



**DISABILITY  
RESOURCE  
DIGEST**

**Volume 8 Issue 8 September 2008**

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The Disability Resource Digest (DRD) is a special project of SMD Alliance. SMD Alliance is based in Manitoba, Canada and provides strategic vision and policy direction to four SMD corporations: SMD Clearinghouse; SMD Foundation; SMD Ventures; and SMD Services.

The vision shared among the corporations is of a "community that supports the independence, participation, and empowerment of persons of all abilities." Each SMD corporation pursues a complementary mandate in working toward this vision.

The DRD is prepared primarily as an informational resource for consumers, professionals and publics interested in remaining current in disability related issues. An archive of past editions of the DRD is maintained on SMD's web site (<http://www.smd.mb.ca>).

Published monthly (with a single summer edition for July and August), the DRD presents summaries of, and URL addresses for, notable disability-related content on the world-wide web (WWW). The DRD focuses on recently posted content but also includes coverage of other web pages of interest. The URL addresses cited in the DRD are current at the time of publication, but as content on the web is continually revised, the addresses in the DRD may not remain current.

The DRD is prepared for SMD Alliance by The Project Group (TPG) Consulting Cooperative Ltd., a Winnipeg-based consulting firm. Neither SMD nor TPG are responsible for the accuracy or reliability of the content cited in the DRD.

Readers interested in learning more about SMD Alliance are invited to visit: <http://www.smd.mb.ca> or to contact the agency by e-mail at [info@smd.ca](mailto:info@smd.ca). Readers are also invited to send comments and suggestions regarding the DRD to this same e-mail address.

## ACCESSIBILITY

### **Blagojevich expands Free Rides program to include people with disabilities – (PJStar).**

"Gov. Rod R. Blagojevich today signed legislation to allow people with disabilities statewide to ride free on all fixed route transit systems. Senate Bill 1920 requires transit systems statewide to begin providing free rides to people with disabilities who are enrolled in the State's Circuit Breaker program no later than Oct. 24. Statewide, approximately 275,000 low-income individuals with disabilities are eligible for this benefit. This new benefit builds on the success of Seniors Ride Free, which was launched in January. In combination, these two programs ensure that nearly 1.6 Illinoisans can ride fixed-route transit for free, once they register with their local transit agency."

<http://www.pjstar.com/news/x2045582847/Blagojevich-expands-Free-Rides-program-to-include-people-with-disabilities>

### **Canadian officials scramble to build ramp for mayor – by Jeff Lee (Canwest News Service).**

"Embarrassed Canadian Olympic Committee officials scrambled yesterday to make a wheelchair-accessible ramp for Canada Olympic House so the building could accommodate Vancouver Mayor Sam Sullivan's wheelchair. The ramp was cobbled together less than a day before Canada House shuts down at the end of the Olympics. Mr. Sullivan, who arrived in Beijing on Wednesday night, had planned to visit Canada House, the home away from home for Canadian athletes, parents and friends. But it was unclear whether the facility, near the 'Bird's Nest' National Stadium, could actually accommodate him."

<http://www.canada.com/ottawacitizen/news/story.html?id=d384a56d-5abe-4ced-b6eb-0c95aa4175a7>

### **Entertainment Access– Your rights as a person with a disability to have a pint at a pub, rock'n'roll, break the bank at the casino, watch another sequel, ruin a walk, and other time wasters – (ILRU).**

"What are your rights as person with a disability choosing an entertainment option today? When visiting a bar or night club to listen to music what are your rights? If you play golf, videogames, or consider gambling your game, can you access the facilities that offer these distractions, and if you can what accommodations can you expect? What are your rights at the opera, an outdoor concert, or at a temporary event like a fair or circus performance? These answers and more will be revealed in this presentation on the impact of the Americans with Disabilities Act on venues of entertainment. Additionally, the impact of the new accessibility guidelines (ADA/ABA AG or "attabag") will be discussed."

[Go to Archived Web Cast](#) (uses RealOne Player)

<http://www.ilru.org/html/training/webcasts/archive/2008/08-13-AM.html>

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## ADVOCACY

### **Alert: Say 'NO' to NY Forced Psychiatric Drugging of 'Ann L' – (MindFreedom).**

"Ann L. says her forced psychiatric drugging makes her 'sick and is torture.' But New York State is aggressively pushing for more forced drugging of Ann L. on an outpatient basis in her own community residence. Ann L. is 50 years old, and says she has been in and out of the psychiatric system since she was 15. Ann says she was locked up for the past seven years in

the notorious Pilgrim Psychiatric Center in New York, where she experienced years of forced psychiatric drugging. Earlier this year Ann L. finally won her freedom. She thought. Ann got out of the institution and has been satisfied living in the community in the Irving Berkowitz Residence in West Brentwood. But now the State of New York is threatening to continue her forced psychiatric drugging while living at home even outside of the institution. The State of New York is seeking to use 'Kendra's Law' to continue to administer forced psychiatric drugs to Ann L. using Involuntary Outpatient Commitment."

<http://www.mindfreedom.org/as/act/us/ann-l>

**Disability centre needs more funds** – (*Canada.com*). "A Nanaimo resource centre for people living with disabilities may have to cancel programs or close its doors completely if members can't find some much-needed funding. The loss of the services will have severe implications for people like Bernice Johnson, who discovered the Nanaimo and Area Disability Resource Centre about 12 years ago. The single mother was an introvert for years before she took control of her life and became a much more involved mother. Born nearly three months premature, Johnson was later diagnosed with cerebral palsy, that led her to a completely withdrawn lifestyle. After years of growth with the resource centre, she said she no longer allows people to take advantage of her. She's also the chairwoman of the group that gave her so much support."

<http://www.canada.com/nanaimodailynews/news/story.html?id=9381811e-df92-4646-be62-15f72e669562>

**International Day of Persons with Disabilities - 3 December - 2008 Theme: "Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Dignity and justice for all of us"** – (*UN.org*).

"Dignity and justice for all of us is the theme of this year's International Day for Persons with Disabilities, as well as for the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Dignity and justice for all persons are established universal principles. Since its inception, the United Nations has recognized that the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family are the foundations of freedom, justice and peace in the world. These principles, along with equality and non-discrimination, have guided the work of the United Nations for the past 60 years and are enshrined in various instruments such as the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as in treaties such as the International Covenants on Human Rights, and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. These instruments are among those which make up the international human rights framework, are complementary and reaffirm that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interrelated, interdependent and mutually reinforcing."

<http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=109>

**Stigma attached to mental illness a "national embarrassment": CMA** – by Patrick Sullivan (*CMA*). "The stigma attached to mental illness is so pervasive it can affect almost all aspects of Canadians' lives, from the people they marry to the workers they hire, a new poll conducted for the CMA indicates. 'The results don't paint a very flattering picture,' CMA President Brian Day said of poll, which was part of the CMA's 2008 National Report Card on the state of Canada's health care system. 'When only 50% of us would tell a friend that a family member

has a mental illness while 72% would disclose a cancer diagnosis, there's something seriously wrong'."

