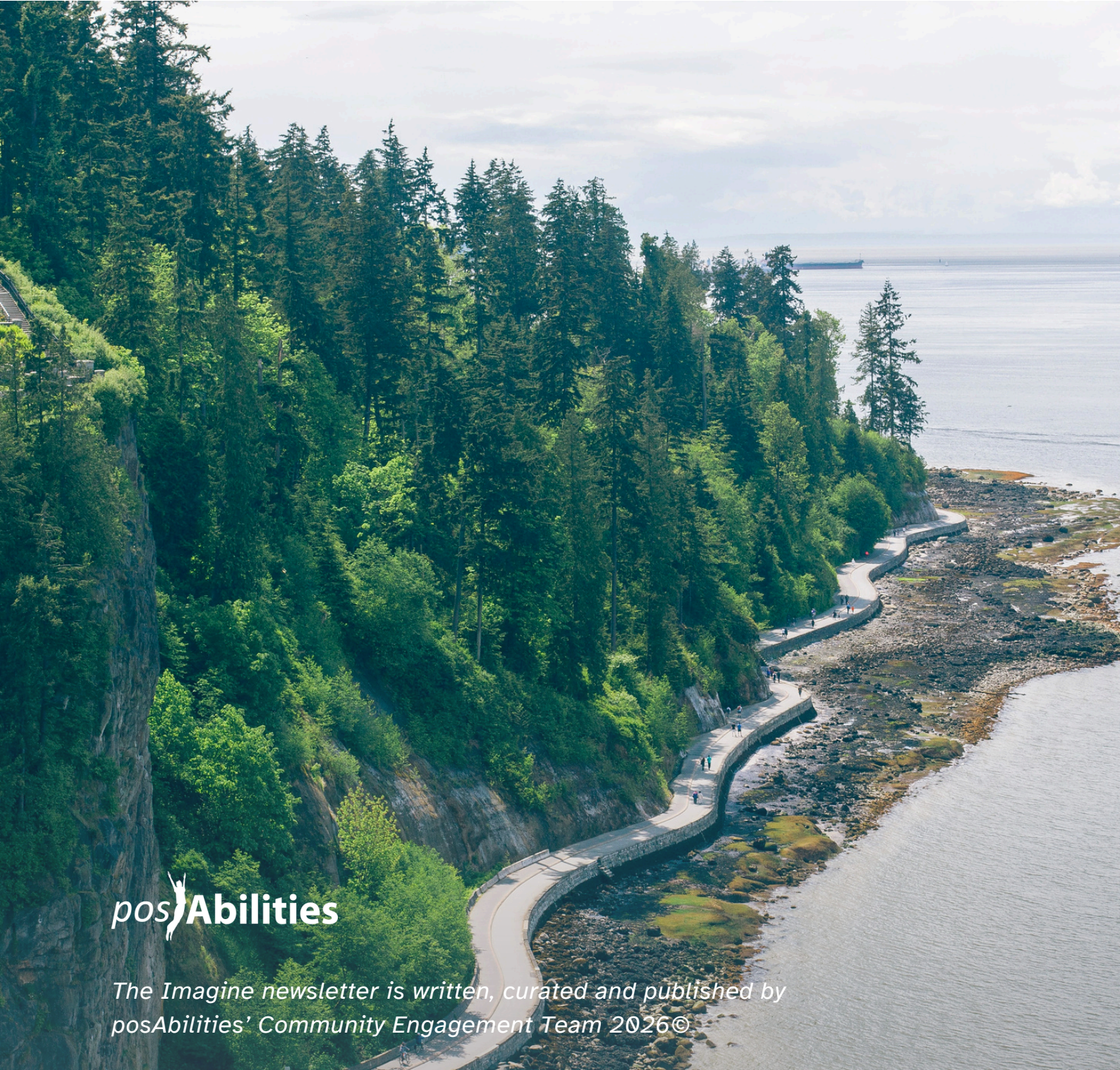


SUMMER 2026

imagine!

