

# coming together

...to create change

Summer 2009



## inside

Message from the  
President of CACL .....2  
*Bendina Miller*

The Future — Our Choice? ..4  
*Audrey Cole*

Families Consider Ways  
to Renew Community  
Living Movement .....6  
*John Lord*

Family Support Networks ..8  
*Salvatore (Sal) Amenta, Ph.D.*

Upcoming Events .....10

Resources .....11

Ten Objectives For  
the Next Ten Years .....12

## Family Leadership in the Community Living Movement

**Laurie Larson** – Vice President, CACL  
Co-Chair, National Action Committee on Family Leadership and Grassroots Engagement

Ever since those first families started coming together many years ago, gathering in small groups across this country, the community living movement has been led by the vision of families who wanted a better life for their sons and daughters. They rejected the practice of institutionalizing people with intellectual disabilities and instead set out to create the services and supports necessary to make sure that their children could remain where they belonged—in loving families and involved in their communities.

Over the years, our organization has evolved from creating and delivering the necessary supports and services in the community to taking a larger, human rights perspective. It is no longer enough to keep our sons and daughters out of an institution. We must ensure that the rights of all individuals with intellectual disabilities are respected and upheld and that they are fully included in all aspects of community life and have dignified supports, of their choice, to do so.

It has been the vision and the passion of families that have driven so many changes over the years. It is important, critical even, to ensure that the voices of families continue to lead the way in our

organization and the larger community living movement. It is also important to realize that families are often challenged by a lack of supports and financial resources that can make their participation very difficult. As an organization we must acknowledge that reality and find new and creative solutions to ensure that their voices are heard and that a variety of opportunities for participation exist.

The issue of how best to engage and support the participation of families has been around for almost as long as our organization has existed. Many attempts have been made over the years to address this issue and it is a major focus once again. Much work has been done in recent years and a new national strategy was developed in 2008 by CACL's Family Leadership and Grassroots Engagement Advisory Committee. Most recently a National Action Committee on Family Leadership and Grassroots Engagement has been formed and is the vehicle by which CACL and the Provincial and Territorial Associations for Community Living can collaborate to implement this strategy. All levels of our organization need to be involved in creating new ways of working together if we are to finally succeed in building a large vibrant movement.

Continued on page 3



---

### Members of the National Action Committee on Family Leadership and Grassroots Engagement

Nancy Armstrong – Co-chair, NB  
Laurie Larson – Co-chair, CACL  
Julie Smith – PEI  
Shauna Henry – NWT  
Mimi Kennedy – NWT  
Kevin McTavish – SK  
Dawn Gates – MB  
Rose Flaig – MB  
Beth French – ON  
Tara Brinston – Secretariat, NB

---

#### PHOTOS:

##### On the front cover:

National Network of Family Leaders: (left to right) Danny Soucy – CACL, Laurie Larson – CACL, Nancy Armstrong – NB, Sherry Gambin-Walsh – NL, Debbie Howell – NL, Rachelle Czwierwinski – BC, Judith McGill – ON, Judy van Amerongen – NS, Dawn Gates – MB, Barbara McLeod – YU, Sal Amenta – ON  
Missing from photo: Shauna Henry – NWT, Elizabeth Kreiser – SK, Nancy McNamara-Trapp – ON, Julie Smith – PEI.

##### On the back cover:

Val and Tim Surbey of Manitoba at the International Gathering of Families, Ottawa, November 2008

Photos courtesy of Danny Soucy



## Message from the President of CACL

### Bendina Miller

President CACL

As President of CACL I would like to commend the Council of the Federation for their decision to create the new National Action Committee on Family Leadership and Grassroots Engagement. In recent years CACL, first through it's Grassroots Engagement Task Force and then later through it's Family Leadership and Grassroots Engagement Advisory Committee, has been working on developing a new national strategy to ensure the participation of families in our organization. A group of family leaders from across the country were brought together to assist in this process. In June these families participated in a two day Think Tank with members of the Council of the Federation to continue discussions on how best to connect with more families and ensure that

their voices are heard and that they continue to provide leadership in our ongoing work. I was fortunate to be at this gathering, to share in the invigorating discussions and hear the conversations focused on working together to realize the necessary changes both in our communities and our Community Living Federation. As a result of these discussions in June a new National Action Committee was created that will be a strong vehicle to address our shared concerns. As President of CACL, I am both delighted and encouraged by the commitment made by both the family leaders and the Council members to continue with this important work.

