: [Conference - Programs & Services - Inclusion BC](#)

Financial/Other Assistance: Inclusion BC offers some scholarships, for more information and to apply [click here](#). Contact Monique Nelson - mnelson@posAbilities.ca if you are interested in attending and have any questions or need some support to participate.

What's New in Accessible and Affordable Housing?

Following our previous newsletter, we have more information to share with you on housing supports and emerging models. The Family Support Institute is offering a panel discussion online on April 7 at 6:30pm.

This is part two of a series. If interested, please [register here](#).

Creating Accessible and Supportive Housing

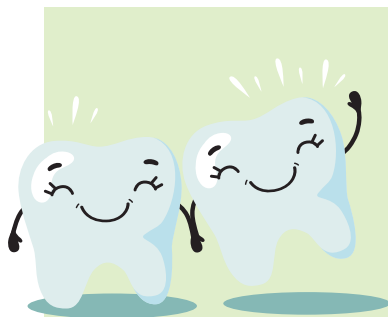
- Technology for Living
- Ean Price / Taylor Danielson.
- CLBC (supported independent living funding) - Josh Dahl.
- CISL (supported independent living funding) - Rod MacDonald.
- Individualized Funding Resource Society - Paul Gauthier.



BC Disability Collective

The BC Disability Collective (BCDC), a group of BC based organizations, researchers and clinicians, is raising concerns about the Ministry of Children and Family Development's (MCFD) sudden decision to transform the existing support network for children and youth with disabilities to a system of generalist hubs while simultaneously eliminating individualized funding. This Collective has released an analysis by [Dr. Pat Mirinda](#) (photo left) critical of the prospective assessment tools which caregivers will fill out online. Read the press release [here](#). Find more information [here](#).

posAbilities is closely monitoring the development of this framework and will apprise families as soon as possible of any changes that may impact their services.



Federal Government Announces Development of New Dental Care Program

A proposed new dental program would provide dental care for low and middle income Canadians. The program will start in 2022 covering those under 12 years old, then in 2023 it will expand to under 18-year-olds, seniors and persons living with a disability. Full implementation should be rolled out in 2025. Read the full CBC news story [here](#).



Time to Plan Camping Adventures

Easter Seals Camps: In-person day and overnight camps are back! The popular virtual camps are still available too. Children and adults ages 6 - 49 can enjoy the fun and excitement of the camp experience with trained counsellors. Check out the offerings on the [Easter Seals website here](#).

Accessible and FREE Camping at BC Provincial Parks

This program provides individuals living with a disability and facing significant financial challenges with the opportunity to connect with nature and outdoor recreation in BC Parks; an experience that they may not otherwise be able to afford. Qualified recipients are entitled to one single campsite, or one half of a double site, per night for their (one) Camping Party for free. Anyone visiting BC Parks is permitted a maximum total of 14 nights per park, per calendar year. To learn more about the social services fee exemption and to book camping spots (including accessible spots), visit these websites:

[Social Services Camping Fee Exemption – BC Parks](#)

[BC Parks - Province of British Columbia](#)

[Park Accessibility Information – BC Parks](#)