



CANADIAN CENTRE ON DISABILITY STUDIES

research and education on issues that affect us all

<http://www.disabilitystudies.ca>

Canadian Centre on Disability Studies Arts Ability Project

PROJECT OUTLINE:

This two-year project began in July 1, 2002 and involved the development, implementation and evaluation of art, drama, music, and dance programs to empower children and adults with disabilities in four sites in Manitoba. Programs were designed to foster creative self-expression and create new opportunities to support community participation in and contribution to Canadian society. Programs involved people with disabilities, their peers and those who provide some form of support. The J. W. McConnell Family Foundation was the primary funder. This project has a training component that is funded by Human Resources Development Canada.

SITES FOR DELIVERY OF PROGRAMS:

1. **Deer Lodge Centre** -One day of programming which focuses on visual art. The sessions are designed for seniors with dementia and work with an integrated format to include some family and community members.
2. **New Directions** - Programs run in conjunction with day programs already established for adults with developmental disabilities. Two days of programs offer visual art and drama/music.
3. **Norway House** - In partnership with Frontier School Division, CCDS offers two days of programming a week from October to May. The focus is for school age children (gr2-11) with FAS/ARND and other disabilities, although other children are invited to participate. Programs will include visual arts and dance/music.
4. **CMHA Portage la Prairie** -One program of one hour a week is offered to consumers of mental health services. The program focuses on dance/drama.

PROGRAMS

The purpose of the programs is: to research and document beneficial aspects of creative participation in the arts for people with disabilities; to develop ways of adapting programs specifically for this population; and to develop educational videos and a training module for teaching facilitators in this field.

Participation in the artistic process is of primary importance to these programs. Each session is designed to meet the level of its participants so that they can readily access their own creativity and explore the art form in their own way. The sessions are process-oriented as opposed to

product-oriented. It is expected that this approach will help build self-esteem, beneficial relationships between people with disabilities and those that support them, increased physical/emotional well-being, and a positive profile of the this program in the community. It is also expected that some participants will demonstrate artistic gifts that were previously unexplored.

For further information on programming or training, contact Program Manager, [Sue Proctor](#).

LEAD ARTISTS

Judy Cook, is a dancer who performs across Canada, and teaches in many settings. She has extensive experience working in dance with children in Northern Manitoba through the Manitoba Artists in the Schools program, and is teaching a pilot program in dance for adults with disabilities at the Manitoba Developmental Centre.

Sue Proctor is on staff at CCDS working on the development of the Arts Ability Project. She taught a four-year pilot program in drama for adults with disabilities at the Manitoba Developmental Centre. Sue is also a performer, clown, mime, storyteller and arts educator with the Manitoba Artists in the Schools Program.

Claire Stephensen, B.F.A., brings experience in empowering individuals through visual arts in teaching, facilitation, and curriculum and workshop development. She has worked with children in the schools, individuals who are deaf blind, and those with autism. She has also helped to develop and facilitate a five-year pilot project in the visual arts for adults with developmental disabilities.

EVALUATION COMPONENT

Research for this project is analytic and reflective in nature and will be used to directly inform programming over the course of the project. As such, research activities will document and build an understanding of relationships and transformations that occur between people with disabilities and those who provide support to them. In order to achieve this, participants as well as people involved in designing, implementing, and hosting the programs will be asked to contribute ideas that will be used to inform the research design as well as information that will be analyzed. Both internal and external evaluators will be involved in the research process. The research will consider both the successes and the dilemmas experienced during the program and will produce insights that will be of benefit to others who are interested in undertaking similar types of programming.

For information about the evaluation research, please contact Principal Researchers, Dr. [Kari Krogh](#) or [Maya Gislason](#).

[Arts Ability Program Evaluation \(PDF\)](#)

Outcomes

[Arts Engagement Manual \(PDF\)](#)

[Arts Catalogue \(PDF\)](#)

[Challenging Stereotypes: A Celebration of Arts in Community - March 25-27, 2004 Program](#)

Funding

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