

POSSIBILITIES!

Family Support Institute

Fall 2011

Looking Back - Moving Forward



FSI Training Weekend 1994



Family Support Institute - RP/RFM Training Weekend 2011

FSI Training Weekend 2011



Some FSI Executive Directors - Past and Present



Some FSI Board Presidents - Past and Present

The History of the Family Support Institute
Breaking News from the Family Support Institute
The Power Of Knowing Each Other - Community Book Launches

The President's and Editor's Report

by Murray George



Looking Back – Moving Forward” is the theme of this edition of the Family Support Institute *Possibilities* Newsletter. The theme of the previous newsletter was “Unity Gives Strength”, which was also the theme of our Training Weekend this year. I think that the

themes show a progression of thought. First we need Unity, and then from Unity comes Strength. With Strength comes the ability to move forward.

There is a passage that I really enjoy by Lewis Carroll in *Alice In Wonderland* in which Alice is standing at a crossroads talking to the Cheshire Cat.

“Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?” asked Alice.
“That depends a good deal on where you want to get to” said the Cat.
“I don’t much care where” said Alice
“Then it doesn’t matter which way you go” said the Cat.

If you don’t know where you are going, then any direction will be the right direction or the wrong direction.

To know the right direction for both individuals and organizations requires you to recognize where you have come from. In this edition of *Possibilities* you can read a bit of the history of FSI – where we, as an organization, have come from. I have always felt that we need to understand where we have come from to fully be able to plan how to move forward.

The Board of Directors of FSI recently completed a Strategic Plan for our organization. We are planning for the future; we are moving forward. So it was good for us to be reminded where FSI came from. In this edition you can read the history of FSI that was shared with the Board members. You can

also read a few articles and poems that were published in previous editions of *Possibilities* newsletter. We also have some Resource Parents (RPs) tell what FSI means to them. These RPs are a mix of people fairly new to FSI and some of our more experienced RPs. All these articles can help us to realize where we, as FSI, have come from.

We also read about the Book Launches of two people whose stories are in the recently launched *Power of Knowing Each Other: Stories about informal safeguards*. In these stories we read about the past experiences of the individuals and how, through the informal safeguards created in their lives, they are moving forward.

There are two sentences that I really enjoyed in the article *Gift Minded Conversations* by Zamina Sunderji.

“The most important conversation is the one of possibility...” That is so true. We cannot move forward unless we are thinking about possibilities and that involves conversation.

Also we read the quote by Peter Block, “...we are acting and moving toward the change we want to see.” We cannot have change without moving.

All this leads us to the article about the Strategic Plan of FSI; the direction that the Board of Directors will be taking as we strive to help FSI move forward over the next two years. We have ten major goals that we will be working on. We hope you enjoy seeing where we are heading.

I hope that this edition of the *Possibilities* newsletter will help you look back to where the Family Support Institute has come from and also see how we are moving forward.



POSSIBILITIES!

Published by the Family Support Institute

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The purpose of the Family Support Institute is to strengthen and support families faced with the extraordinary circumstances that come with having a family member who has a disability.

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The Broken Arm and “Aha” Moment

by Angela Clancy, FSI’s Executive Director



My 5 year old daughter, Chayse broke her arm last week. It was her second broken arm in the past 4 months. The first one happened while I was double bouncing her on the trampoline; the trampoline we had owned for all of 45 minutes at that point. We obviously had not learned any appreciation for the

rules of safety on a fun apparatus like this! That broken arm was a bad break and required surgery, pins, hospital stay and a significant cast for 8 weeks.

The second broken arm happened at school during her first full day of kindergarten. (I knew I was not a fan of this all day kindergarten...I have to blame something right!) Part of me was slightly relieved that this injury happened at school this time rather than at home. The last thing I wanted was to have the “Authorities” arriving at my door inquiring as to where these broken arms had come from...“Oh, and what about that bruise on her chin”, I could hear them asking me. “Oh that”, I could hear myself saying in response “that’s where she ran face-first into the wall when we were playing tag.” Yeah, no red flags there whatsoever right?!

Still, those of you who know my little Chayse will agree that she is reckless, a little (ok, a lot) clumsy, and has no fear. She did not require surgery this second time, just a small cast and a bit of discomfort. So here I am with 3 kids all under 7 years of age and a hectic schedule from the minute I wake up until the minute my eyes close at night. All of you parents out there know what I am talking about! We love our kids and wouldn’t change a thing...except how long the days are...just an extra 2-4 hours in each day would be so helpful! Maybe then brushing my teeth would become a regular thing and not just a luxury once in a while!

In any case, the reason I tell you about my chaotic

life and this second broken arm is because I had an “aha” moment the other night. Here is how it happened. It was about 6:30 at night and Chayse desperately needed a bath. We needed to wrap her arm in plastic bags and hair elastics to try to keep it as dry as possible. I sat straddling the edge of the shower attempting to wash this little 5 year old without getting her cast wet. I first fell into the tub (I still had my work clothes on for this dunking), then fell onto the floor shortly afterwards (still have the angry bruise on my butt cheek to prove it), finally ending it all by dropping the entire bottle of shampoo onto the bathroom floor and watching the sticky mixture ooze onto the hall carpet as I still attempted to hold my daughter’s tiny arm out of the water. You would have thought I would have been a pro by this time, with this being the second time in a few months that she has had a cast on her arm.

I admit it...I was feeling extremely hostile and very sorry for myself as all of this was unfolding. Why hadn’t someone invented a fully water proof cast, or at least a cast cover, for small children who love the water and love danger at the same time? I was silently cursing the people who had forgotten about 5 year olds like mine and never thought to address personal hygiene as a priority for the dare devil youngsters like my little Chayse.

However, we got our little bathing escapade over with and she and her two sisters headed into bed as I dove into some unfinished work.

