

The Ripple



People. Potential. Power.

2023

Mission

To teach people with disabilities to advocate on behalf of themselves and others. We are a united voice which promotes equality, opportunities, and inclusion for us by educating the community about our dreams and what we can achieve.

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Mental Health and Resiliency

Everyone has experienced some change to their way of life when the pandemic hit us. Many people have lost connections and have experienced some struggles with their mental health due to lockdowns and isolation.



Many people still have not been able to continue with activities that they used to participate in and that has caused loneliness and lack of connections.

Now that we can have in person meetings and activities again many people are excited to get together and get back to doing things they enjoy.

Some tips on keeping your mental health good while getting into a normal routine are:

- Getting enough sleep
- Self Care– Shower, brush your teeth, comb your hair, wash your clothes.
- Exercise- finding something that feels good to you. (walking , gym, swimming)
- Creating and sticking to routine like going to the gym or what day you clean and do laundry on.
- Getting to work on time
- Deep breathing and mindfulness
- Listening to music
- Spending time with friends and family



Tell Us What You Think!



Write:

#210 410 Stafford drive s
Lethbridge, Alberta T1J 2L2

Phone: (403) 320-1515

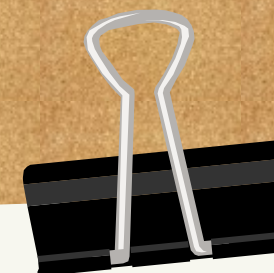
Toll Free: 1-886-320-1518

Fax: (403) 320-7054



Email:

advocacy@saipa.org



**The Ripple was created with pride
for you by the following
self-advocates:**

**John, Brady, Kevin, Landen,
Danielle, Melodie, Brielle,
Brooklynn, Gracie, Shannon**

Calling all Guest Writers

Would you like to try your hand at writing an article? Do you have some information you would like to share with the SRSAN membership and others who read this newsletter? We would love to hear from you.

Call Leah at the SAIPA office. 403-320-1515 or
Email: advocacy@saipa.org



The purpose of this newsletter is to raise awareness about self-advocacy, the contributions of people with developmental disabilities, inclusion and community living. It is also to provide educational information on how a person can be a better self-advocate, how to speak up for one's self, how to help self-advocacy groups and their allies. If you have information, events or ideas you would like to share or see in the newsletter, please contact us as we will help you get the message out.

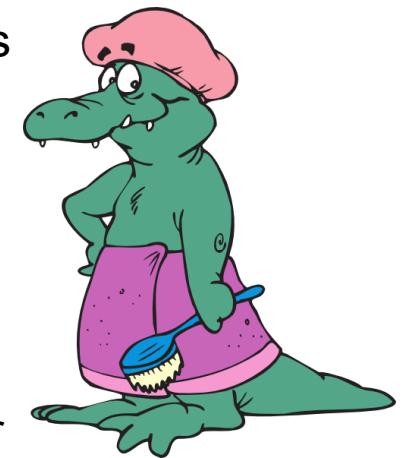
Our contact information is on the back of this newsletter if you want to send us your information to share with others. We look forward to hearing from you!

Remember, together we are stronger!

Mental Health

Personal Hygiene

When our mental health is struggling, it is common for our personal hygiene to be one of the first things we either forget about or do not have the energy to do. Hygiene means keeping your self clean. This includes your body and clothes. Not keeping up with good personal hygiene can make people not want to spend time with you which can keep you disconnected from your friends.



Talking to someone you trust about your struggles can help with increasing your energy to keep up with your personal hygiene. It can also help to tackle the other struggles you may be having.

Taking that first shower can be a way to refresh and start your day and getting your laundry done can be the first step to getting back into a routine.

Making sure to brush your teeth and wash your hands is a good way to keep yourself from getting sick as well.

It is very important to remember that you don't have to struggle in silence or struggle alone.



Self-Advocates Say...



Listening to music is one of the best ways to get yourself out of a funk. Some examples of how music can help are:

- Listening to music can help to make you feel happy.
- Helps with motivation to work out.
- Helps with cleaning and organizing your home.
- Different types of music can help you get through difficult feelings or hard situations.
- Can lower your blood pressure and decrease your heart rate.
- Can help with getting to sleep or having a better quality of sleep.
- Listening to music can help with exercise. Dancing is a good way to get exercise at home. Whether you dance with a group or just rock out in your kitchen at home.
- Can help with depression and anxiety.
- Can help connect with others when you like the same songs.
- Music can help you concentrate when you are studying.

Spend some time and make a new playlist and let the good times roll.