[http://www.cma.ca/index.cfm?ci\\_id=10042907&la\\_id=1](http://www.cma.ca/index.cfm?ci_id=10042907&la_id=1)

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## EMPLOYMENT

**Finding the Right Way To Disclose a Disability** – by Suzanne Robitaille (*Wall Street Journal*).

"Disclosing a disability is a personal decision but can be beneficial if done right. Only you can decide whether -- and when -- to tell your new employer about your disability. Disclosing a condition can help protect your legal rights but can also leave you open to discrimination. Still, experts say you're better off giving management a heads-up. Here are a few different approaches to disclosure."

[http://online.wsj.com/article/SB121970164024670703.html?mod=googlenews\\_wsj](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB121970164024670703.html?mod=googlenews_wsj)

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## GENERAL INTEREST

**Bellingham educator uses clay to help people conquer dyslexia** – by Michelle Nolan

(*Bellingham Herald*). "Marlene Easley uses the three-dimensional nature of clay to help break through the barriers to learning that are created by dyslexia. The 58-year-old Bellingham teacher can list hundreds of students, age 6 to 62, whom she has helped overcome both reading and math dyslexia during intense one-week programs through her business, Dyslexia Unlearned."

<http://www.bellinghamherald.com/102/story/511707.html>

**Drawing Inspiration From Disability - By Mouth and Foot Painting Artists** –

(*HealthNewsDigest.com*). "Increasingly, individuals with a physical disability are redefining what it means to be disabled. According to the American Disability Act (ADA), about 43 million Americans--one in seven people--are living with at least one disability, and most Americans will experience a disability at some time during the course of their lives. For some, that experience can be such that it changes the direction of their life forever. Take for example, Californian artist Dennis Francesconi, who, as a result of a skiing accident at age 17, broke his neck and became a wheelchair-bound quadriplegic. Fortunately, he refused to see this as the end of his life. Eventually, he began to draw by gripping a pencil between his teeth. In time, and with the support of his wife, Kristi, his skills as an artist blossomed. Later, he was introduced to the U.S. Mouth and Foot Painting Artists (MFPA), a for-profit organization run by disabled artists seeking financial independence, formed nearly 50 years ago."

[http://www.healthnewsdigest.com/news/Education\\_390/Drawing\\_Inspiration\\_From\\_Disability\\_shtml](http://www.healthnewsdigest.com/news/Education_390/Drawing_Inspiration_From_Disability_shtml)

**FamilyConnect Named a "2008 Outstanding Product" in the iParenting Media Awards** –

(*AFB*). "The American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) and the National Association for Parents of Children with Visual Impairments (NAPVI) are proud to announce that the web site [FamilyConnect](#) has been named a '2008 Outstanding Product' in the iParenting Media Awards. The Awards determine the most outstanding products available for children and

teens in a diverse range of categories, including games and toys, educational books, web sites, and more."

<http://www.afb.org/Section.asp?DocumentID=4370>

**'Learning detective' touts testing** – by Cindy Stephen (*CalgaryHerald*). "Julie Hendry was a little worried when her youngest son was struggling with Grade 1 reading. But she became alarmed when young Jacob was barely into Grade 2 and the teacher raised the red flag. 'She told me he was really far behind and she asked me if we could get him tested,' says Julie, who was surprised but anxious to get some answers."

<http://www.canada.com/calgaryherald/news/neighbours/story.html?id=2ebb4661-aab6-46d9-9f11-175a11e692cb>

**Nigeria: Disability is certainly never inability** – by Ifeanyi Celestine Ugwu (*Africanpath*). "I blame African leaders for the woes of the entire continent. Able bodied Africans are finding it very hard to survive both at home and abroad; how much more the disabled ones? I have lived with disability for the past 33 years. I was not born disabled, though the failure of leadership made a lot of us victims of disability and the same situation still obtains today. Have you ever imagined how many Africans would have been saved the agony of living with disability if only government had brought immunization against child killer diseases within the reach of the rural communities at no cost? Imagine how many disabled people would have remained able bodied if not for the selfish interest of African leaders who lead our various countries into ethnic conflicts and wars. It is disheartening to know that our leaders contributed 90% of the woes the disabled persons."

[http://www.africanpath.com/p\\_blogEntry.cfm?blogEntryID=5658](http://www.africanpath.com/p_blogEntry.cfm?blogEntryID=5658)

**"Pool rat" Phelps found focus on path to gold** – by Simon Denyer (*Reuters*). "When Michael Phelps was a kid, his primary school teacher told his mother he would never amount to anything because he was unable to focus. When Phelps won the first of his 14 Olympic gold medals, in Athens in 2004, he remembered those words as he stood on the podium and listened to the 'Stars and Stripes'. Despite being diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) at the age of nine, Phelps went to prove that teacher spectacularly wrong. 'He was a very energetic little guy, always all over the place, 'Why are we doing this? When are we doing this? What are we doing next?',' his mother Debbie told Reuters in an interview."

<http://www.reuters.com/article/GCA-Olympics/idUSDEL16389120080821>

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## GOVERNMENT

### CANADA

**Government Meets With Disability Groups** – "Saskatchewan's Social Service Minister says eliminating the Saskatchewan Council on Disability Issues hasn't left people with disabilities behind in the governments policy decisions. Donna Harpauer says on the contrary she's been meeting face to face with the nearly 170 disability advocacy groups to hear first hand what they would like to have happen. Harpauer says she's had a positive response to the meetings with most indicating they've never been able to meet face to face with the Minister in the past."

[http://www.saskatoonhomepage.ca/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=13115&Itemid=374](http://www.saskatoonhomepage.ca/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=13115&Itemid=374)

**Registered Disability Savings Plan** – "Not including BC, Newfoundland and Yukon (who have all already exempted the RDSP), many provinces/territories are in the midst of deciding how the RDSP will affect someone who is receiving Disability Benefits. We decided to put together a Top 10 list of why we think it is important these provinces/territories exempt the RDSP as an asset and income. If you have any reasons you would like to include feel free to post a comment and add to our list."

<http://rdsp.wordpress.com/>

## U.S.

**Employers and Disability Advocates Laud Amendments to Landmark Americans with Disabilities Act** – (*AbilityMagazine*). "The House of Representatives voted by a wide bipartisan majority to restore the full protections of the Americans with Disabilities Act authored by Senator Harkin. The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act overturns several Supreme Court decisions interpreting the ADA in such a way that people with obvious disabilities from epilepsy to missing limbs have nonetheless been found by a court not to be disabled. Harkin, a longtime leader in ensuring equality and the opportunity for self sufficiency amongst the millions of Americans with disabilities, is the author of companion legislation in the Senate."

[http://www.abilitymagazine.com/news\\_ADA\\_Amendments\\_act.html](http://www.abilitymagazine.com/news_ADA_Amendments_act.html)

**People With Disabilities Choose Obama, Disaboom Poll Shows - Poll Conducted by Premier Online Community for People With Disabilities Shows That Majority of Respondents Support Barack Obama** – "People with disabilities support Barack Obama as their choice for president, according to a recent poll conducted by Disaboom, the premier online community for people with disabilities. The poll, which was posted on disaboom.com in an effort to gain insight into the political leanings of people with disabilities in the 2008 presidential election, showed that 57 percent of respondents support Barack Obama, 27 percent support John McCain, and 16 percent do not support either candidate."