As I read through all of my emails and pored over my “To Do” list I started thinking about all of the families that we support at FSI. We hear and learn from all of their challenges that they encounter. They are so generous with stories and the experiences they face as they travel along on their journeys. They explore innovation, inclusion and opportunity in many aspects of their lives.

This is what I realize as I am looking through our

database of calls: My Chayse is beautiful WITH her recklessness (and her broken arms), and her and I need to have more fun with this situation. We need to learn together. We need to find solutions to the things that challenge us, together. There is not much room in my life, where opportunity sits, to feel sorry for myself. Of course I cannot celebrate her broken arm. But I can have fun with her **despite** her broken arm. I now ask myself these questions. Why didn't I stay in the tub with her with my work clothes on? Why didn't we laugh and splash and do silly things right there in the bath, rather than stomping around and grumbling about how hard this was for me? I suppose this is the "when life serves you lemons make lemonade" scenario. I will remember my regret over this one night when I had my "grumble party".

In any case, my reflections landed me personally on some great learning opportunities. There are so many families that face adversity every day and never complain. They so rarely feel sorry for themselves. They often see their challenges as opportunities for growth. They create the space for conversations about sharing experiences. In the future, if I find myself in this icky, negative head space, I commit to myself to re-read this story and reflection, and try to tell myself that there can be joy when you land in the bathtub with all of your clothes on. I will take more time to laugh. I offer applause and honor to all of the families who face challenges, struggles and hiccups every day and "make lemonade"!



Jaida, Chayse and Hannah



Chayse

Special Thank You

to the Ministry of Children and Family Development for their sponsorship of FSI's Resource Parent / Resource Family Member Training Weekend

Don't focus on the challenges or the unexpected obstacles but instead celebrate all of the wonderful things that life has to offer and that you are lucky enough to be blessed with.

~ ~ ~ Darcee Matlen ~ ~ ~

Waterproof Cast Covers

In her article (The Broken Arm and “Aha” Moment on page 4) Angela describes problems she had while trying to give a bath to her daughter who has a broken arm. Angela says that she wished there was a product that would keep the cast dry. So for Angela, and any others that want to keep a cast dry, we have researched what products are available. We have not tried these product but we encourage anyone needing a waterproof cast cover to check out these companies yourself. There may be other sources also. If you do try either of these products please let us know and we will pass the information on to our readers. Also if you find a local BC or even Canadian dealer please let us know.

Editor

One source that offers a waterproof cast cover that we found on the internet is the Dry Pro company at <http://www.drycorp.com/>.

They describe their product as:
“The Dry Pro™ is completely watertight keeping your casts and bandage dry. The Dry Pro™ offers the only leg and arm cast protection in the world with the patented vacuum seal to keep you dry. It is so completely and totally waterproof, between the waterproof material and the vacuum seal, that you can even dive off a diving board or ride the ocean waves and still have your cast or bandage stay completely dry.

The Dry Pro™ protector fits snug yet comfortable offering protection during a shower, a bath, and even an active swim. Unlike “modified garbage bag” products, the cast protection offered by the Dry Pro™ protector is unmatched, it cannot come off. You can’t even pull it off!

Allows Postoperative Hydrotherapy: The Dry Pro cover is also used for immediate postoperative physical therapy, allowing hydrotherapy right after surgery, which helps prevent swelling and stiffness and aids in a speedy recovery. The Dry Pro™ is used by at all levels of physical therapy, including head NFL trainers, Major league teams all over the country and at the collegiate level as well.

The Dry Pro™ waterproof fabric is rugged. The waterproof fabric is made of durable high quality surgical latex. The special Non-Skid Grid™ protects the sole and helps prevent slipping. The Pump not only creates the vacuum seal but also works as a gauge showing that the vacuum is intact and cannot leak. So go ahead and ENJOY THE WATER! “

The price is about \$35.00 USD, depending on the size, plus shipping.

Another source that we found on the internet is: Active Motion Health
<http://www.activemotionhealth.com>.

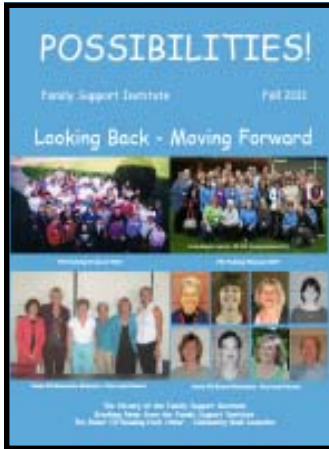
Active seal is a safe way to let yourself or loved one retain their quality of life while wearing a cast, even while swimming. Made of TPE, a high performance material, Active seal is latex free, stretches easily, folds compactly and maintains a waterproof seal. It’s easy to use - no need for pumps velcro straps or irritating tapes. Active Seal is perfect for swimming, water sports, whirlpools or hot tubs.

The price is \$27.00 USD plus \$5.00 shipping to Canada.



Breaking News From the Family Support Institute!

In response to feedback from people around the province, future FSI's Possibilities newsletters will be offered **FREE** to **ALL families, friends, and organizations** with the hopes that the stories and information can help support or inspire families and individuals with diverse challenges.



To receive YOUR future issues of FSI's Possibilities newsletter (full of stories written by families and other information), please subscribe through Mail Chimp at: <http://eepurl.com/eQc0-/>.

Besides the FSI Possibilities newsletter, FSI also produces an FSI Bulletin, which is full of helpful resource material. For samples of the FSI Bulletin, please check our website's "WHAT'S NEW" page at:

http://www.familysupportbc.com/whats_new.

To receive **FREE** issues of FSI's Bulletin, please subscribe through Mail Chimp at: <http://eepurl.com/cXWyU>.



Please note that all FSI members will automatically be subscribed to FSI's Possibilities newsletter and FSI's Bulletin.