## The Council of the Federation

The Council of the Federation is the forum for bringing the broad Community Living Federation together to work collaboratively on advancing the full inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities and their families.

It is comprised of CACL and each of the 13 Provincial/Territorial Associations for Community Living. Through National Action Committees, members of the Council come together to share and exchange knowledge, to link existing efforts and to identify ways of working together to achieve our shared 10 point agenda.

## Family Leadership

(Continued)

It is also important to acknowledge that many others have joined with us, people who share our passionate belief that inclusion is right, and who will stand with families in demanding change. We also have a strong People First organization working along side us, and when necessary, challenging us to not settle for less than full inclusion. Any strategy to strengthen the involvement and voice of families must also be respectful of those who walk this path with us.

This edition of our newsletter will be focused on the issue of family leadership and grassroots engagement. Audrey Cole provides us with a glimpse of the scope of change that can be effected when families set their minds to making our society more inclusive and to defend their sons and daughters human rights. John Lord reflects on some of the discussions that have taken place to this point in the development of our strategy and some of the implications that arise for all levels of our organization. Sal Amenta then focuses on the importance of Family Networks, one of the pillars of our national strategy.

It is more urgent than ever to have a strong organization that can defend the rights of those with intellectual disabilities and their families. Even as we continue to work on long standing forms of exclusion and discrimination, new forms are also appearing. The rapid increase in genetic technology is making it possible to seek out and destroy people with disabilities before they are even born and the growing 'duty to die' debate puts pressure on those with disabilities later in life. When we are fighting for our child to be included in school, or to receive

therapies, or to be included in all those activities that other children take for granted, these topics might seem remote, but they reflect the underlying devaluing and discrimination that we must challenge. It is this underlying attitude that people with intellectual disabilities are not valued citizens that keeps us from succeeding in our individual day-to-day issues.

We know that there is strength in numbers and in the hopes, dreams and passion that families bring to our movement. We must find ways to attract many more families and ensure their ongoing leadership in our organization.

In order to succeed we must be willing to look not only at the external conditions that limit a family's ability to participate, but also at ourselves—our structures, our traditional ways of working, to see if they are supportive of family participation or if in fact they are hindering it. We must look at the image we portray to families—do they see an organization willing to challenge the status quo and take a strong stand on the issues of importance to them? Do they see an organization that is relevant to families in 2009 and beyond. Do they see an organization that is willing to transform itself to become relevant again? These are not easy questions to ask and answer. We have attempted to do so many times in our history. We must however, be brave enough, strong enough to embrace whatever changes are necessary to build an organization that can face the challenges that exist today and into the future. And we must never lose sight that our goal is to create communities and a country that welcomes, values and fully includes all individuals with intellectual disabilities and their families.

### Five Pillars of a National Family Leadership and Grassroots Engagement Strategy

1

**Establish and Operationalize Family Leadership and Grassroots Engagement as an ACL Priority**

2

**Provide Family-focused Information Resources**

3

**Support Family Networking**

4

**Engage Diverse Families and Self-Advocates**

5

**Identify and Nurture Family Leaders – for local, provincial/territorial, national and global organizations**



Diversity includes.

# The Future – Our Choice?

Audrey Cole



**Audrey, her husband Fred and son Ian live in Smith Falls, Ontario. Audrey has been involved in the Association for more than 40 years and has made significant contributions to advancing the rights of people with intellectual disabilities. She is one of the activist mothers featured in Melanie Panitch's book *Disability, Mothers, and Organization – Accidental Activists*.**

**A**s an older member of CACL, I have been invited to provide a glimpse of the scope of change that has resulted from the efforts of families since they first came together to form our Association over 60 years ago. That is no easy task, particularly in the space available but, more particularly because, personally, I don't instinctively think of the Association in terms of families. From my standpoint, being the parent of a person who has a disability is simply a fact of life over which I have no control—not that I have ever wanted to change that circumstance!