INSPIRING STORIES AND COMMUNITY UPDATES



posAbilities

*The Imagine newsletter is written, curated and published by
posAbilities' Community Engagement Team 2026©*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROGRAM NEWS Pages 1 - 5

Sarah Anne's Journey of Culture and Connection *Pages 1 - 3*

Vista House's World Cup Journey *Page 4*

Introducing Laurel Supports *Page 5*

UPCOMING EVENTS Pages 6 - 8

INCLUSION Art Show & Sale Returns *Page 6*

Stage Door All Stars *Page 7*

Pick Your Picnic *Page 8*

MULTIMEDIA REPRESENTATION Pages 9 - 12

We All Need a Home *Page 8*

A Place Where I Belong *Page 10*

Celebrating Accessibility Through Design *Page 11*

What's in the Hat? Laughing Matters Global Release *Page 12*

SECTOR NEWS Pages 13 - 15

Will Children Receive the Right Support at the Right Time? *Pages 13 - 14*

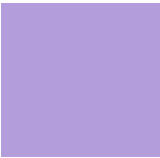
Province Exploring Changes to Social Services *Page 15*

Celebrate Diverse Abilities Magazine *Page 15*

FAMILIES MATTER Pages 16 - 17

Finding the Right Supports *Page 16*

Empowering Dads *Page 17*



CARRYING TEACHINGS FORWARD

Sarah Anne's Journey of Culture and Connection

Contributed by Amy Chang, Supported Living Network

Sarah Anne is part of posAbilities' Supported Living Network, where she receives support to live independently while pursuing the things that matter most to her. Those passions include reconnecting with her Indigenous culture, sharing traditional teachings, and creating spaces for healing and community.

When Sarah Anne introduces herself, she begins by honouring who she is, where she comes from, and the generations who came before her: "My name is Sarah Anne, and my traditional name is Mother Bear. I was born in Calgary, and my ancestry lies with my great-great-grandmother, Mary Mussle, from the Skwah Nation under the big umbrella of the Stó:lō Nation."

Her family history reflects the complex impacts of colonization. She carries both Indigenous and European ancestry – her mother's lineage includes Métis ancestry, while her father was of Scottish descent.

Reconnecting with her culture has been a lifelong journey. Raised Catholic, she grew up hearing about residential schools but had few opportunities to learn about her own Indigenous heritage or explore what it meant to her. Over the past two decades, she has been walking what she describes as the "red road", learning through ceremony, cultural teachings, and the guidance of Elders and knowledge keepers.

One teaching that has stayed with her is that knowledge should be shared so it continues to live on for future generations. Today, sharing those teachings is one of her greatest passions. She finds joy in cedar weaving, harvesting cedar on the land, drumming, and lifelong learning. She is a member of the "Wildflowers Drum Group Women on Turtle Island", where she performs at schools and community events.

"The drum is the heartbeat of Mother Earth," Sarah Anne says. "It's where I find peace and solace while drumming on the land."

Her commitment to community extends beyond sharing culture. After participating in a United Nations-funded women's insight project, she and several other women recognized a need for greater support for Indigenous fathers. Together, they co-founded the "Eagles Inspirit Protecting Indigenous Fathers Society", creating spaces where Indigenous men feel heard, supported, and empowered in their roles within families and communities.

[Story Continues on the Next Page]



One of the society's initiatives has been the creation of a sacred fire pit at Burrard View Park in partnership with a səliłwətał Elder Cedar Man, the Vancouver Park Board, and community members. The space offers a place for Indigenous men, and ultimately all Indigenous people, to gather, grieve, heal, and connect through ceremony with the guidance of Elders and knowledge keepers.

The group is also working toward placing a house post in the park to honour its history and has collaborated with Indigenous artists from the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm and Skwxwú7mesh Nations to carve cedar logs surrounding the fire. The carvings feature important cultural symbols, including a whale, eagle, king salmon, and double-headed sea serpent.

She has also helped organize virtual gatherings centred on the Seven Sacred Teachings, creating welcoming spaces for people across Canada to share songs, culture, and connection.