We value your comments, suggestions and articles on what's going on in your community. Submissions for consideration into a future FSI Possibilities newsletter or FSI Bulletin or requests to reprint any of their content can be emailed to fsi@fsibc.com (for the FSI Possibilities newsletter) or to spaterson@fsibc.com (for the FSI Bulletin).

If you know of family members, friends or colleagues who might be interested in learning about the **Family Support Institute**, or you require more information please contact our office or visit our web-site at www.familysupportbc.com.

**Feel free to share this information with your networks.
We hope you enjoy this Fall 2011 Possibilities newsletter.**



History of the Family Support Institute

In years past, British Columbia families of children with disabilities would often gather together in their kitchens and church basements to share their concerns and experiences. As a result of the conversations and get-togethers parent groups, local associations and various services were developed to provide for the needs identified by these families. This was at a time when there were fewer services for children with disabilities that we now have. The emphasis on family support started to change with the development of more formal services and local associations. Professionals took a greater role in the lives of the children and families felt that they were losing their ability to make key decisions. Families began to feel isolated and helpless. However, the need for the correct information and a need for connection with other community services and support from other parents still remained.

In 1984, the members of a family support committee of the British Columbia Association for Community Living (BCACL) discussed ways to better support families. It became clear that an agency needed to be developed to provide family support. In the fall of 1986, with funds from the St. Christopher's Foundation, the Family Support Institute (FSI) was established. FSI was the first of its kind in Canada.

The Institute became a separate non-profit agency in April 1989 and continues to share office space with BCACL. The original mandate of the Family Support Institute was to strengthen families who had a son or daughter with a mental disability. This mandate has now been expanded to include all disabilities and to include active family members in addition to parents.



*FSI's First Training Weekend 1987
Postcard from Bowen Island*



FSI Training Weekend 1994

FSI was created to strengthen families faced with the extraordinary circumstances that come with having a family member who has a disability. Directed by families, the Family Support Institute assists families in three main ways:

- Workshops are presented based on requests from families. Parents are key players in both the development and presentation of these workshops.
- Networking is promoted to enable families to build upon the expertise of each other and to facilitate families meeting together to address common issues, needs and concerns.
- Up-to-date information on services, current practices, and educational options is provided to assist families to make well-informed decisions.

The Family Support Institute's philosophy was developed based upon the following beliefs:

- All people have gifts and strengths and much to contribute to society
- Parents are the experts when it comes to understanding their own children
- Families are a unique and valuable resource to one another
- Informed, involved and confident parents are the most effective agents for social change on behalf of their children
- All people have a right to be valued and to belong

To meet the needs of families throughout BC, FSI has established a network of Resource Parents (RPs) and Resource Family Members (RFMs) in communities across the province. These parents and active family members act as resource people for their own community and form the foundation for the services provided by the Family Support Institute. Each RP or RFM makes their own connections in their home community. Resource Parents and Resource Family Members work voluntarily and independently and contribute based upon their strengths, abilities, and preferred areas of interest. Some examples of the work of the RPs and RFMs are:

- Setting up support groups
- Receiving phone calls from parents and professionals
- Acting as members of advisory committees on a local and provincial level
- Attending planning meetings as support for other families
- Linking with community groups to increase their awareness of the Family Support Institute and the support it provides

The Family Support Institute has an elected board of directors from regions across the province. The majority of the board directors are family members of a person with a disability. FSI has a paid Executive Director and other staff that support families and our RP/RFM network.

The Family Support Institute continues to help people with disabilities and their family members to recognize their rights and to make choices and to realize that individual empowerment is the key to playing an active role in creating their futures.



FSI Training Weekend 1999



FSI Training Weekend 2011

Gift-minded Conversations

by Zamina Sunderji, FSI's Research and Marketing Assistant



The workshop "Everyone Belongs" presented recently by Peter Block was deeply inspirational. It was filled with seeds of insight and anecdotes that anyone can use to improve communication in personal, workplace, and community situations.

Block discussed, "Gift-mindedness" which he defined as the importance of understanding the gifts that we bring, and how we can use those gifts to keep us feeling engaged and motivated. He also stressed the negativity associated with applying labels to marginality and how these labels do not define who we are. For example the statement "Meet Jack, he is homeless" does not define who Jack is, because Jack is not inherently homeless. We should be expressing the gifts that individuals bring rather than stressing what they cannot bring. Being negative does not benefit anyone involved and lessens the drive to better oneself and the world around us.

Block emphasizes the importance of conversation, and stated that, "All transformation is linguistic". We must engage in heartfelt, present-oriented conversations that do not strive for process. But rather we need to begin the thought process of the change we would like to see. Process-oriented thinking enables feedback and appraisal of progress and these qualities do not promote progress in the long run. Block asks, "Who are we to provide feedback and appraisals?" Although, individuals in leadership positions have been given a responsibility, it is not to judge others based on what they have not been able to do. This neglects the gifts that those people around us bring and does not motivate anyone to strive for betterment. Those people in leadership roles bear the burden of responsibility by conveying capacity and start-

ing meaningful conversations. This is the only way in which to achieve success.

The most important conversation is the one of possibility, not of process. Focus should be on interconnectedness, capacity, and genuine desires, rather than clear and measurable objectives. While these may seem beneficial on the surface, they subject those involved to degradation in the form of feedback and appraisal.

Peter Block believes, "Statements affirming the world we are committed to creating are the only way to successfully progress; by declaring, we are acting, and moving towards the change we want to see. Be the change...!"



Poem About Dealing With Seizures

by Madeleine Harlamovs, RP Fruitvale



Madeleine's son, James, was a bright child with a complex seizure disorder. The following are some of her thoughts on dealing with seizures.

Misfiring neurons

Sparks fly from my son's brain
pounding on my head.
They land square on my shoulders
corkscrew into my heart
squeeze my gut and
buckle my knees.

When his body stills
mine
begins to shake.