What is and has been important to me and to my family is the way that simple fact of life propelled me into membership and participation in this vibrant social movement. The national, provincial and local levels of CACL, each in their own way, provide for all of us the opportunity to share in and contribute to social change in ways that would be futile were we to be speaking out and working alone as individuals or even as families. The changes in the lives of people with intellectual disabilities across Canada over the past 60 years are the result of the shared beliefs and values and the combined energy and commitment of many people. As CACL Vice-President, Laurie Larson, reminds us, that includes family members, friends, people who have disabilities, employees of the Association, interested citizens—

many in professional practice and many who are or have been public servants. All have dreamed of a better world than the one we have known. All have recognised their obligation to try to build it.

It is hard to imagine life as it was 60 years ago for the pioneers of our Association. The world our son entered 15 years later was bleak enough. It was not a caring world. It was not a world that welcomed people with disabilities. There was no early infant intervention, few doctors were interested and many were unwilling to take our sons and daughters as patients (our family was fortunate in that respect). Generally, there was no binding obligation on the state to provide education for our sons and daughters, no opportunity for real work and certainly none for real pay. Choice for families in those days, meant isolating their children in large, overcrowded institutions or keeping them at home with no support. The vast majority chose the latter and battled on.

The picture is now somewhat different. Most new parents today do not face a brick wall. There are now doors and there are windows. They can be opened. Usually, there is some element of support behind those doors and some glimpse of a better future through those windows. People with disabilities do not yet have all for which our movement has worked. Yet, for what it is worth, it can be said that,



for most people, services and supports, educational and employment opportunities, places to live and activities in which to participate are distinctly better than they were 60 years ago. But “better than” is not enough!

Sadly, improved support, recognition under law and other advances have created the illusion that society as a whole cares about our sons and daughters (and, by extension, about us). That illusion is dangerous. We cannot afford to be complacent. We cannot afford to sit back and relax under our illusion of acceptance. As families, we cannot afford to receive what is now available and wait for the next steps because there is no-one else out there to build them. Only we can do that. Every advance that we have enjoyed has been made possible by the effort of those who have preceded us. Governments themselves rarely initiate change but, if we work hard enough to show them the way, they often respond. Our job is not yet finished but it is changing.

While we keep our sights on the vision of an inclusive society where our sons and daughters are welcome, other people are working much harder and with government support, on a different agenda with a different vision. It is an agenda that sees disability as a problem, as something that no-one would wish to have and that, consequently should be eliminated. Neither people with disabilities nor their families have been asked if they agree with that assumption. Efforts to inject their opinions into the process are ignored.

We have moved quietly, almost secretly, into frightening times. Science and technology are being used for purposes that are not under public discussion. There are, for example, very few infants being born with Down syndrome in Canada today. Infants in care with severe disabilities die in unexplained or inadequately explained circumstances. Only last week I heard of another instance where a child with a disability is being denied entry into Canada to be reunited with immigrant family members.

It is time to lift the lid off our illusion of a caring society and pitch in to make that illusion real. When families are no longer allowed to give birth to infants with Down syndrome, it will be too late to demand society’s respect for such people, indeed for any of our sons, daughters and friends with disabilities.

Fellow members of the Association, fellow family members: as Victor Frankl once said, for our peace of mind and our personal well-being, there is something of significance yet to do. We must do it. We do not have a choice.