At posAbilities, Sarah Anne generously shares her knowledge with others. She has presented at a Buddy Club event for the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and recently visited the Limitless Community Inclusion program, where she introduced participants to the significance of medicine bags, medicine wheels, dreamcatchers, cedar weaving, and the practice of smudging.

Through her generosity, curiosity, and commitment to community, Sarah Anne continues to create opportunities for connection and understanding. By sharing her culture and teachings, she honours the generations who came before her while helping ensure this knowledge continues to be carried forward. We are grateful for the wisdom, strength, and heart she brings to our community.



Vista House's World Cup Journey

Contributed by Norilee Baltazar, Vista House

When Metro Vancouver was preparing for the FIFA World Cup, Kerry became curious about the event and was eager to explore the city. While watching the news, he noticed the vibrant decorations and large-scale preparations taking place across Vancouver. Inspired by what he saw, staff offered to help him plan a visit so he could experience the festive atmosphere firsthand.

Together with staff and his housemates, Joe and Mike, the group set out on a SkyTrain ride to Science World. There, they visited the Soccer Dome and continued their outing with a relaxing stroll along the False Creek seawall, enjoying both the beautiful waterfront views and the sunny day.

Throughout their trip, Kerry, Joe, and Mike were filled with joy, excitement, and amazement. They admired the colourful decorations and felt a strong sense of inclusivity and community within the city they call home.



Photo Credits: Norilee Baltazar



Introducing Laurel Supports

We're excited to share a new chapter for Laurel Supports, including a refreshed brand and a redesigned website that better reflects who we are today and how we support individuals, families, and communities.

This update includes:

- A clearer, warmer name
- A refreshed visual identity
- A redesigned website with simpler navigation, more accessible language, and clearer information about our services

Together, these changes are intended to make it easier for people to understand the support we offer, feel welcomed, and find the information they need.

The new website is now live, and we encourage you to explore it. It's a helpful resource to share with families, community partners, and anyone interested in learning more about Laurel Supports and our work. If you notice anything that could be improved or have feedback to share, we'd love to hear from you. Visit: laurelsupports.ca



UPCOMING EVENTS

INCLUSION Art Show & Sale Returns

The posAbilities INCLUSION Art Show & Sale is back for its 22nd year! Join us in celebrating creativity, community, and inclusion.

Explore original works across a wide range of media, including painting, collage, illustration, photography, pottery, art cards, jewelry, glassware, textiles, and more.

Event details:

- **Date/Time:** Tuesday, October 27 (10:30am-7:30pm) and Wednesday, October 28 (10:30am-6:30pm)
- **Location:** Roundhouse Community Arts & Recreation Centre - 181 Roundhouse Mews, Vancouver

Artist Registration:

Open to all artists with diverse abilities from anywhere in British Columbia.

Registration will be open from **July 13th** to **September 14th** at inclusionartshow.com. Make sure to secure your spot, as registration is on a first-come, first-served basis.

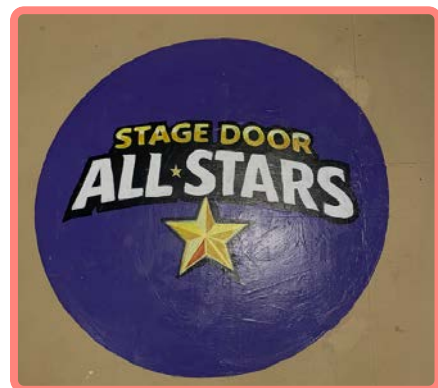


Stage Door All Stars

Last year, Stage Door taught us that laughter truly is the best medicine with their production: Emergency 911! Coming this fall is Stage Door Theatre's latest production: Stage Door All Stars. This summer has shown us the magic that sport has to bring people together. So, let's keep that summer spark going this fall as Stage Door scores laughs with sport skits.

Event details*:

- Relaxed Performance
 - Date: Friday, August 28
 - Time: 11:00am
- Evening Showtimes
 - Dates: September 1-3 & 8-10
 - Time: 7:00pm show
- Tickets: Available to purchase at the door
- Location: Heritage Hall, 3102 Main St, Vancouver



*Reserve ASL or Vocal Eye Services by calling Stage Door: [604-872-1252](tel:604-872-1252)



PICK YOUR PICNIC!