Blast from the Past (reprinted from Winter/Spring 2011)

Considering Renovating?

by Ellen Candlish, RP Victoria



This article is a reflection on some of the things my family learned when we decided something had to be done to our home to better accommodate our daughters needs. There are questions you can ask yourself, a few tips you can try and points to look into before you spend any money. Before we got involved with renovating, we sat down and asked ourselves, why do we want to do this renovation? We needed to clarify what is for our child and what is for other caregivers and ourselves. Is renovating likely to be the answer and worth all the time and trouble? Should we sell and buy a different house with a different set of (unknown) concerns? Once we got beyond this initial stage of what we really wanted and needed, we tried to get more specific. Here are some of the questions my family asked when developing our plan:

- 1. What does my child need?** What work needs to be done to meet those needs? What future needs can we anticipate now and what plans will we need to make to accommodate those future needs?
- 2. How will the work benefit our child?**
 - Think about health, safety and quality of life issues and think of examples. This helps flesh out what is “must have” renovations and what are “like to have” renovations.
- 3. What cost savings can I include?**
 - Recycling materials (sometimes it costs more to recycle)
 - Do I know anyone who can help me at no cost? Does that person really know what they are doing? Is having a number of different people involved really a cost savings? (Trades people use different materials, different products. Some may not be compatible with one another).
- 4. What am I prepared to do and pay for myself?** What am I going to apply for such as from foundations and programs to help offset the costs?
 - Some examples of what you might be able to pay for are paying for fixtures for the sink and tub, light fixtures, paying of permits and drawings with changes, photocopying of drawings.
 - Seeking funding from other sources requires specific information and details about what you want to do and why. Funding sources are not keen on building a den for you but may be more willing to assist in putting in a ramp or making your home more wheelchair accessible.
- 5. What permits do I need?** Your municipality can help you here with information on your drawings, what their expectations are and who to talk to. The municipality will also have a history on your home: what has been done before and what you are allowed to do now. They will also give you information on what the building codes are and what restrictions of which you must be aware of such as:
 - Building permits
 - Electrical, plumbing permits
 - Engineering permits
- 6. If I’m planning on seeking funding support from the government, how will the government save money over the next 8 years, at least, by accepting my proposal?** What other funding sources might I approach and what information do they require to justify my request?



Considering Renovating? continued from page 11

- Go back to your health, safety and quality of life issues and go through them describing how much it would cost if someone else looks after your child and provides these things. Be clear about health and safety issues and use specific examples.
 - Who can I check with for some information (other families and agencies in your town or region) on what the costs are for my child to live in a group home or outside of my home? Compare these figures with how much it costs to stay at home.
- 7. What points should I put into the proposal if I'm seeking funding from other agencies?**
- Include a short history of my family and child with the disability.
 - Describe briefly, how the decision was made on what needed to be done.
 - Describe briefly, what sort of research was done to determine how best to meet my child's needs.
 - How will the changes make a difference in my child's daily living, in helping other caregivers assist my child?
- 8. Who should I get to write letters to back up my proposal?**
- Physiotherapist/occupational therapist
 - Engineer
 - Psychologist, etc.
- 9. What unexpected expenses might be incurred?**
- Does my family have to leave home while renovating is being done? How long? Where will we stay? How much will that cost?
 - Can the work be done while we live in our home? What precautions do we need to put in place for our home to be a healthy and safe place while construction is occurring? Dry walling is particularly dusty and family health concerns may be an issue, therefore, putting up plastic and making frequent changes to furnace filters may be necessary along with a daily clean up.
 - If heavy equipment will be necessary, what impact will it have on my driveway, lawn, and house?
 - There's always the unknown. What's behind a wall? If tiles need to be replaced, are they still available? If a tradesperson becomes ill, timing becomes an issue and all other work needs to be moved.
- 10. Re: contractors** – If you decide not to do your own contracting, here are some questions you should ask yourself:
- How do I know this is a credible, reliable and knowledgeable contractor?
 - Contact the Better Business Bureau for a list in your area
 - Contact the BC Building Contractors Association and ask for their booklet listing contractors
 - Contact anyone you know who has done recent renovating and ask to see it and ask what to watch out for
- 11. Questions to ask the contractor/or people you want to hire to do the work:**
- Insurance
 - Guarantees on work
 - Clean-up daily
 - Live in while work being done
 - Length of time job will take
 - WCB
 - Warranties



Considering Renovating? continued from page 12

- References
- Informed on adaptations for someone using a wheelchair
- Suppliers the contractor deals with may give a reduction in price on items you buy
- If there is a discrepancy in what contractor 1 says compared to contractor 2, you will need to do more research to determine which route you want to go
- Think of the long term when making decisions. If your child uses a power wheelchair the wear and tear from that wheelchair can wreck a new floor within a couple of years if you don't think about durability. Does your child need to turn their power wheelchair in a particular area a lot? This area may become more worn than other spots.
- What sort of maintenance is required to keep floors/walls or equipment in good shape or good working order? What other options do I have if the maintenance or upkeep is too much or too expensive?

12. What are the details of the work to be done?

- What considerations for kind of flooring such as: laminate, linoleum, hard wood, tile, cork
- Light fixtures such as floor lamps take up a lot of space, pot lights may not work if getting a ceiling lift
- Paneling vs. drywall
- Fixtures (such as sinks, toilets, tubs) for kitchen, bathroom, bedroom, and other areas
- Are these going to be appropriate when my child is an adult
- Height of counter tops, bumpers to protect wall from wheelchair
- Types of doors, height and width of doors
- Insulation for warmth or noise
- Number of electrical outlets
- Ramp surface (prevent slipping on ramp, railings for ramp, roof for ramp)
- Banisters for stairway (can a wheelchair impact break the banister, hand grips for banisters, gates)
- Venting of rooms
- Ceiling lifts and impact on lighting
- Storage areas for equipment (wheelchair, standing frame, walkers, medical equipment, medications, supplies)



There are many other details that have not been listed. However, there are different kinds of ways of doing things and many different choices to make such as about style, color and size, etc.