***Look at your son or daughter...  
What do you see?  
What do you feel?  
Now imagine they have  
an intellectual disability...***

***When I look at my child,  
I see the same things  
that you see when you  
look at your child...  
I feel the same things  
that you feel when you  
think of your child...  
I want the world to see  
my child the way I see him  
...the way you see your child.***

***My wish for all individuals  
with intellectual disabilities  
is that everyone just  
see them...  
and think of them...  
as “people first”...  
realizing that they do belong  
and should be included  
in all aspects of community life  
...just like anyone else.***

***Isn't that what  
embracing diversity  
is all about?***

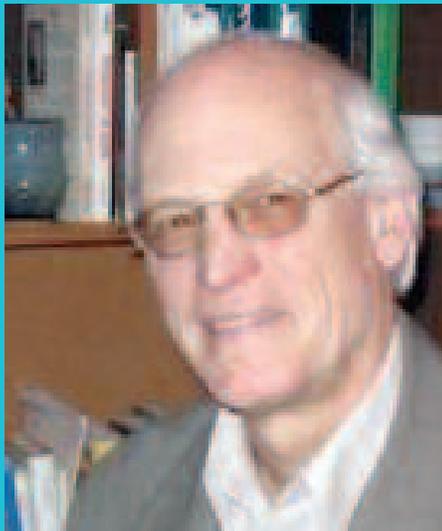
— Dawn Gates, National Action Committee on Family Leadership and Grassroots Engagement member from Manitoba



Diversity includes.

# Families Consider Ways to Renew Community Living Movement

John Lord



John Lord is a researcher, author, and family member, and is a partner in the Facilitation Leadership Group. John facilitated the recent two-day Council of the Federation Think Tank that included family leaders from across Canada. In this article, John reflects on the Think Tank, and some of the ways that family leaders are considering family engagement and renewal of the community living movement.

When 40 family leaders and Council members gathered in Toronto in June, there was a sense among delegates that they were part of creating a new era for the community living movement. After all, the purpose of the two-day event was “to develop directions for enhancing family engagement and leadership across Canada that can assist families to organize for change and to consider how the Federation can help this change to happen.”

Much significant work related to family involvement had preceded the Think Tank. The CACL national conference in November, 2008 had highlighted family engagement, where there was extensive dialogue about how to change traditional approaches used with individuals and families. The Family Leadership and Grassroots Engagement Advisory Committee had been working with family leaders across the country for the previous year.

During the early conversations at the Think Tank, family leaders and Federation leaders soon discovered that they had much in common. Both groups readily agreed that changes were needed in the community living movement and in the Federation of associations. “It is time to re-engage families in all levels of the movement,” said one delegate, expressing what many were feeling.

Some of the older delegates described the history of the

association and the contribution that values have played over the years. Delegates agreed that values would be essential to any future changes in the movement. The two values that ground the current work of this movement came up over and over again; self-determination and community. We can think of self-determination as the expression and freedom of each person being able to make personal choices about their own life. These choices are always embedded in community, which includes the social fabric of families, neighbourhoods, and other personal relationships. Community is what gives us social meaning and enables us to belong and feel included. When self-determination and community work hand in hand, they create the context for citizenship. As this movement is learning, participation, contribution, and belonging are the essence of citizenship.

Michael Bach, EVP of CACL described how the context of our communities and the community living movement has changed in the last two decades. We can think of the world changing more and more through networks and connections, and less and less through formal agency structures. Family leaders found this insight particularly helpful as they explored the expanding ways that families are engaged in their communities. As one family leader noted, “The growth of autonomous family networks should be seen as a

catalyst for change, not as a problem for the community living Federation.”

As the conversation evolved over the two days, delegates worked on two inter-related themes that would need attention in the future. First, there would need to be strategies and commitment to re-engage families in all Federation activities. Second, there would need to be a deeper understanding of what it might mean to assist traditional local associations to be “transformed.” Let’s briefly explore each of these directions.

Re-engaging families is central to what is happening in disability circles world-wide. There is growing awareness that families must be involved in disability issues if we are going to get people the right support in the right places. From the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to the expanding array of family networks across Canada, participation of families enables people with disabilities to have expanded networks and enables service providers to embrace the power of the family voice. Delegates developed a number of directions and strategies to enhance family engagement, including: passing resolutions on family engagement at each provincial/territorial association, supporting family networking, creating spaces and places for those family networks to connect and have conversations, and identifying and supporting new family leaders with events that promote participation and solidarity.