<http://www.marketwatch.com/news/story/people-disabilities-choose-obama-disaboom/story.aspx?guid=%7BFA2F014B-FCA8-4E24-8013-0C0F1E81BA32%7D&dist=hppr>

**U.S. Department of Labor Announces Two New Initiatives Aimed at Promoting Hiring of Veterans and Applicants with Disabilities** – (*AbilityMagazine*). "The U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) unveiled two initiatives aimed at promoting the hiring of veterans and protecting the rights of applicants with disabilities: The Good Faith Initiative for Veterans Employment (G-FIVE) and Ensuring the Accessibility of Online Application Systems. . . The second initiative, Ensuring the Accessibility of Online Application Systems, is designed to ensure that federal contractors and subcontractors provide equal opportunity to qualified applicants with disabilities, including disabled veterans, to compete for jobs when using an online application system. Electronic job application systems must be accessible to, and usable by, applicants who have disabilities, or

the contractor must provide a reasonable accommodation that allows an equal opportunity to compete for a job."

[http://www.abilitymagazine.com/news\\_DOL\\_new.html](http://www.abilitymagazine.com/news_DOL_new.html)

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## HEALTH/WELLNESS

**F.I.T.T. - Kranking: the Next Revolution in Fitness** – (*nccpad*). "Shouldn't fitness be fun? If you look into the eyes of the athletes currently competing in the Olympic Games (and soon the Paralympic Games), it is easy to see the joy, excitement, and pure thrill of competition shining through them. These elite Olympic and Paralympic athletes have found the fun in fitness. But how many of us actually have fun in our daily workouts? A medal will not await us at the end of that group exercise class, but at least we are there, working out, making our bodies stronger and healthier. But for the 54 million Americans with a disability, fitness centers are often not a welcoming environment. For many individuals, there are few options for cardiovascular exercise if you are unable to utilize your lower body. Finding the fun in fitness becomes secondary to finding any available cardiovascular option to stay healthy. Having a disability and being healthy is not an oxymoron! And why should a person with a disability or an older adult with chronic knee pain have to sit in the corner of a fitness facility and use the solitary arm ergometer? Well thanks to Johnny G and his team at Krankcycle, the opportunities are not only boundless but they are cool, fun, and 'have a soul,' as Johnny G would say."

[http://www.nccpad.org/fitt/fact\\_sheet.php?sheet=638](http://www.nccpad.org/fitt/fact_sheet.php?sheet=638)

**The International Council on Active Aging (ICAA)** – "Men and women ages 50 and older have a wide range of interests, abilities and needs. This website helps older adults and physicians find fitness and wellness facilities dedicated to serving 50-plus adults of different abilities. It also helps individuals find 55+ residential communities, health stores and community services that can help them achieve the style of life they desire. . . The International Council on Active Aging (ICAA) recognizes these organizations as committed to creating products, services and settings for older adults. This site is divided into sections for the general public, physicians and facility operators."

<http://www.icaa.cc/facilitylocator.htm>

**"Transformation" of health care now sits atop CMA priority list** – by Patrick Sullivan (*CMA*).

"Members have witnessed hundreds of General Council debates since the CMA held its first annual meeting in 1867, but few could match the breadth of the topic discussed Aug. 19 - the transformation of Canadian health care. By the time the two-hour debate ended in Montreal, delegates had discussed 23 resolutions that touched on a huge range of topics."

[http://www.cma.ca/index.cfm?ci\\_id=10042913&la\\_id=1](http://www.cma.ca/index.cfm?ci_id=10042913&la_id=1)

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## LEGAL

**Moves to Strengthen Disabled Access Law** – (*NYTimes*). "On a Saturday afternoon here in her hometown, Lisa Tarricone wants a cup of coffee from her local coffee shop. For Ms.

Tarricone, a director at Westchester Independent Living Center who uses a wheelchair, that everyday wish brings a series of maneuvers. First is a call to the shop to ask that a rudimentary wooden ramp be positioned atop a deep step; then a request to an employee to prop open the door so Ms. Tarricone can use both arms to wheel herself up the nonregulation ramp (no handles; improper pitch); finally, the navigation of a crowd of customers that is complicated on this day by a performer stationed near the door. It is time-consuming and cumbersome 'and all of it in front of an audience of people who are staring while you're trying to get inside, maybe annoyed that you're letting the air-conditioning out – just for the sake of a latte,' she said several days later. Life in a wheelchair is a series of carefully calculated moves, Ms. Tarricone said, and some of the obstacles are not merely inconvenient – they are also a violation of the federal Americans With Disabilities Act, enacted 18 years ago last month."

[http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/10/nyregion/nyregionspecial2/10adawe.html?\\_r=1&ref=nyregionspecial2&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/10/nyregion/nyregionspecial2/10adawe.html?_r=1&ref=nyregionspecial2&oref=slogin)

**National Day Care Center, Sued for Failure to Accommodate Student with Epilepsy** – (*AbilityMagazine*). "Protection and Advocacy, Inc. (PAI) recently received court approval to add the Epilepsy Foundation of America as a plaintiff in a previously filed lawsuit in Federal Court against Tutor Time Child Care/Learning Centers, LLC for its discriminatory policy against a child with epilepsy. The suit, filed in the Central District Court of California, asserts that the Center in Mira Loma has violated the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Unruh Civil Rights Act, and the California Disabled Person's Act by refusing to administer first aid or medications to children who attend the Center. Tutor Time is a nationwide chain of centers that provides after school care to children. There are approximately 125 corporate and 75 franchise Tutor Time Child Care/Learning Centers in the U.S. As a day care center, Tutor Time qualifies under the ADA as provider of public services, and therefore must make reasonable accommodations to enable children who have disabilities to access its programs." [http://www.abilitymagazine.com/news\\_PA1.html](http://www.abilitymagazine.com/news_PA1.html)

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## **MEDIA**

**AAPD Condemns Portrayal of Disabled Character, - Use of the Word "Retard" in "Tropic Thunder"** – (*AAPD*). "The largest cross-disability membership organization in the U.S. on Monday condemned all of the entities involved in creating, producing and marketing the movie 'Tropic Thunder' for the use of the word 'retard' and their portrayal of an intellectually disabled character in the movie. The American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) helped organize a coalition of disability groups that have come together to boycott the film. Members of the coalition, including AAPD's President and CEO, Andrew Imparato, met with DreamWorks executives last week to discuss concerns about the film. The movie is a movie-industry spoof depicting a caricature of an intellectually disabled person - a character called 'Simple Jack,' played by actor Ben Stiller's character - which is a continuation of the horrifying portrayal of disabled characters in entertainment." <http://www.aapd.com/News/aapd/pr080811aapd.htm>

**DreamWorks "Retard" Scandal Update: Disability-Rights Groups To Watch "Tropic Thunder," See If They Are Offended** – (*Business Sheet*). "On Wednesday, DreamWorks

met with representatives from several disability-rights groups to address the organizations' concerns about the use of the word "retard" in the upcoming film, Tropic Thunder, and its attendant marketing materials. Even though DreamWorks' head of publicity, Chip Sullivan, told disability-issues blogger Patricia E. Bauer that everyone felt that it was 'a very productive meeting,' it doesn't seem that any major decisions were made. Instead, Bauer reports that the disability-rights advocates will screen Tropic Thunder and get back to the studio by phone within the next few days. Why the organizations weren't already given the chance to see the film in its entirety, we don't know."