Don't just take someone's word that the item is what you want. Do your own research and check with other families who have done work. In addition, look for examples in stores/catalogues, ask therapists and trades people involved with renovators what has worked best for them. Think about the quality, longevity and maintenance of materials as well as how it will be installed. Will outside services such as the septic field, sprinkler system, gas, water, and electric lines be impacted?

13. What are some considerations not included here that I need to consider?

14. Who do I need to connect with to be sure I've thought of everything?

If you have any renovating questions, please contact the FSI office and we may be able to find a Resource Parent / Resource Family Member who can answer your questions. **Happy renovating!**

Ellen Candlish, RP Victoria

Blast from the Past (reprinted from Spring 2004)



Family Support Institute Strategic Plan

by Murray George, President FSI Board of Directors



Following are some of the highlights of our Strategic Plan – based on the PATH document written by FSI Board member Kevin Lusignan who facilitated our PATH with the artistic help of his daughter-in-law Danielle.

The PATH Process was recently used by the FSI Board of Directors in developing a two-year strategic plan. The PATH process starts by identifying our collective dreams. The Dreams for FSI, as seen by the Board of Directors, are as follows:

Dreams (if you could wave a magic wand....)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No need for government dollars because FSI is self sufficient • All families know FSI • FSI is able to respond to families needs and help build relationships • The values, experience, and wisdom of families influence decision makers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All areas of BC have FSI resources present • FSI is representative of communities in terms of age, gender, and culture • The integrity and essence of FSI is secure in the future • FSI prepares families for the ups and downs of life

The **Dreams** are then anchored by the following **values** voiced by the FSI Board of Directors:

Values	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informed choice • Integrity • Acceptance • Confidentiality • Equal opportunities for all • Non-partisan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone has a gift to offer • Trust • Families have a meaningful voice • Meet the parents where they are at and walk alongside them • Everyone belongs

Flowing from the **Dreams** and anchored by the **Values**, we then created the following “**positive and possible**” **goals** for the next two years. Each goal considers where FSI is now, and where we want to be in one month, six months, and one year from now. As this is only a summary of the full PATH document it will only show the one-year objectives.

GOAL 1

- **We have an Organizational Culture that Respects the History and Culture of FSI.**

Sub-goals:

- We need multiple perspectives (founding parents and new parents) to speak to our history.
- We invite RPs/RFM's to share their stories at the Training Weekend and through the Possibilities Newsletter to show the history of FSI.

FSI Now:

- FSI has strong values and the courage to move forward to improve and maintain the integrity and culture of FSI.

By the end of one Year (September 17, 2012)

- We will have shared and captured stories from Resource Parents/Resource Family Members at the FSI Training Weekend.
- A video of FSI's history is under way, but may not be finished.
- We will have published two FSI history-related articles in the Newsletter.
- Website article/testimonials/stories on history will be complete.

GOAL 2

- **FSI is representative of communities with respect to age, gender, culture and socio-economic status.**

By the end of one Year (September 17, 2012)

- We will have communicated to members and Resource Parents/Resource Family Members about our desire to create more diversity within FSI.
- We will have taken the opportunities to create diversity when they arise.

GOAL 3

- **We have conducted ASSET MAPPING with a focus on enhancing our areas of expertise in marketing, fundraising and writing and to discover who knows who in order to provide a larger number of contacts who can help us advance our mission.**

FSI Now:

- We have introduced the notion of asset-mapping to our members at the last Training Weekend.

By the end of one Year (September 17, 2012)

- We will have a reasonably well-developed asset map using various lenses to build on for the future.

GOAL 4

- **We have more training for families on dreaming, family affirmation, advocacy and we have identified how to meet the current needs of families.**

FSI Now:

- We offer excellent training but we are not sure what families need or what training to offer.

By the end of one Year (September 17, 2012)

- We will have surveyed members about what type of training is desired or needed and we have developed a training plan. We will have looked at what other training is being offered by other organizations and have identified where our niche is so that we can be more effective.

GOAL 5

- **We have developed a "ROADMAP" website for Families across British Columbia to provide an easy source of information for families.**

By the end of one Year (September 17, 2012)

- We will have partial funding secured and the first phase of the website will have been launched.

GOAL 6

- **We will have increased corporate sponsorships by two and we have diversified our funding by exploring other possibilities for fundraising.**

FSI Now:

- We rely on Government funding and we have one corporate sponsor (Thrift Shop)

By the end of one Year (September 17, 2012)

- We will have met with 10 corporate sponsors and done follow ups.



Possibilities! Fall 2011

- We will have identified who in FSI can help us find our sponsors.
- We will have conducted asset mapping to uncover who we know in the corporate world.
- We will have looked for natural alliances in order to advance our mission.

GOAL 7

- **We know whether or not we are meeting the needs of families.**

FSI Now:

- Although FSI often receives appreciation for their work, we do not truly understand if we are meeting families' needs.

By the end of one Year (September 17, 2012)

- We will have a draft survey ready to send out to see if we are meeting the needs of families.

GOAL 8

- **We have an annual Awards Banquet.**

FSI Now:

- We have a desire to find a way to support and recognize agencies, businesses and corporations who are exceptional in their support of all families across British Columbia.

By the end of one Year (September 17, 2012)

- We will have had an Awards Banquet to honour those individuals, businesses and corporations that support families.

GOAL 9

- **We have continued to collaborate and foster relationships to align decision-makers with family experiences.**

FSI Now:

- FSI is actively meeting with a diversity of government representatives and decision makers and conveys the family voice at all meetings.

By the end of one Year (September 17, 2012)

- We will have reviewed our progress and planned for the next steps.