Finding ways to assist traditional local associations to be “transformed” was a challenging conversation. Like with any controversial issue, it takes time



and insight for a group of people to agree on what needs to change. And no one is really comfortable with transformation, because it often means upheaval and discomfort as we change functions and structures that have served us well in the past. Delegates struggled with this challenge, but agreed that transformation is what is needed — not just development, where we add on to what we are currently doing, but fundamental changes in purpose and process.

**Purpose**—many great leaders have helped us understand that if we get our purpose right, we are well on the way with our journey. Tommy Douglas often used to quote Proverbs when he said, “Where there is no vision, people perish.” If self-determination and community are the values to guide the change we want, can we imagine principles we could implement that would empower families and individuals as they work closely with local associations for community living across the country.

**Process**—if the world changes through networks, then we need to know how to evoke good process with families and communities. As delegates engaged in conversation, they realized its power in understanding and mobilizing. While conversation was seen as critical, it was agreed that we need to broaden who we talk to. For inclusion to take hold for all citizens, collaboration is one of the

principles that will guide the work. We need to be comfortable exploring ideas and actions with town councils, school boards, neighbours, and activists who want transformational change now! And most important, it was agreed we need to get much better at listening to and supporting the choices of persons with disabilities. The development of family focused tools and resources was seen as an important direction in the context of engaging diverse families and communities.

In 2008, a committee of CACL developed recommendations for new national strategy and with the help of Provincial and Territorial ACLs identified a group of family leaders from across the country to provide some fresh insight into this issue. The Think Tank was one of the first major responses to the strategy recommendations. As delegates reflected on the two days of work, there was agreement on the course they had outlined for the future. In her closing remarks, CACL President Bendina Miller expressed optimism “at one of the most important meetings” she had ever attended. Delegates agreed that engaging families and renewing the community living movement and the Federation would not be easy. If the quality of participation by the family leaders at the Think Tank is any indication, engagement and renewal are certainly within the realm of the possible!



Diversity includes.

# Family Support Networks

Salvatore (Sal) Amenta, Ph.D.



Sal Amenta, his wife Kathy and son John Paul live in Stouffville, Ontario. Sal is a founding member of Newmarket Family Support Network and a member of the National Network of Family Leaders.

John Paul, who has mild intellectual disabilities, graduated from high school with a diploma, but his program had been so heavily modified that he lacked the skills and knowledge to continue studies at a community college...so much for his dream of becoming an auto mechanic!

With no prospect of continuing his education, my wife and I were left with the challenge of keeping him occupied during the day. Since Kathy was still working for another two years, and I had retired early to look after my parents, it was my job to keep him engaged and productive in a rural area where there is no public transit. While I became JP's caregiver, chauffeur, and job coach with considerable good cheer, at first I didn't know where to turn. Indeed, when I think back, I wonder how my wife and I could have been so ill-prepared, given that we were both teachers for a combined sixty years! But there we were, directionless, on our own, fending for ourselves and our son.

After researching programs and services available in the Newmarket area north of Toronto, I learned about Community Living, an association I had vaguely heard about. We soon found ourselves in the uncharted territory of *disability supports*. Happy to find that financial and work-related supports were available to us, we quickly took advantage of them, but despite our new relationship with our Community Living Association, we were not getting any *social supports*.

I recall speaking with our association's Day Supports Manager and his supervisor of programs. While noting that Community Living provides all kinds of programs for individuals with disabilities, I asked them, "Where is the support for beleaguered and isolated families, and where is the budget for it?"

You guessed it, there were none, so the three of us pursued the idea of bringing parents and families together to share experiences and information, and if possible provide moral support. Surely, opportunities to meet and talk would be a good start.

With our allies from Community Living Newmarket, we established a new family support group, and anticipating the eventual linkage of many such groups in the region and beyond, we named it the Family Support Network (FSN), its mandate being to support families supporting individuals—our ultimate beneficiaries.