<http://www.businesssheet.com/2008/8/dreamworks-retard-scandal-update-disability-rights-groups-to-watch-tropic-thunder-see-if-they-are-offended>

**Art... Not Disability** – "A Lexington woman is getting National and International attention for her artwork, but probably more important, she's not getting attention for her disability. Beverly Baker who has Down Syndrome and communicates through her artwork...Before coming to Latitude's Art Studio in Downtown Lexington, most people thought of her art as doodles, or a way to pass the time....This fall, her work will be on exhibit in Paris, France followed by a solo exhibit in New York."

<http://www.wtvq.com/news/1-latest/1244-art-not-disability.html>

**Ben X Interview** – by Billy Chainsaw (*IGN UK*). "Ben is different to other teenagers; he seems to live in his own universe, dividing his life between an online world of computer games and the daily hell of school, where he is tormented by two bullies. As his pain intensifies the gap between reality and fantasy blurs until Ben's online girlfriend Scarlite encourages him to come up with a plan - one that will change his life and the lives of those around him forever. Nic Balthazar's feature is loosely based on a true story, and here he tells IGN about the genesis of the film and the impact it has had. . . I was wondering what I should write about and there was this 17-year-old young man who threw himself off a medieval castle in Ghent, the city where I live [in Belgium]. Apparently he was mildly autistic - he suffered from Asperger syndrome - went to a normal school and in his letter of goodbye he said that he had basically been bullied to death."

<http://movies.ign.com/articles/906/906469p1.html>

**'Harry Potter' star Daniel Radcliffe has dyspraxia, a brain disorder** – by Korin Miller (*Daily News*). "Daniel Radcliffe often has trouble tying his shoelaces thanks to a brain disorder, the 'Harry Potter' star has revealed. The actor, 19, has dyspraxia, a condition that can cause problems with coordination. 'I sometimes think, 'Why, oh why, has Velcro not taken off?' ' he joked to Britain's Daily Mail newspaper. Radcliffe also revealed that he decided to become an actor partly because he had trouble in school due to dyspraxia."

[http://www.nydailynews.com/gossip/2008/08/17/2008-08-17\\_harry\\_potter\\_star\\_daniel\\_radcliffe\\_has\\_d-1.html](http://www.nydailynews.com/gossip/2008/08/17/2008-08-17_harry_potter_star_daniel_radcliffe_has_d-1.html)

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## MEDICAL

**Folding@home** – "What is protein folding and how is folding linked to disease? Proteins are biology's workhorses -- its 'nanomachines.' Before proteins can carry out these important functions, they assemble themselves, or 'fold.' The process of protein folding, while critical and

fundamental to virtually all of biology, in many ways remains a mystery. Moreover, when proteins do not fold correctly (i.e. 'misfold'), there can be serious consequences, including many well known diseases, such as Alzheimer's, Mad Cow (BSE), CJD, ALS, Huntington's, Parkinson's disease, and many Cancers and cancer-related syndromes. You can help by simply running a piece of software. Folding@home is a distributed computing project -- people from throughout the world download and run software to band together to make one of the largest supercomputers in the world. Every computer takes the project closer to our goals. Folding@home uses novel computational methods coupled to distributed computing, to simulate problems millions of times more challenging than previously achieved."

<http://folding.stanford.edu/English/Main>

**Stem cells 'created from teeth'** – (BBC). "Japanese scientists say they have created human stem cells from tissue taken from the discarded wisdom teeth of a 10-year-old girl. The researchers say their work suggests that wisdom teeth could be a suitable alternative to human embryos as a source for therapeutic stem cells. Research involving stem cells is seen as having the potential to treat many life-threatening diseases. But some people do not believe it is morally right to use human embryos."

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7576131.stm>

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## **POLICY/RESEARCH**

**American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Says Evidence-Based Approach Should Guide National Autism "Conversation"** – (*AbilityMagazine*). "Noting that speech-language pathologists (SLPs) are often the first group of professionals to recognize that a child has autism and are central to providing treatment, the American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA) sent letters this month to Presidential candidates Sens. John McCain and Barack Obama that advise taking an evidence-based approach to the vaccine controversy surrounding what causes autism and to policy development related to care. ASHA's letters were prompted by an April 22 Washington Post story, 'What the Autism Studies Show Isn't Reflected in What the Candidates Say' by Michael Dobbs. The article attributed comments to both senators related to the controversy over whether a potential link exists between autism and a preservative in childhood vaccines and also reported on a body of evidence that indicates that assertions of a link are unproven so far."

[http://www.abilitymagazine.com/news\\_Autism\\_evidence.html](http://www.abilitymagazine.com/news_Autism_evidence.html)

**Cognitive and Learning Disabilities Literature Review** – "[WebAIM's Phase I Steppingstones of Technology grant](#) funded by the Office of Special Education Programs is working to create an evaluation tool, using the [WAVE](#) evaluation framework, that will provide feedback on some web page issues that may impact users with cognitive or learning disabilities. Adobe is partnering with WebAIM so that the final product can be used as an extension to Dreamweaver. 10-12 items will be included in the first phase of this tool based on their impact and feasibility. We hope that subsequent phases will include additional items. A four phase process is being used to identify items to go into the initial cognitive evaluation tool. The first phase was to gather information from existing literature. The results of this literature review are below."

<http://webaim.org/projects/steppingstones/litreviewssummary.php>

### **Disability in Australia: trends in prevalence, education, employment and community living**

– (*Australian Institute of Health and Welfare*). "This bulletin provides an overview of disability trends over two decades, including trends in need for and receipt of assistance with specific basic activities of daily life. It also examines the trends in three major areas of people with a disability: education, employment and community living."

<http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10495>

[http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.chtml?filename\\_num=227774](http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.chtml?filename_num=227774)

### **National Council on Disability Provides Roadmap of Critical Policy Changes to Allow People with Disabilities to Participate Fully in American Dream**

– (*PRNewswire*). "The National Council on Disability (NCD) today released a report titled *The State of 21st Century Financial Incentives for Americans with Disabilities*

(<http://www.ncd.gov/newsroom/publications/2008/pdf/FinancialIncentives.pdf>), with

recommendations that provide a new frontier for the next generation of Americans with disabilities -- allowing them to participate fully in the economy. According to NCD Chairperson John R. Vaughn, "We believe that this groundbreaking document provides a road map for equality of economic rights for people of all abilities, regardless of race or socioeconomic background. This report describes financial incentives affecting people with disabilities and presents research findings on key areas of people's lives, such as education and health care. It also describes selected state-level innovations affecting asset development and wealth accumulation.' The report suggests several strategies for securing meaningful employment, career advancement, and benefits needed for daily living and accommodations. One of the key strategies involves the conversion of federal financial disincentives to incentives, which the report describes as possible."

[http://www.marketwatch.com/news/story/national-council-disability-provides-](http://www.marketwatch.com/news/story/national-council-disability-provides-roadmap/story.aspx?quid=%7BEDFC1534-E532-474C-8009-97C2F40A9859%7D&dist=hppr)

[roadmap/story.aspx?quid=%7BEDFC1534-E532-474C-8009-97C2F40A9859%7D&dist=hppr](http://www.marketwatch.com/news/story/national-council-disability-provides-roadmap/story.aspx?quid=%7BEDFC1534-E532-474C-8009-97C2F40A9859%7D&dist=hppr)

### **The State of 21st Century Financial Incentives for Americans with Disabilities**

– (*NCD*). "This NCD report defines or describes financial incentives affecting people with disabilities and presents research findings in key areas of people's lives, such as education and health care. It also describes selected state-level innovations affecting asset development and wealth accumulation. In addition, the report suggests several strategies for securing meaningful employment, career advancement, and benefits needed for daily living and accommodations."