GOAL 10

- **FSI continues to close gaps where there is limited or no FSI presence in British Columbia.**

FSI Now:

- Although FSI has a presence in much of British Columbia, we have communities where we have no Resource Parents/Resource Family Members. We need to make FSI known throughout British Columbia.

By the end of one Year (September 17, 2012)

- We will be executing a comprehensive communications plan to enhance the presence of FSI across British Columbia.

HOW THE BOARD OF FSI WILL BUILD STRENGTH AND STAY ON OUR PATH

- We will review the PATH every time we meet.
- We will staple the PATH to the front of the board package.
- Board President will make phone calls to ensure we are on track with our PATH at the different milestones.
- Staff will review the PATH at staff meetings.
- We will continue to support each other through successes and disappointments.
- We will engage in multicultural training and engage in other training as required.
- We will be available for each other if needed (President has contacts).
- We will adhere to the existing code of conduct.
- We will revisit the code of conduct in the next two years and revise as required.

Check out the
FSI merchandise at
www.familysupportbc.com

(just click on FSI Store)



FSI funding acknowledgements:

THANK YOU!

BC Gaming Grants
Ministry of Children and
Family Development (MCFD)
Community Living
British Columbia (CLBC)
Evelyn and Erling Bjarnason Fund

**Family Support Institute
Resource Parents /
Resource Family Members:**

**Mark your calendars for the 25th
Annual Training Weekend in
Naramata, BC**

April 19-22, 2012

**You don't want to miss out on
the fun and networking!**

**If you have any suggestions for us on:
TW session topics, new Resource
Parents / Resource Family Members, or
have any new family pictures for a future
RP / RFM Tribute DVD, please
contact the FSI office.**

FSI Needs Your Help! Give The Gift Of Time!

We are looking for a volunteer, proficient in Microsoft Access, to help improve our database reports. We are also looking for a professional quality video producer, who would be willing to volunteer time for the development of a short promotional video clip for a Family Support Institute presentation. Please contact Angela Clancy at 604-540-8374 ext. 524 or via email at aclancy@fsibc.com if you can assist with either of these projects.

Support FSI - Shop At The Blue Bay Thrift Buy & Sell

The **Family Support Institute (FSI)** is excited and honored to have a partnership with the "**Blue Bay Thrift Buy & Sell**", that allows them to donate 5% of their thrift store's annual sales to FSI!

"**Blue Bay Thrift Buy & Sell**" carries all sorts of items such as electronics, antique dolls, jewelry, clothing and furniture.

FSI would like to encourage people to go to the **Blue Bay Thrift Buy & Sell** located at **421 6th Street, New Westminster, BC V3L 3B1**. Bring your "gently used" items to donate or sell and have a look at what they are selling. The store is amazing and you will love the atmosphere. Laretta Duncan is wonderful, welcoming and very generous with her time! Your support not only contributes to our partnership but it supports FSI and Laretta both at the same time.

Special thanks to Laretta and Blue Bay Thrift Buy & Sell for our wonderful new relationship!

Family Support Institute

FSI's 4th Annual Trivia Night

PUT YOUR BRAIN TO THE TEST!!

You don't have to be an Einstein, music junkie or trivia buff for this game!
If you like to have fun and lots of laughs! Come and help raise funds for a great cause
...the **Family Support Institute**.

Date: Friday, November 4, 2011
Place: Marlborough Elementary School
6060 Marlborough Avenue, Burnaby, B.C.

Over twenty four tables were set up for Trivia Night 2010 and approximately \$4,000 was raised. With your support, we hope to make the 4th one bigger and better! Only you can make it happen! If you are from the Lower Mainland or are planning to visit, join us for the some laughter and lots of excitement! For more information, please contact the Family Support Institute at 604-540-8374, via email at fsi@fsibc.com or check out our website (www.familysupportbc.com) on the What's New Page for details as they unfold.





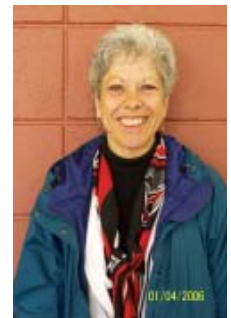
What the Family Support Institute Means to YOU!

In the Fall 2010 Possibilities newsletter, we featured a letter written by Cathy Anthony, RP Coquitlam, about her experiences with the Family Support Institute (FSI). Since then several other Resource Parents / Resource Family Members from throughout the province have submitted the following testimonials:



Ann Auld, RP Victoria: An FSI training weekend means: connections, found friendships, laughter, tears, sharing, love, gratitude, gabbing, leadership, respite (for me), someone else's cooking, no grocery shopping - unless it is a chocolate related celebration!

Cathy Anthony, RP Coquitlam: After over 22 years of connection to FSI, what I continue to be in awe of is the amazing parents I have the opportunity to meet. To me, FSI is about being touched, inspired and moved by the parents, and the stories and experiences they so openly share. These families truly open their heart and bring warmth to my soul. The result is a true sense of belonging and acceptance in a community of others on a similar life journey.



Aimee Quaife (Morry), RP Nanaimo: FSI is an inspiring group of families, who walk a journey similar to my own. FSI's network of families has become my strength, source of knowledge and information, and my extended family. I am no longer alone on my journey that, before FSI, felt so isolating and scary. FSI has given me a voice and permission to dream for my children.

FSI Members / Resource Parents / Resource Family Members:

If you have a story to share about your experiences with the Family Support Institute and the Resource Parent / Resource Family Member network, please contact the FSI office. It will help us reach more families!

"Families Supporting Families"



“The Power of Knowing Each Other” Kathy Klovance’s Book Launch Tea



On June 24th, 2011 thirty-one people dropped into the Salmo Library to celebrate Kathy’s book launch of “The Power of Knowing Each Other”, where “Kathy’s Story: A Home of Her Own” is featured on page 58.