FSN decided to meet monthly, and to organize evening meetings around socials followed by a presentation, workshop or other in-service for members. We brought treats and our local association provided a venue and facilities. Each month we tackled issues like day and evening programs, services, new residential initiatives, disability support programs, and life planning strategies. As volunteers generously provided respite care so families could join us, we mingled and shared experiences, frustrations and joys. We learned from one another how best to cope and advocate.

As a support group, we constantly seek to involve more parents and families, recognizing that, due to obligations, they cannot attend meetings regularly...one reason why our membership has grown only gradually. Still, our membership list has grown eight-fold in a year, and we have established a telephone and email list for communication purposes. We appreciate being able to contact them, and by using social networking media, we plan to extend and expand our reach.

FSN has taken on causes such as transit and sheltered workshops, participated in association review as a focus group, and explored new provincial initiatives in residential accommodation. It has done a little fund-raising, and in some ways acted as our Community Living Association's conscience, even as a gadfly if necessary.

After more than a full year of meetings, and slow growth, we have a (very) long list of projects, and we have established a solid and influential role in our CLA. As a member of the board and founding member of FSN, I report monthly at board meetings of our CLA, and the board consults us on matters where

***Involvement with other like-minded mothers had a strong galvanizing effect on the development of support networks which in turn provided support for their concerns. At the core of these networks was a shared experience of discrimination, rejection, belittlement and pain as women and mothers, and a passion for social justice. The power of having one another to call upon and act with, and the sense of common purpose in the work encouraged their persistence and sustained their momentum.***

— Melanie Panitch in *Disability, Mothers, and Organizations—Accidental Activists*

parental/family input is desirable, such as policy, program, and strategic planning. We are making overtures to nearby support groups, and are exchanging visits with them.

We no longer look backward to when we suffered in silence, alone. We look forward to greater influence in the community living movement, our adoptive cause. As a grassroots force, our family group and the network in which it operates, will gain the power that comes from cooperation and collaboration. It will continue to break down the barriers of exclusion that tend to isolate us, and try to replace them with opportunities for communication and supportive collaboration.

Like others involved in family networks across this country, I share a passion for networking because it has been for me a life changing experience, one that set me on a path not anticipated.

Kathy and I are no longer isolated, exhausted and burning out. We may be weary as we continue to rely on employment support services to seek a work placement for JP's future needs. However, at least we now have a support group that will work with us to get programs tailored for individuals like him, who have tended to "fall between the cracks".

This in itself is comforting, since our connection with other families allows us to feel that we are part of something bigger than our own private, little world. More importantly, it is empowering to go beyond the walls of our home by advocating for social justice with others. This is the promise of building strong family leadership and grassroots engagement as part of a national strategy. In the end, family networking can only strengthen the community living movement—much as it did in its early years.



Diversity includes.

# Recipe for Change

## A Maritime Family Kitchen Party

### Main Ingredients:

- 2 Organizations
- 1 Community Living Federation
- 1 Self-Advocacy movement
- 100s of allies and friends of community living

### Blend in:

- 1 pre-conference day with John O'Brien
- 2 plenary sessions
- 8 concurrent sessions

### Add in:

- A dash of networking
- A pinch of fun

### Directions:

Mix together for two days in Dieppe, New Brunswick

### Final Product:

A vibrant national family and grassroots movement committed to an inclusive Canada.

**National Conference • October 23-24, 2009 • Dieppe, NB**

For more information and to register please visit [www.cacl.ca](http://www.cacl.ca)



50 years  
Canadian Association  
for Community Living  
Association canadienne pour  
l'intégration communautaire



50 years  
New Brunswick  
Association for  
Community Living  
Association du  
Nouveau-Brunswick  
pour l'intégration  
communautaire

Diversity includes. On se ressemble.