<http://www.ncd.gov/newsroom/publications/2008/FinancialIncentives.html>

### **Study: Factors associated with patterns of psychological distress over 10 years**

– "The study 'Using the National Population Health Survey to identify factors associated with patterns of psychological distress over 10 years,' published recently in the journal *Healthcare Policy*, uses longitudinal data to examine factors associated with patterns of psychological distress in a group of individuals over a 10-year period. While the vast majority of individuals did not experience an episode of high distress from 1994/1995 to 2004/2005, a sizeable number experienced single or multiple episodes at levels likely to be clinically relevant. More than 1.6 million Canadians experienced multiple episodes of distress during this decade, and almost 3 million more experienced at least one episode."

<http://www.statcan.ca/Daily/English/080813/d080813a.htm>

**The Rise and Fall of Welfare Time Limits in British Columbia** – by Bruce Wallace & Tim Richards. "This report documents the dynamics of the opposition to time-limited welfare which led the government to capitulate on this element of its welfare reforms. In addition to the public record, it draws extensively on over 1,000 pages of internal government materials obtained through a Freedom of Information request. It presents an analysis of the public and internal government records and shows that the opposition to time-limited welfare involved resistance both from the public and also from within the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance."  
[http://www.vipirg.ca/welfare\\_time\\_limits\\_june\\_08.pdf](http://www.vipirg.ca/welfare_time_limits_june_08.pdf)

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## REHABILITATION

**Colourful confidence boosters - Trendy new ear moulds help kids deal with hearing loss** – by Cheryl Clock (*The Canadian Press*). "Six-year-old Amaris was partial to the hearing aids with pink and white swirls. Her four-year-old sister, Emaly, who once had a strong preference for the colour blue until convinced otherwise by a friend, chose the same cotton-candy-like mix. Amaris and Emaly Arnt match. Hearing aids for both ears. Pink and white ear moulds. The colour, according to Amaris, is 'pretty cool.' So cool, in fact, that children in the playground have noticed and asked the sisters what they have in their ears. Amaris does the explaining: "It's a hearing aid," she says. 'It helps me hear because I lost my hearing.' So pretty is the colour that some of their friends who have no hearing loss have voiced their desire to have a hearing aid, just like the girls."  
<http://news.therecord.com/Life/article/395198>

**Therapy Dogs - Researcher Explores New Ways To Aid Autistic Patients** – by Beth Dunham (*ladowntownnews*). "Illustrating her research, USC occupational therapist Olga Solomon plays a video of a severely autistic young boy and his parents: The boy avoids eye contact and ignores questions - both signs of the socially debilitating effects of the brain development disorder. But in the next video Solomon plays - of the same boy playing fetch with a trained therapy dog - the child giggles wildly as the dog returns a thrown tennis ball. Somehow, the dog has managed to make a connection with the youngster, and the simple, but priceless, interaction brings his parents to tears."  
<http://www.ladowntownnews.com/articles/2008/08/04/health2/health03.txt>

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## SELF-HELP

**Facing Our Fears** – (*NewMobility*). "What are your worst fears in your disability journey? Several readers told us theirs: For some, fear went beyond their physical limitations and had more to do with fear of not being successful. But whatever the source, all discovered they had to face the fear in order to overcome it."  
<http://www.newmobility.com/articleView.cfm?id=11231>

**Housing & Mortgages for People with Disabilities** – "This guide has been created to help individuals living with disabilities, and their family members, in the process of buying a home of their own. Here you can learn more about the five important steps in buying a home and

about financial assistance programs that are available for you living with disabilities, who want to buy a home."

<http://www.mortgageloan.com/disabilities/>

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## SPORTS/RECREATION

**A-Z of Paralympic classification** – (BBC). "The 2008 Paralympics in Beijing involves 20 sports but not all disability categories can compete in each event. Each sport has different physical demands and so has its own set of classifications."

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport2/hi/other\\_sports/disability\\_sport/7586684.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport2/hi/other_sports/disability_sport/7586684.stm)

**Book Review: Coaching Manuals: Wheelchair Basketball, Wheelchair Football, Indoor Wheelchair Soccer** – (NCPAD). "The vision of the American Association of adaptedSPORTS Programs, Inc, (AAASP) is to provide every school in America with an adapted sports program to benefit students with physical disabilities or visual impairments, as it relates to their overall academic success. These manuals are dedicated to wheelchair athletes and the educators who work with them. The three manuals focus on coaching philosophy, implications of coaching various disabilities, the respective field of play, strategies, team and individual skills and drills, wheelchair set-up and maintenance, proper positioning, and other adaptive techniques to enhance athletic performance, as well as the rules of the sport, including recent rule changes."

<http://www.ncpad.org/newsletter/newsletter.php?letter=79&section=1183>

**Mencap pressures government over Paralympics** – "Mencap is campaigning for the ban on athletes with a learning disability competing in the Paralympics to be overturned in time for the London Olympics in 2012. The ban has been in place since the Sydney Games in 2000, when members of the Spanish basketball team falsely claimed to have a learning disability. Despite the ongoing anger and disappointment of the athletes, the ban will remain until sporting bodies are able to agree on a suitable registering system."

<http://www.mencap.org.uk/news.asp?id=4157&pageno=&year=&menuId=90>

**Paralympics boost for China's disabled** – (BBC) "The Olympic Games will be followed by the Paralympics and, as the BBC's Jill McGivering reports from Kunming, if Chinese athletes perform well, it could help society address long-standing prejudice towards the disabled. The large public swimming pool is crowded with early morning swimmers. Twelve-year-old Qian Hong-yan comes here twice a day. She lost both legs in a car accident when she was a child. On land she is confined to a wheelchair, but once she is in the water her swimming is agile and fast."

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7556652.stm>

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## TECHNOLOGY

**Robo-skeleton lets paralysed walk** – (BBC). "A robotic suit is helping people paralysed from the waist down do what was previously considered impossible - stand, walk and climb stairs. ReWalk users wear a backpack device and braces on their legs and select the activity they

want from a remote control wrist band. Leaning forwards activates body sensors setting the robotic legs in motion. Users walk with crutches, controlling the suit through changes in centre of gravity and upper body movements."

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/7582240.stm>

**An interface for your eyes only** – by Lee Bruno (*Guardian*). "Technology is designed for people to use. The only trouble is that computer interfaces on all types of devices from the home to the car can frustrate many users. But most software interfaces have been designed with a one-size-fits-all approach for mass markets. It's a problem that has dogged computer scientists for more than 25 years. But now, researchers at the University of Washington have had a breakthrough of sorts that's allowed them to generate custom interfaces automatically optimised for each individual's preferences, such as vision, clicking movements and speed. Simply put, the software runs the would-be user through a battery of skill tests, and then runs the data generated through a sophisticated set of mathematical algorithms to produce an optimised interface."