Kathy’s staff, her mother Bonny, and the Salmo Library provided a delicious afternoon tea. A beautiful embroidered picture that Kathy made was on display. Visitors included: Kathy’s staff; her friends; Bonny’s friends; and staff members



Kathy and her embroidered picture

from the Salmo Elementary School, Salmo Library and the Castlegar office of Community Living BC; as well as library drop-ins.

All enjoyed the refreshments, were awed by Kathy’s work, and very appreciative of the stories of the book. Everyone received a free copy of the book.

The five copies of the book with Kathy’s picture on the front cover were especially appreciated. These special copies were distributed to Kathy’s sisters, Bonny and one was kept by Kathy herself. It was a great social event and successful book launch!
Submitted by Bonny Klovance



“The Power of Knowing Each Other” Zackery’s Book Launch



I was delighted to join Barbarah, Zackery and their many friends and guests on Saturday, September 24th, at their Open House back yard party celebrating the “The Power of Knowing Each” book. Many people who attended are part of Barbarah and Zackery’s social network. Guests were treated to wonderful food and fabulous music by the Carson Family. It was a joy to watch Zackery visiting with his friends and guests and share his joy in the music. Zackery proudly signed many books for people.

Submitted by Maria Glaze, Resource Parent Powell River



Julia, Barbarah and Zackery



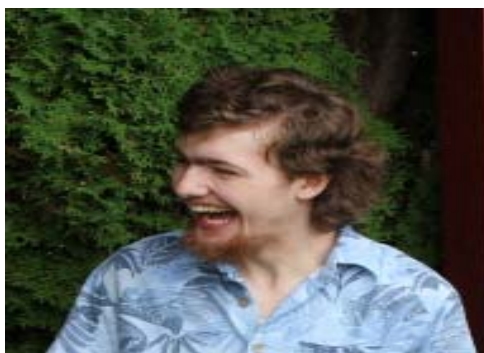
Book signing - Julia, Zackery and Barbarah



Carson Family

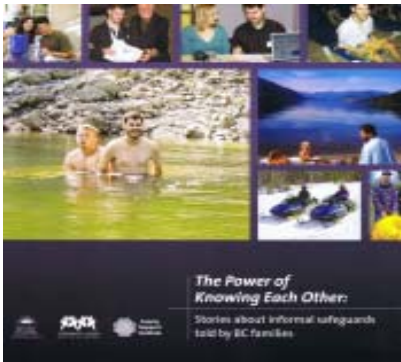


Garden Party



“The Power Of Knowing Each Other”

Some individualized book covers of the families



Thank you to CLBC for creating individualized book covers for the families represented in the inspiring book. These are some of the wonderful covers.



**FSI's New Book:
The Power of Knowing Each
Other: Stories about informal
safeguards told by BC families**

**Stories are a gift of inspiration from
one person to another**

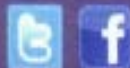
These stories of informal safeguards offer examples, ideas and seeds of hope that can shine a light of inspiration on others. Weaving informal safeguards around our loved ones comes through the gift of relationship to others. It is through our connection to others, that the tapestry of a meaningful life is woven and the thread holding the most strength to ensuring a life of quality and safety is by being known, cared about and embraced by others.

excerpt from the forward by Cathy Anthony



The Power of Knowing Each Other:
Stories about informal safeguards
told by BC families

To order one or more books, please contact:
Toll-free: 1-877-660-2522
info@communitylivingbc.ca
www.communitylivingbc.ca



“**Wordle** is a toy for generating “word clouds” from text that you provide. The clouds give greater prominence to words that appear more frequently in the source text. You can tweak your clouds with different fonts, layouts, and color schemes. The images you create with Wordle are yours to use however you like. You can print them out, or save them to the Wordle gallery to share with your friends.” *Extracted from the Wordle website at: <http://www.wordle.net/>.* To the right is a sample of FSI information “wordled”. Play and have fun!



Supporting FSI Has Never Been Easier!

The Family Support Institute provides province wide support to families faced with the extraordinary circumstances that come with having a child with a disability. Your support and generosity enables us to enhance this support and continue to strengthen families. Through CanadaHelps, this process of support is not only simple, but fast, secure and convenient. The direct link to donate to the West Coast Family Support Institute Society is:



<http://www.canadahelps.org/CharityProfilePage.aspx?CharityID=s1106>.

Please check it out! The “Donate Now” button is also at the bottom signatures of FSI emails, as well as on our FSI website at www.familysupportbc.com.

For mail-in donations, just complete the donation section of the Membership Form on the back page of this newsletter or go to FSI’s website at www.familysupportbc.com and check out the “How You Can Help” page.

**Other FSI members and friends have designated FSI as their charity of choice when donating through the United Way or company donation programs.
THANK YOU!**

Mohawk-Husky Fund Development for FSI

The Family Support Institute has been working on a fund development endeavor with Mohawk-Husky Oil. We have been fortunate enough to be given cards that we are allowed to distribute to our members, who in turn can swipe this card when they fuel up at these gas stations. FSI receives 2% of all purchases made as a source of revenue.



We are excited to invite you to support FSI in this way too. It doesn’t cost you anything except the regular costs that you would spend on gas, and 2% of that money spent will go to FSI to support our services and supports.

Approximately 89 FSI members and friends are supporting FSI by using their Mohawk-Husky Oil cards. **Special thanks to the Langley Children’s Society for requesting 30 of the cards and the Trail Association for Community Living for requesting 8 of the cards to be used within their organization!**

If you would like to have a Mohawk-Husky savings card sent to you please contact the office at (604) 540-8374 ext. 523, toll free 1-800-441-5403 or email at fsi@fsibc.com. Thanks for your ongoing generosity and support!

FSI Workshops

Please check the “Workshop” page on our website at: www.familysupportbc.com for the various FSI workshops and call our office to arrange a presentation for your group.