## Upcoming Events

### British Columbia:

#### Ripple Effect V: Prince George Exploring the Power of Advocacy and Community Development

BCACL will be hosting our fifth in a series of family retreats from October 16-18 in Prince George. The Ripple Effect Five is for family members from the Prince George, Peace River South and Caribou regions. We encourage all family members—Moms, Dads, Brothers, Sisters, Aunts and Uncles—who have a loved one with a developmental disability to apply. The retreats provide a unique opportunity for families to come together to continue to build their strengths, nourish their passions, and expand their knowledge. For more information: [www.bcacl.org](http://www.bcacl.org)

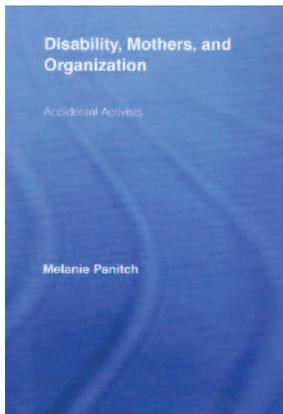
### New Brunswick:

The Canadian Association for Community Living and the New Brunswick Association for Community Living are pleased to co-host a **Maritime Family Kitchen Party** — A national gathering of families, self-advocates and allies working towards a more inclusive Canada.

Join us in New Brunswick on October 23rd and 24th to connect with others, share experiences and strategies and build on the strengths and commitment of families and self-advocates.

For more information: [www.cacl.ca](http://www.cacl.ca)

# Resources



## Disability, Mothers and Organization — Accidental Activists Melanie Panitch

This book examines how and why mothers with disabled children became activists. Leading campaigns to close institutions and secure

human rights, these women learned to mother as activists, struggling in their homes and communities against the debilitating and demoralizing effects of exclusion. Activist mothers recognized the importance of becoming advocates for change beyond their own families and contributed to building an organization to place their issues on a more public scale.

Now available in paperback!

Order at:

<http://routledgesociology.com/books/Disability-Mothers-and-Organization-isbn9780415998963>



## Pathways to Inclusion: Building a New Story with People and Communities John Lord and Peggy Hutchison

*Pathways to Inclusion* addresses the organizational strategies that have been used in the

past and highlights areas for change. Well-researched, with clear dialogue and interspersed with insightful anecdotes, *Pathways to Inclusion* inspires change within both human services and the greater community. This book is an invaluable resource to educators, advocates, citizens, families, and practitioners in the fields of disability studies, aging, and related human services.

Order at:

<http://www.captus.com/information/catalogue/book.asp?Book+Number=945>

## International Gathering of Families in Ottawa, November 2008

In November 2008, families from around the world came together in Ottawa for the International Gathering of Families.



Diversity includes.



*Leadership is action, not position.*

— Donald H. McGannon

## Ten Objectives For the Next Ten Years

- Achieve equality rights and recognition.
- Close institutions and assure a home in the community.
- Secure child rights and needed supports.
- Ensure families have needed supports.
- Achieve inclusive education.
- Secure the right and access to disability supports.
- Establish safe and inclusive communities.
- Eradicate poverty for people with intellectual disabilities and their families.
- Achieve employment equality.
- Make a global impact on inclusion.

Our Ten-Year Agenda has ten objectives to guide how we'll realize our vision: communities, a country, and a world where diversity includes.

Join us in making this dream become true.  
Visit [www.cacl.ca](http://www.cacl.ca)

## What Can I Do?

- Share this newsletter with families who might not otherwise receive it.
  - The Preamble to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recognizes the role of families: "Convinced that the family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the state, and that persons with disabilities and their family members should receive the necessary protection and assistance to enable families to contribute towards the full and equal enjoyment of the rights of persons with disabilities"...
- Please write a letter to your Member of Parliament urging the Government of Canada to ratify the UN convention.
- Send suggestions or upcoming events for future editions of this newsletter to Laurie Larson at [ynot2@sasktel.net](mailto:ynot2@sasktel.net)

This project is funded in part by the Government of Canada's Social Development Partnerships Program, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada. The opinions and interpretations in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the Government of Canada.



50 years  
Canadian  
Association for  
Community Living

**Diversity includes.**