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2008/aug/28/research.artificialintelligenceai>

**Free software to 'see sound'** – (*BBC*) "Children with hearing difficulties try out software that enables them to see sound as visual images. Mick Grierson from Goldsmiths, University of London, has developed Lumisonic with the backing of the Arts and Humanities Research Council and the Sonic Arts Network. The BBC went to film pupils at Frank Barnes School for Deaf Children in London testing the equipment for the first time."

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/technology/7557660.stm>

**IBM and GW Micro Join Steering Committee for Accessibility Interoperability Alliance** – (*Business Wire*). "The Accessibility Interoperability Alliance (AIA), a coalition of leading information and assistive technology companies dedicated to enabling developers to more easily create accessible software, hardware and Web products, welcomes the addition of two new steering committee members: Doug Geoffray of GW Micro and Richard Schwerdtfeger of IBM. The five-member Steering Committee guides the AIA in its mission to improve the lives of people who can benefit from accessibility technologies. The AIA accomplishes this by encouraging the enhancement of current technologies, creating new technologies, and promoting the implementation of APIs and specifications across platforms and the accessibility industry."

[http://www.businesswire.com/portal/site/google/?ndmViewId=news\\_view&newsId=20080804005435&newsLang=en](http://www.businesswire.com/portal/site/google/?ndmViewId=news_view&newsId=20080804005435&newsLang=en)

**Mobile Robot Co. Introduces New Personal Care Robot** - (*World Stock Wire*). –

"GeckoSystems Intl. Corp. announced today that they have completed the prototyping of their CareBot™ MSR 3.8. GeckoSystems is a dynamic leader in the emerging Mobile Service Robot industry revolutionizing their development and usage with mobile robot solutions for safety, security, and service. 'After over ten years of development by many talented, tenacious engineers and programmers, we are very excited to introduce our new CareBot personal care robot,' said R. Martin Spencer, President/CEO of GeckoSystems Intl. Corp. 'The new CareBot MSR 3.8 can watch over grandma or the kids, patrol your home, and/or run errands for 8 to 14 hours continuously without recharging. This capability, along with web-based video

conferencing enables our CareBot to perform much like a family caregiver, letting them watch over their loved ones, even when they can't be there'."

<http://www.worldstockwire.com/viewpressrelease/prID/554/>

**MonAMI - mainstreaming on Ambient Intelligence** – "Previous European projects have shown that introducing innovative technology into the living space can help older people and people with disabilities to carry out daily living tasks, thus increasing their quality of life and reducing the need for institutional and other care. Unfortunately, the results of these projects have often stayed in the laboratory or only been implemented on a small, local scale. MonAMI will build on these experiences and aim for large-scale mainstream deployment. The MonAMI project will demonstrate that accessible, useful services for older persons and persons with disabilities living at home can be delivered in mainstream systems and platforms. This will be done in close cooperation with users and by involving key mainstream suppliers throughout the whole process. Ambient intelligence stands for an environment where people are surrounded by intelligent intuitive interfaces that are embedded in all kinds of objects and an environment that is capable of recognising and responding to the presence of different individuals in a seamless, unobtrusive and often invisible way."

<http://www.fastuk.org/research/projview.php?id=1426>

**Nuance Dragon NaturallySpeaking improves accessibility for all** – by Peter Abrahams (*it-director*). "The major users of early versions of speech recognition technology were people who could not use a keyboard. Even though it was slow and made mistakes it was a boon to the user as they could, with a little patience, produce high quality written communications. Now, the technology can reliably transcribe at 120 words per minute. This compares very well with the average user who struggles to type 40 words per minute accurately. So it is no surprise that many users including lawyers, doctors and court reporters are using the technology. The widening of the potential user base has encouraged Nuance to invest in continuous improvements in the basic voice recognition engine as well as the functionality of the user interface. This investment has brought benefits to the original group of users who have no other viable input method."

<http://www.it-director.com/business/compliance/content.php?cid=10691>

**Q & A: Futurist Ray Kurzweil** – by Michael Greene (*InformationWeek*). "We caught up with the visionary inventor at SpeechTek 2008, where he talked with InformationWeek about speech technology, his new cellphone reading machine, and two new movie projects."

[http://www.informationweek.com/news/personal\\_tech/virtualworlds/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=210200573](http://www.informationweek.com/news/personal_tech/virtualworlds/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=210200573)

**Review of CallXpress from AVST** – (*ICDR*). "ICDR recently did an in depth analysis of the CallXpress product from AVST. This is an innovative telecommunications product that helps to solve many accessibility issues involved with email, voice mail, and Unified Communications. The product is designed to be used by the greatest number of people, disabled or not. As such it is one of the most effective products we have seen to date in this arena. There are a number of interfaces offered to the user and they can be used by people with a variety to disabilities as well as users in different situations which may preclude the use of one type of interface or another. The product has a well designed user interface for accessing email, voice mail, and fax messages. It has a variety of user interfaces available that will let users in

various environments, situations, or with specific disabilities access their messages in ways that best suit them."

[http://www.icdri.org/Reviews/CallXpress\\_review.htm](http://www.icdri.org/Reviews/CallXpress_review.htm)

**Tongue-assisted technology is developed** – (*UPI*). "U.S. engineers said they've developed a tongue-assisted technology to help individuals with severe disabilities lead more independent lives. The system allows individuals with disabilities to operate a computer, control a powered wheelchair and interact with their environments simply by moving their tongues. 'This device could revolutionize the field of assistive technologies by helping individuals with severe disabilities, such as those with high-level spinal cord injuries, return to rich, active, independent and productive lives,' said Maysam Ghovanloo, an assistant professor in the Georgia Tech School of Electrical and Computer Engineering. The research team is also developing software to connect the tongue-operated assistive technology with a wide variety of communication tools, such as text generators, speech synthesizers and readers."

[http://www.upi.com/Science\\_News/2008/08/04/Tongue-assisted\\_technology\\_is\\_developed/UPI-44151217870222/](http://www.upi.com/Science_News/2008/08/04/Tongue-assisted_technology_is_developed/UPI-44151217870222/)

**University of Washington Team Develops Internet-based Screen Reading Tool called WebAnywhere** – (*CNIB*). "A team from the University of Washington Computer Science and Engineering department, led by doctoral student Jeffrey Bigham, has developed a screen reading internet service called WebAnywhere. This tool is meant to be a low-cost, easy-to-use alternative to a screen reader for users with vision loss who are looking to surf the internet on computers that do not have the often expensive and complicated screen reader software installed. WebAnywhere was developed through in-depth research and close consultation with users with vision loss, and has the added benefit of allowing web developers to use a screen reading tool to ensure greater accessibility of their own website without having to install pricey tools."

<http://www.cnib.ca/en/news/archive/webanywhere.aspx>

**Virginia Tech Selects HiSoftware for Website Accessibility - Web Compliance Solution Chosen to improve Accessibility for All** – (*Business Wire*). "HiSoftware Inc. ([www.hisoftware.com](http://www.hisoftware.com)), a leading provider of software, services and managed operation solutions that monitor and optimize Web content governance, quality and regulatory compliance, today announced that Virginia Tech ([www.vt.edu](http://www.vt.edu)) has selected HiSoftware's Compliance Sheriff to meet their Website quality management initiative for accessibility. Bill Holbach, Director of Assistive Technologies and Research Applications at Virginia Tech stated, 'Accessibility is no longer just about social responsibility, but key in providing a high quality web presence for our students, faculty, and staff and for the public that we serve. HiSoftware's Compliance Sheriff is another tool for website development at Virginia Tech that, when fully implemented, we expect to use for monitoring the quality of accessibility standards and providing a more functional and efficient web presence.'"

