



# Alberta Ability Network Recreation Table

**Date/Time:**

November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022 / 9:30am – 11:30am

**Location:** Zoom

**Chairs:** Kim Presser

**In Attendance:**

Andrew French (Winder Inclusive Communities Service)  
 Cydney Yaremko (BLOOM)  
 Elizabeth Kaleta (Cerebral Palsy Alberta)  
 Jamie McCulloh (Rocky Mountain Adaptive)  
 Josie Sauve (Developmental Disabilities Resource Centre)  
 Katie Bakken (Friends of Fish Creek Provincial Park Society)

Leonard O’Keffe (Developmental Disabilities Resource Centre)  
 Meri Topchieva (Alberta Ability Network)  
 Mezaun Lakha-Evin (Alberta Ability Network)  
 Scott Godfrey (Autism Aspergers Friendship Society of Calgary)  
 Tracy Oh (CP Kids and Families)

## Meeting Minutes

Land Acknowledgement  
 Welcome and Introductions  
 Breakout Rooms

**Topics of Discussion:****Mental Health and Recreation**

- How to address mental health in recreational activities?
- We need to have more conversations with people.
- Need to make Canadian winters more accessible for newcomers. Winters are very perplexing here because it can get really cold very fast, and it stays for a longer amount of time. Many don't know what activities they can do and what to wear.
- Only spend a few hours with clients every day, need to build up a rapport with clients to know and understand what's going on with their lives outside of programs.
- COVID 19 affected everyone's mental health including people with disabilities.
- BLOOM extended their class time, so the students and parents have more time to socialize. A part of COVID-19 is re-learning how to socialize, share and connect. This has been a great success for them.
- Rocky Mountain Adaptive has partnered with U of A to survey their client's mental health. 97% of their program participants said their mental health improved by being outside, socializing, and being set up for success for the sport they're doing.

- Not many agencies have funds to secure Social Workers. This makes other employees take on the responsibilities of being one when they don't have the capacity or training.
- Cerebral Palsy Alberta produced a Re-Entry Strategy for Persons with Disabilities in 2020 where they addressed transportation and other safety measures. This document was presented at United Nations on IDPD and will be sent to our Minister Jeremy Nixon, for IDPD this year.
- We can bring in an expert on mental health through a disability lens so the table can gain a better understanding of how recreation and mental health intersect. A subcommittee will be created to further plan this out.
- Mental health and recreational activities go hand-in-hand, we need to see how to improve people's mental health through the recreational activities we hold.

### **Advocate to Government to proclaim a Provincial Recreation Day/Week**

- There is a Therapeutic Recreation Day that already exists, however, most of our members don't provide therapeutic recreation but other recreational programs. As this day needs to be accurate to the people we serve and the people we're collaborating with, we will be advocating for an *Adaptive Inclusive Recreation Week*.
- For *Adaptive Inclusive Recreation Week*, we can create a social media campaign that shares inclusive recreation activities throughout the Province.
- Many people are unaware of the possible recreational activities people with disabilities can do.
- The social media campaign should be based on people with disability and their experience with inclusive recreational activities. This makes it more likely that the general public will show interest in our campaign and want to learn more.

### **2022 Alberta International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) Celebration**

- Cerebral Palsy Alberta, Easter Seals Alberta, Voice of Albertans with Disabilities, and other community organizers were selected by the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities to host a virtual, province-wide, International Day of Persons with Disabilities event.
- This year's event will showcase the talents, hobbies, skills, and passions of disabled Albertans virtually on Saturday, December 3, 2022.
- If you would like to register please click here:  
[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_jB7u2KXpRs-Uhw6z-Zw7qA](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_jB7u2KXpRs-Uhw6z-Zw7qA)

### **Agency Updates**

#### **DDRC**

- Want to make their Learning and Leadership program more community-focused by inviting agencies to host the workshop where they can teach the participants about sports, activities, events occurring in the city, and more.
- This is an opportunity to connect with community members, people with lived experience and agencies are both welcome to host the program.
- If anyone is interested in hosting the program, please email Leonard O'Keefe at [leonard.okeefe@ddrc.ca](mailto:leonard.okeefe@ddrc.ca).



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### Rocky Mountain Adaptive

- Adaptive Nordic Skiing Camp is starting in December and the program is open for all ages, and abilities. The program is completely free including tickets for a caregiver, parent, lessons, and equipment thanks to their sponsor.
- Their first accessible van has launched and will be going to Calgary and other rural areas in the new year.
- Please go here if you would like to register for programs:  
<https://rockymountainadaptive.com/camps/>

### Action Items:

- Create a subcommittee to see how mental health and recreation can intersect.
- Proclaim *Adaptive Inclusive Recreation Week* to municipalities within Alberta and create a social media campaign for June.

Wrap-Up/Adjournment

### **Next meeting:**

**Date:** December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022

**Time:** 9:30am – 11:30am

**Location:** Zoom