**As of Oct. 6, 2011,
SWC has over 2,182
confirmed users!**

Over the past few years many people have expressed a desire for a central website where individuals and families from across British Columbia could connect with qualified support workers in their communities for personal support needs and community participation. In June 2009, the Family Support Institute (FSI) was granted money from CLBC to develop a website for these purposes.

FSI's Support Worker Central (SWC) is an online database designed to match individuals, families and agencies with support workers in their British Columbia communities. SWC is a one-year pilot project aimed at testing the effectiveness of a centralized BC-wide website. The success of the website is dependent upon getting the word out to families and potential support workers. You can help us do that by sharing this with others: www.supportworkercentral.com. After the pilot, FSI will be looking to gain corporate sponsorship to assist in covering costs so SWC can continue to help families and support workers connect.

If **YOU** have been successful in finding a support worker through the SWC website and would like to share your story, please contact the *Possibilities!* Newsletter Editor through the FSI office. Email fsi@fsibc.com, call 604-540-8374 / 1-800-441-5403 (toll free), or fax 604-540-9374 with your SWC experience for possible inclusion in a future *Possibilities!* Newsletter. Here are samples of family experiences as posted on SWC's Family Message Board:

Great site: *This site is working so well for what my son wants. His dream is to travel to other places and stay for a few days to see what the town/city is like. He is blind, so this is the best way for him to learn about the world. We have made several connections in the Vancouver area, and he plans to travel there in July to meet a person that could support him in his endeavors. Something like this would not be possible without this website, we are so thankful it exists!* Last posted on Jul 4 2010 10:01AM , Author: xxxxx Message ID# 54268

Thank you for another great hiring experience: *We have just hired our second caregiver found using this site. My daughter has significant support needs and we have been connected with some very qualified and capable people. Having the convenience and matching abilities of this site has taken one of the huge jobs off of my plate - thank you!* Last posted on Jan 27 2011 4:43PM , Author: xxxxx Message ID# 54274

Thank You!

We extend a big thank you to all of our supporters. Without your generous support both financially, in volunteer time and donations in kind, we would not be able to do all the work that we do!

Monthly Donors

Sigrid Bjarnason towards the Evelyn and Erling Bjarnason Fund
Norma Collier
Lauretta Duncan of the Blue Bay Thrift Buy and Sell

Special Event Donors

Stefanie Cave and her sister Germaine completed the Great Walk from Gold River, BC to Tahsis, BC (63.5 kms) on June 4th, 2011. They fundraised in memory of their sister, Tiffany, who passed away. All proceeds were donated to the Family Support Institute. **An AMAZING \$1,228.50 was raised!** Some of the donors are listed below. **THANK YOU** for your support of FSI! Stefanie and Germaine are daughters of Joe and Gudrun Cave, FSI Resource Parents from Nanaimo.

Julie Cave
Chris Davies
Ian Ford
Kathleen Fournier
Fred Koldrubsy
Fiona Steeves
Gail Wilkinson

Donors

Ball Packaging Products Ltd.
BC Lions - Courage For Kids Ticket Program
- United Way of the Lower Mainland
British Columbia Teacher's Federation
Langley Children's Society
PNE - KC's Kids Ticket Donation Program
Provincial Employees Community Services
Fund
Team Telus Cares
Trail Association for Community Living

Rhonda Burden
Leslie Cartwright
Bonnie Fallowfield

Saroj Malhotra
Monique Nelson
Judy Peterson
Dawn Robertson
Ric Tesan
Diane Wagnor
Marie Webb

FSI Office Volunteers

Daryl Chan
Nicole Chan
Tom Chan
Joe Liang
Erin Tesan

**And of course, THANK YOU to all of our Resource Parents /
Resource Family Members and Board Members!**



Membership Form

Your support strengthens and empowers families faced with the extraordinary circumstances that come with having a family member who has a disability.

YES! I want to become a member of the **FAMILY SUPPORT INSTITUTE**, a not for profit society directed by and for families providing family to family networking, support, information and training. As well as supporting FSI, membership gives me these benefits:

Free access to the **FAMILY SUPPORT INSTITUTE** current resource library
Access to the **FAMILY SUPPORT INSTITUTE** province-wide Resource Parent / Resource Family Member network

Please note that all FSI members will automatically be subscribed to FSI's Possibilities newsletter (full of stories written by families and other information) and FSI's Bulletin (full of helpful resource material).

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Prov: _____ Postal Code: _____

Email: _____ Telephone: _____

**Please return this page with your payment to the
FAMILY SUPPORT INSTITUTE
227 6th Street, New Westminster, B.C. V3L 3A5**

Please select a membership category that applies to you (*memberships valid May 1 to April 30*):

- Annual Family and Individual \$ 25.00
- Whatever you can afford (\$0-\$25) \$ _____
- Annual Non-Profit / Government Agency \$ 60.00
- Annual Corporation / Business \$100.00

Voting members are relatives of a person with a disability or persons with a disability.

I am a parent / family member of a person with a disability or I am a person with a disability.

Here is a tax-deductible donation in the amount of \$25 \$50 \$100 \$500 \$1000 \$_____.

YES, I would like to make monthly donations to the **Family Support Institute**. I have enclosed post-dated cheques in the amount that I would like to contribute every month.

Your generosity and support ensure our future. The FAMILY SUPPORT INSTITUTE is a not for profit society that relies on fundraising, memberships and donations to meet our operating expenses.

Please note that tax receipts are issued for donations and family/individual memberships.

YES, please send me a tax receipt for my membership and/or donation.

Charitable BN/registration number 105629497RR0001

Total Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Paid by: Cheque, or
 VISA Number _____ Expiry Date: _____

Name on the VISA card (please print) _____

Signature _____

For your personal safety, please do not email your VISA information. Fax, mail or call the FSI office instead. Another option for donations is to go to the FSI website (www.familysupportbc.com), and click on the **secure "Donate Now"** button with the charity name of "West Coast Family Support Institute".