<http://www.marketwatch.com/news/story/virginia-tech-selects-hisoftware-website/story.aspx?guid=%7BB1A13C03-0A72-4901-9899-8D176F84B81B%7D&dist=hppr>

**Why not make the iPhone more Accessible?** – by Peter Abrahams, (*it-director*). "The iPhone is the must-have technology of the moment—unless you are unable to use it. A user must be able:

- To see fairly well, not 20-20 vision but something close. If the user is blind they cannot see the controls on the screen and therefore cannot control the device. If the user has a vision impairment the controls may not be sufficiently clear and again the device is of no use.
- Hold the device steady with one hand whilst controlling it with the fingertips of the other. Whilst ruling out its use by a tetraplegic user it also appears to rule out ladies with long nails (the nails get in the way of the fingertips and trying to control the device with the pads of fingers or nails does not seem to work well if at all).

If you search for 'iphone accessibility' on the apple site you will find a list of standard features that can make the iPhone more accessible. It is a useful list but leaves a significant number of holes."

<http://www.it-director.com/business/change/content.php?cid=10678>

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## CONFERENCES

### (☀ New Conferences)

- ☀ **Internet Event - The RERC on Telerehabilitation - State of the Science Conference** – November 17-21, 2008 | Internet. "You are invited to join us each day for live, interactive sessions on current issues related to telerehabilitation. Each morning we'll host an on-line whitepaper presentation and open discussion with an invited panel of experts immediately following. Of course, your participation in these discussions is possible from the location of your choice via the World Wide Web."  
[http://www.rerctr.pitt.edu/RERC\\_TR\\_SOS/](http://www.rerctr.pitt.edu/RERC_TR_SOS/)

## CANADA

- ☀ **Symposium on Disability and Employment - CCRW's Annual Conference** – October 5-7, 2008 | St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. "For more than 30 years, the CCRW has been a national leader in employment equity and in promoting and supporting the hiring of persons with disabilities in Canada. In the development of a framework for a National Employment Delivery Strategy, the Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work (CCRW) is holding its annual conference, Employment Now! Diversity Planning for Inclusive Employment, to discuss and move the Employment Equity agenda forward in Canada. CCRW is encouraging all employment and HR Professionals to attend and participate in this highly interactive and informative conference."  
<http://www.ccrw.org/conf/index.html>

**Tenth International ACM SIGACCESS Conference on Computers and Accessibility** – October 13-15, 2008 | Halifax, Nova Scotia. "The ASSETS series of conferences is aimed at providing a technical forum for presenting and disseminating innovative research results that address the use of computing and information technologies to help persons with disabilities."  
<http://www.sigaccess.org/assets08/>

**Guide Dog Users of Canada - 2008 Conference and AGM** – November 1, 2008 | Montreal, Quebec. "Guide Dog Users of Canada has historically held all of its annual general meetings

in Toronto. This year, we would like to try something a little different, and to that end, our annual conference and general meeting will be held in Montreal."

<http://www.gduc.ca/en/about/agm/2008>

- ☀ **Toronto ABI Network Conference 2008** - November 3-4, 2008 | Toronto, Ontario. "Success for individuals living with the effects of brain injury can take many forms; this may mean becoming as independent as possible, resuming old interests or acquiring new ones, achieving at school, engaging in paid or non-paid work and enjoying meaningful relationships among family, friends and the community. Rehabilitation professionals across the continuum of care play a key role in establishing collaborative relationships with clients and family members to assist them in navigating the system and achieving their personal goals following brain injury." <http://www.abinetwork.ca/conference2008/>

**The 3rd National Spinal Cord Injury Conference and the 16th Interurban Spinal Cord Injury Conference** – November 6-8, 2008 | Toronto, Ontario. "Toronto Rehabilitation Institute is pleased to announce that the 3rd National Spinal Cord Injury Conference and the 16th Interurban Spinal Cord Injury Conference will be held as one national event on Spinal Cord Rehabilitation: Innovation, Impact and Future Directions at the Hilton Toronto Hotel on November 6, 7, 8, 2008. The conference will include a pre-course, plenary sessions, poster displays and concurrent workshops that are intended to promote collaboration and exchange among attendees in a variety of formats."

<http://www.torontorehab.com/education/scic08index.htm>

- ☀ **NADD 25th Annual Conference A Quarter Century of Awareness: Assessment, Treatment & Policy Advances (ID/MH)** – November 12-14, 2008 | Niagara Falls, Ontario. "The theme of the program for this year is A Quarter Century of Awareness: Assessment, Treatment & Policy Advances (ID/MH). Everyday, we are flooded with important new health information and are challenged to keep pace with the many new developments in prevention and intervention. This conference will highlight important areas of physical and mental health and well being for people with intellectual disabilities and will focus on the collaboration and integration of physical and mental health care in promoting collaborative efforts among professionals and family members. As you know this has always been a theme of NADD conferences." <http://www.thenadd.org/pages/conferences/25th/index.shtml>

- ☀ **The 2008 CASE Conference - Working Matters** – November 13-14, 2008 | Vancouver, British Columbia. "CASE is proud to co-host this event in partnership with the [BC Association for Community Living](#). The CASE Conference attracts leaders in the field of supported and customized employment, and is highly valued by leaders in the field as a high quality networking and professional development event." <http://supportedemployment.ca/en/conference/>

**NEADS Conference 2008 - "Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow."** – November 14-16, 2008. | Ottawa, Ontario. "The National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS) is pleased to announce our 2008 national conference, "Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow." It will take place at the Delta Ottawa Hotel and Suites from November 14-16, 2008. The conference will focus on solutions to drive change. This year's event will be an exciting opportunity for students, consumer advocates, service providers, employers and all others

interested in exploring key issues of equal access to post-secondary education and employment for students and graduates with disabilities. We welcome delegates from across Canada and around the world. The 2008 conference is being organized by a Conference Planning Committee, comprised of NEADS board members and chaired by Agnes Tomkow, NEADS Alberta Representative. The 2008 conference will welcome guest speakers including Steven Fletcher, Member of Parliament and Sandi Bell, Canadian Human Rights Commissioner."

<http://www.neads.ca/conference2008/en/info.php>

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## U.S.

**Toward Culturally Responsive Disability Services: An International Conference** – October 6-7, 2008 | Niagara Falls, New York. Conference themes are:

- Cultural competency education and training (pre service and in service)
- Best practices in providing culturally responsive services in the disability and health services
- Acquiring and strengthening cultural competence through international experience
- Research on cultural competency

<http://cirrie.buffalo.edu/conference2008/index.html>

**The National Conference on Disability Inclusion and National Service: Acting Today to Shape the Future** – October 16-18, 2008 | Alexandria Virginia. "The National Conference on Disability Inclusion and National Service: Acting Today to Shape the Future, will take place October 16-18, 2008 at the Hilton Alexandria Mark Center in Alexandria VA. This conference is designed to bring together key members for the national service network and the disability community to focus on issues related to the actively engaging people with disabilities in national service and community volunteerism. It is anticipated that this conference will draw more than 500 individuals from across the country. This opportunity will allow you to share information about your organization and connect with agencies with similar interests and goals."