A vibrant, colorful background featuring a smiling sun in the top left, various flowers in yellow, teal, and pink, and abstract organic shapes in orange and red. The overall style is bright and cheerful.

Advocacy Through Art

TIME FOR SOMETHING NEW

- ✓ Art projects
- ✓ Yoga
- ✓ meditation
- ✓ Vision boards

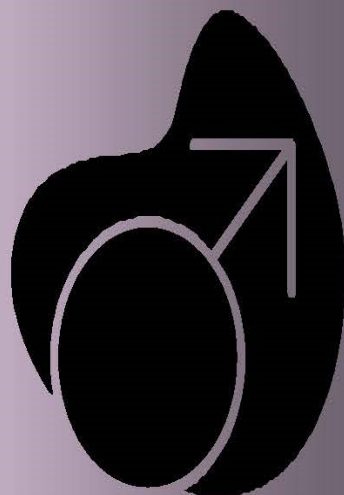
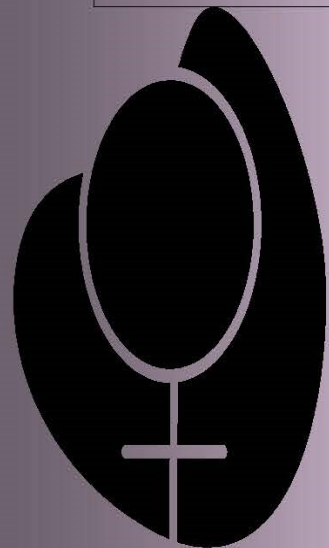
Starting March 23 - 4 sessions
1-2 pm

REGISTER WITH LEAH
LEAH.DORMAAR@SAIPA.ORG



Developmental Disabilities & Sexuality Workshop

This 6-week curriculum is designed for self-advocates and staff to teach a sexuality education series together as a team.
Starts April 18th, 2023 @1:00pm



Topics Include:

- Types of relationships
- Affection: Private or Public
- Moving from Friend to More
- Being in a Relationship
- Anatomy
- Sexual Feelings, Attractions & Acts
- Avoiding Pregnancy & STI's

AND MANY MORE!

If you would like to register for this workshop, contact the SAIPA office through email at mail@saipa.org or by phone at 403-320-1515.
Workshop will take place in person at the SAIPA office and over Zoom video conferencing

New Doctors coming to Alberta and How to find one

The City of Lethbridge currently has 100,000 people living within the city limits. 40,000 people in Lethbridge and area do not have a doctor. Alberta Health Services has been working hard to bring more doctors to come to our city by offering better deals like housing and more money. 4 new doctors have recently started working in Lethbridge. Alberta Health Services says that two more doctors will start in January, five will start between February and April, and six more between May and July 2023.

Each doctor can take on about 1000 to 1500 people as patients. This means that Lethbridge will continue to need 20-23 more doctors to get everyone off the waiting list.

Many people have gotten used to going to walk in clinics instead of having a regular doctor. However, this means you do not have someone to help with health issues that are not cured easily. Each time you go to a walk-in clinic, you are likely to see a different doctor each time which means starting from the beginning. This can cause medical issues to get worse or completely missed.

If you are looking for a new doctor in Southern Alberta, one of the best ways to find if anyone is taking new patients, is to go to www.albertafindadoctor.ca. This will list any available doctors in your area. However, at the time of this article, there are no clinics offering to take new people.



AISH Indexing

Those receiving AISH (Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped) saw their benefits rise starting January 1, 2023.

This is to help deal with inflation. AISH benefits went from \$1,685 to \$1,787. In addition to the plans to increase AISH the government announced a one time payment of up to \$600 for people who qualify to help with the increased costs (this would be \$100 a month over a period of 6 months). Anyone who is on AISH will automatically get this money.

This increase comes as a relief as the cost of everything keeps going up. The extra money has been able to help with the cost of groceries, the cost of transportation and other basic needs.

What does Indexing AISH benefits mean?

Indexing AISH benefits means that the amount of the payment will increase each year so that it will keep up with inflation and the cost of living and medical bills.

The increased costs of basic needs like groceries, utilities, and transportation has caused a lot of worry for many people who were not sure how they were going to make sure that all their bills were paid. Knowing that each year the AISH benefits will go up with inflation gives a great sense of relief.

Alberta Winter Games 2023

From February 24– 26 over 1200 athletes, staff and volunteers headed to Strathcona County where the 2023 Special Olympics Winter Games were held.

We are lucky to have two of those athletes sit on our Ripple Newsletter team. Congratulations to Brielle and Brady who both came home with bronze medals in their sports (floor hockey and 5 pin bowling).