Picnic #1:

**Tuesday, August 18, 11am-2pm
Blue Mountain Park, Coquitlam**

Picnic #2:

**Thursday, August 20, 11am-2pm
Central Park, Burnaby**

We're excited to offer two picnic options this year! Please choose the one that works best for you.

**Interested in volunteering?
Contact Pam Balog:
778-945-3354 or
pbalog@posabilities.ca**



**Join us for
games, food and
fun at our annual
picnic!**



MULTIMEDIA REPRESENTATION

We All Need a Home

Who needs a home? We all do.

Through humour and powerful storytelling, the theatre production ‘We All Need a Home’ brought audiences together to explore the fundamental right to housing.

From June 4–6, UBC’s Centre for Inclusion and Citizenship and the Community Living Society presented three performances, along with an inclusive housing forum, at Massey Theatre in New Westminster.

The play featured posAbilities Board Member, Larissa Gunkel, along with a talented cast of actors, opening to a huge crowd of 200 guests. Through a blend of flair and humour, the play delivered important messages about inclusion, belonging, and the right to have a place to call home.

The event also welcomed several distinguished guests, including Stacey Ferguson of Qayqayt First Nation and Community Living BC Board President, Shane Simpson, who joined audience members in supporting this important conversation.



A Place Where I Belong

Spreading the message of the right to love globally, walking the red carpet and celebrating it locally – a community-building experience through our award-winning film.

In celebration of Pride Month and BACI's 70th anniversary on June 18, 2026, Kinsight, posAbilities, CloudStreet Media (co-executive producers), and Real Talk presented the documentary film, "A Place Where I Belong" at New Westminster's Anvil Centre.

This film highlights the lives of six 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, exploring themes of identity, love, and community. The documentary has had an incredible impact for those involved in its creation and members of the greater community.

To continue fostering meaningful dialogue, the screening was followed by a panel discussion. It didn't stop there, this free screening treated moviegoers to a red-carpet experience, a photo booth, and swag bags that included helpful information on supports provided by groups like Connecting Queer Communities.

This film has now been screened across BC, Canada, the US and in Europe, earning significant recognition along the way. Beyond its success on the festival and screening circuit, the film continues to serve as an important training and educational resource for the disability sector.

Photo Credit: Damien Bent



Celebrating Accessibility Through Design

In May, posAbilities was kindly invited to participate in Easter Seals BC/Yukon's National AccessAbility Week (NAAW) Design Contest Voting Event. Held at Easter Seals' Vancouver office, the event brought together community members to celebrate and promote accessibility and inclusion.

April Carmody represented our team as a panelist and helped review and select standout designs created by students (aged 10-18). This year's theme, "Reimagining Play, Learning, and Community Through Accessibility," inspired thoughtful and creative submissions that highlighted the importance of removing barriers and building more inclusive spaces for all.

Here are this year's winning designs! They will be featured on a commemorative T-shirt, with prizes awarded to the students and their classrooms.

Congratulations to this year's winners for their creativity and contributions to advancing accessibility!



What's in the Hat?

Laughing Matters

Global Release

What's in the Hat?: Laughing Matters is officially making its way to **YouTube**, opening its doors for audiences everywhere to join the show that makes learning fun and accessible.

After a red-carpet premiere at the UBC Robson Square Theatre promoting its initial release on TELUS Optik TV, the series' YouTube drop makes these essential, hilarious conversations accessible to everyone.

Created and led by creators with disabilities through posAbilities' Social Media Fellowship and supported by TELUS STORYHIVE, this mini-series is inspired by talk shows and popular YouTube series. Hosted by Hannah Nolan and the Fellows, and directed by Matthew Rachmat the show features various guests—including comedians like Zach Anner and academic experts—pulling unpredictable questions straight from a hat and learning more about their fields.

Where Else to Watch

STORYHIVE Video Podcasts on:

- TELUS Optik TV Video on Demand channel 9
- Stream+

Want to learn more about the Fellowship or want to find their shows? Visit their website at www.SocialMediaFellowship.ca





SECTOR NEWS

Will Children Receive the Right Support at the Right Time?