[http://www.serviceandinclusion.org/index.php?page=ncd\\_ex\\_op](http://www.serviceandinclusion.org/index.php?page=ncd_ex_op)

**IDA 59th Annual Conference** – October 29-November 1, 2008 | Seattle, Washington. "The International Dyslexia Association (IDA) is a scientific and educational nonprofit organization concerned with dyslexia and related language and learning difficulties. The IDA Annual Conference focuses on the latest advances in these and related fields. IDA is interested in a broad spectrum of research and practical presentations along these lines. The objective of the conference is to bring up-to-date information to a diverse audience that includes educators, researchers, physicians, psychologists, social workers, speech-language pathologists, administrators, parents, persons with dyslexia, and others."

<http://www.interdys.org/AnnualConference.htm>

**11th Annual Accessing Higher Ground - Accessible Media, Web and Technology Conference** – November 11-14, 2008 | Boulder Colorado. "Disability Services at the University of Colorado at Boulder presents Accessing Higher Ground: Accessible Media, Web and Technology Conference for Education, for Businesses, for Web and Media Designers

Accessing Higher Ground focuses on the implementation and benefits of Assistive Technology in the university and college setting for people with sensory, physical and learning disabilities. Other topics include legal and policy issues, including ADA and 508 compliance, and making campus media and information resources - including Web pages and library resources – accessible."

<http://www.colorado.edu/ATconference/>

**The Network of Autism Training and Technical Assistance Programs (NATTAP) - Second Annual International Autism Training and Technical Assistance Conference** – November 19-21, 2008 | Columbus, Ohio. "The 2nd annual NATTAP Conference will gather educators, service providers and parents from across the United States and from around the globe. The objectives of the conference are to review current systems models for addressing the needs of individuals with autism spectrum disorders (ASD), promote use of best practice in research and intervention and provide methods for capacity building – all of which contribute to the ultimate goal of improving outcomes for individuals ages 3-21. The 2008 NATTAP Conference will provide a forum for the continued exchange of ideas and promising practices that will provide common solutions to the common problems in ASD."

[http://www.nattapconference.org/view.php?nav\\_id=1](http://www.nattapconference.org/view.php?nav_id=1)

**Assistive Technology: Improving Lives Daily - A conference for people with disabilities, families and professionals** – November 20, 2008 | Warwick, Rhode Island. "Assistive technology can play a critical role in the life of a person with a disability. A wide range of presentations and an exhibit hall offering product demonstrations and information will provide conference participants with the opportunity to learn what a powerful impact assistive technology can have in improving the lives of people with disabilities."

<http://www.techaccess-ri.org/Conferences/2008/2008Conf.html>

**33rd Annual TASH Conference - Social Justice in the 21st Century** – December 3-6, 2008 | Nashville, Tennessee. "This year's theme is Social Justice in the 21st Century: achieving the full and equal participation of every member of society in a way that is shaped to meet each member's unique needs. Social justice provides a vision that all members are valued, physically and psychologically safe, and enjoy all aspects of life in their community. We achieve social justice for people who have significant disabilities in a variety of ways. This year's TASH conference will focus on the issues and trends in today's world as they relate to the bringing about social justice for people who have significant disabilities and their families."

<http://www.tash.org/2008tash/index.htm>

**Technology, Reading & Learning Diversity 2009** – January 22-24, 2009 | San Francisco California. "The mission of TRLD 2009 is "Opening Doors to Universal Learning." Universal Learning embodies the idea of equitable and flexible access to concepts and ideas for all students, all people. The digital age we live in creates a level playing field and multiple opportunities for all learners to achieve."

<http://www.trld.com/about/mission/index.html>

**ATIA 2009** – January 28-31, 2009 | Orlando, Florida. "The ATIA Conference serves as a leading conference for the Assistive Technology community offering attendees the opportunity to participate in discussions with industry experts, learn about new technologies, best practices,

and a host of specialized services. Assistive Technology products and technologies will be represented in various presentations, demonstrations and/or exhibits. In addition, hands-on labs will provide an opportunity to experiment with and evaluate the latest assistive technology devices and software."

<http://www.atia.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3280>

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## OVERSEAS

**4th International Forum on Disability Management** – September 22-24, 2008 | Berlin, Germany. "The professional performance of employees is the engine of a healthy society. Maintaining this capacity to work is the goal of disability management. Valuable knowledge remains in companies, people maintain their standard of living and social systems are unburdened. The International Forum on Disability Management has developed into a movement that spans continents, and new alliances have been formed. The people who meet at these gatherings are making a difference, tearing down walls between the concerned persons and developing cross-border return-to-work strategies. Disability managers from throughout the world exchange experiences and can learn from each other."


<http://www.disability-manager.de/e/ifdm2008/index.html>

**AAATE Seminar 2008 Socio-economic assessment of assistive technology in service delivery practice** – September 25-26, 2008 | Milano, Italy. "Nowadays, there is an increasing demand for evidence of the cost-effectiveness of assistive technologies. Policy makers and financing agencies need such information to properly allocate resources, control how efficiently they are used, stimulate the market, identify priority areas for research, understand possible wider implications at an overall societal level; professionals working in health care and social services – within today's climate of accountability calling for evidence based practice - need to know whether their AT choices have proved effective within the rehabilitation programme, useful for the client, and efficient in using resources; industrialists need evidence of the added value their products or services may offer in comparison to those of other competitors; users and user organisations require to be fully involved in decision making processes and bring their expertise in this discussion."

[http://www.aaate.net/uploaded/81/aaate\\_workshop\\_2008\\_draft\\_programme.doc](http://www.aaate.net/uploaded/81/aaate_workshop_2008_draft_programme.doc)

**Adaptive Content Processing Conference 2008** – November 6-7, 2008 | Amsterdam, Netherlands. "We are delighted to invite you to the ACP '08 Conference to be held in the Beurs van Berlage in Amsterdam on 6/7th November 2008. The conference is jointly hosted by the EUAIN Network, the ProAccess Project and the Federation of Dutch Publishers and is held as part of the Amsterdam World Book Capital celebrations. New technologies are changing the way in which we create, produce and consume content. Over the last few years, the publishing industry in Europe and beyond has been active in responding to the growing demand for more accessible, adaptive content. The publication of the recent green paper on Copyright in the Knowledge Economy demonstrates the central role of these issues."

<http://www.euain.org/?q=node/10>

 **4th International State-of-the-art Congress "Rehabilitation: Mobility, Exercise & Sports"** – April 7-9, 2009 | Amsterdam, Netherlands. "The theme of the 4th congress underlines the

development taking place in our research since 1991: from a strongly manual wheelchair-oriented focus back then, towards the much broader perspective of mobility restoration, active lifestyle, exercise, training and sports in the context of rehabilitation practice today."

<http://www.move.vu.nl/links/rehabmove2009/program/>

**19th IAGG World Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics** – July 5-9, 2009 | Paris, France.

"Every four years, the World Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics represents a unique and irreplaceable event attended by experts from around the world to discuss the latest findings in the field of ageing. The 19th congress, which is taking place in Paris in 2009, is particularly important, as it coincides with an ideological u-turn. Lifespan extension and the growing number of elderly people, once considered as catastrophic, are now viewed as an indisputable progress."

<http://www.gerontologyparis2009.com/site/view8.php>

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