Brady said that the most exciting part about the games was the wrap up dance and dinner. He also enjoyed getting to meet people from all over Alberta and representing Southern Alberta.

Brielle told us that they both had the opportunity to meet Hunter, the mascot for the Edmonton Oilers. A definite highlight to the trip.

Both Brielle and Brady noted that getting up really early in the day was needed to compete in events, which lead to really long days and they were very tired by the end of the events. This was the largest challenge they had during the games. The weather didn't help much either as it was –34 Celsius most of the weekend.

Brady said another amazing experience for them was that they got to ride a double decker bus in Edmonton for the first time. You don't see to many of those in Alberta

Overall they had a wonderful experience and the Ripple Newsletter crew wishes to congratulate all the athletes on a successful weekend.



UPCOMING EVENTS



March

- March 8- International Women's Day
- March 12– Daylight savings time– Spring forward
- March 15 -Online SRSAN meeting
- March 17– **St Patrick's Day**
- March 23 - Advocacy through ART @ SAIPA

APRIL

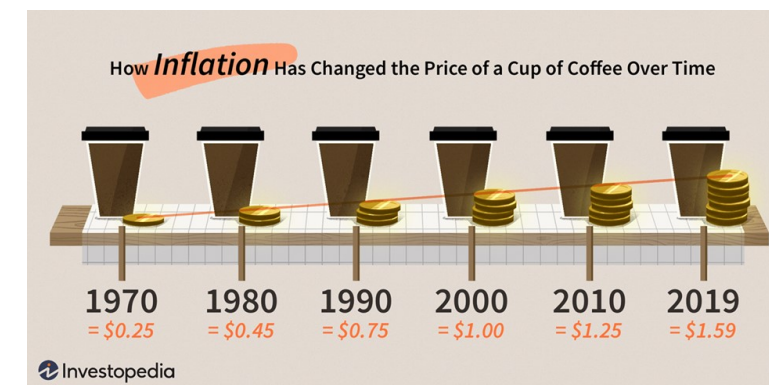
- April 8– Fight Night @ The Enmax
- April 13– SRSAN Meeting - Medicine Hat
- April 18 - Healthy Relationships and Sexuality workshop @ SAIPA
- April 9– Easter Sunday



Inflation

What is causing prices to go up?

Inflation is when the value of your money goes down over time. For example, if in 2020 you could buy a coffee for \$1 but 2 years later you need \$1.25 to buy that same coffee, that means you are experiencing inflation. Look at this picture below to get a better idea of what inflation does to the cost of a cup of coffee.



Canadians are feeling the price increase more this year than any other time since 1983. Inflation on buying things is up 7.7% compared to last year. As things like groceries, gas, housing, and utilities continue to cost more, people are not receiving more money. This means everyone has less to spend on the things they need to live. However, the costs have gone up even more than just what inflation has caused as there are shortages and delivery delays making things even more expensive. As an example, the cost of food has gotten so high that food banks in Alberta have seen more people using their services compared to anytime before this. Gas has jumped in cost since last year and the cost of energy for our homes has almost doubled.

Tips to Save Money

Transportation

Travel costs are at an all time high, Saving money here can really help your bank account. Some tips include:

- Use public transport instead of driving a car. If this is an option, it will cost less than a weekly gas fill-up, maintenance, and insurance/registration.
 - Walk and bike if that is an option.
- Share a ride with someone to split the cost

Food

For people who have a green space at their home, you can grow your own vegetables which will help lower your grocery bill. You can grow most vegetables or fruits you find at the store. You can also look for sales and discounts. Grocery stores will often offer weekly deals or a week where groceries are 15% off.

You can also buy vegetables and fruit when they are naturally grown near you. When you buy vegetables and fruit not in season, you are paying extra because it has to be shipped to the store.

Clothing

Clothing is expensive and something that everyone needs. Finding the best deals can really save money over time!

Tips to Save Money

- Going to thrift stores can save you money. You can get really nice clothes for cheap. You can also go to garage sales! You can also buy clothing for the summer in winter and vice versa for a nice discount.
 - You can work with your friends and have a clothing swap. Check your local churches for clothing swaps and fundraising sales.
 - Learning how to fix holes in clothes so you can continue to wear them.

Budgeting

Learning how to budget your money and pay your bills each month will help you make sure that you have money to buy food and clothing and other things you need. Writing out all your bills, how much they are and when they are due will make sure that your bills are paid on time and you are not getting charged extra for late fees.

Using any of these options can save you money each month. Hopefully prices will go down in the next year or so but until they do, we should do anything we can to save money to help with our bills.