Disability advocates collaborate and respond to Ministry's plan

The BC Disability Collaborative (BCDC) has released a response to the Ministry of Children and Family Development's recent [Claims and Facts](#) document regarding the redesign of services for Children and Youth with Support Needs (CYSN).

The Collaborative welcomes the province's commitment to improving supports for children and youth with disabilities, including the significant new investment announced for CYSN services. At the same time, the response raises important questions about how the redesigned system will ensure that children and families receive the right support, at the right time, and in ways that are sufficient, flexible, and responsive to individual needs.

Key topics highlighted in the response include:

- The importance of early intervention and prevention
- Recognition of less visible or emerging support needs
- The need for reassessment when children's needs change over time
- Whether community-based services will have enough capacity to meet demand
- The continuing importance of direct and individualized funding when needed
- Reducing administrative burdens on families
- Clear accountability, outcome measures, and public reporting

The BC Disability Collaborative brings together disability organizations, self-advocates, families, professionals, and researchers from across British Columbia to advance equitable, person-centred disability policy. Readers interested in learning more about the proposed changes and the Collaborative's response are encouraged to read the full statement and follow the ongoing rollout of the CYSN service redesign.

Learn more:

- Read the [full BCDC response](#)
- Learn more about the [BC Disability Collaborative](#)





Province Exploring Changes to Social Services

The Government of British Columbia is engaging with community organizations and service providers to explore how social services are organized across government. The discussions include how ministries that support children, youth, adults, seniors, and people with disabilities—including the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (SDPR) and the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD)—could work more closely together to create a more connected system that improves coordination and makes it easier for people to access services.

For the disability sector, these changes could eventually affect how programs and services are organized and how ministries work together. At this stage, however, the work is focused on engagement, with no decisions made about future organizational structures. The engagement process will take place over the next few months.

The province has emphasized that:

- This work is not about reducing services or cutting programs.
- There are no changes to income assistance, disability assistance, eligibility, or funding as part of this process.
- Existing services and supports will continue while engagement is underway.

We'll continue to share updates as more information becomes available.

Celebrate Diverse Abilities Magazine

These stories celebrate self-advocates across B.C. who are creating positive change, supporting others, raising awareness, and building more inclusive communities. Their leadership and contributions show the many ways people are making a difference every day. We hope their stories inspire you to help create communities where everyone belongs. [Subscribe here.](#)



FAMILIES MATTER

Finding the Right Supports

As we head into the warmer summer months, many families are looking ahead to new routines, activities, and supports. It can also be a great time to explore what resources are available in the community.

posAbilities offers a comprehensive Community Resources page on our website, designed to connect families with a wide range of services and information. From financial assistance and housing supports to recreation opportunities and community programs, this curated collection brings together trusted resources to help you navigate what's available. Whether you're exploring new supports or looking for something specific, it's a great place to start.

We encourage you to visit the page and see what might be helpful for your family: www.posabilities.ca/community-resources/

Join Us Sundays

— 4pm Pacific —

Empowering DADS



Scan to register or Email
diversefamilyroots@gmail.com

Empowering DADS involves increasing father involvement through resources, community, and support to strengthen families well-being.

Aiming to create a supportive community where Dads of children with disabilities can *connect, share* experiences and *offer* mutual support.



Canadian Centre for
Caregiving Excellence

Founded in 2023, **Diverse Family Roots Society** is the **only** grassroots, non-profit, parent-led support network—the only one of its kind in the Kootenays—supporting families with children or loved ones with **diverse abilities** and **disabilities**.

Do you have a story for our newsletter?

Connect with us: communications@posAbilities.ca | 778-945-1438



We acknowledge that our work takes place on Indigenous lands across British Columbia (BC). These lands are the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of BC First Nations. We recognize and celebrate the many Indigenous Peoples – First Nations, Métis, and Inuit, who live here. Their cultures, knowledge, and teachings continue to care for the land, water, sky, and all living things. Visit [Whose Land](#) to learn more.