



Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association Recognizes International Day of Persons with Disabilities

OTTAWA (December 3, 2014) The twenty second year of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities is celebrated today by the United Nations General Assembly. The Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA) proudly supports this day as an important opportunity to recognize the important contributions of persons with disabilities across Canada and around the world.

Celebrated each year on December 3rd, this day serves to promote awareness and engage support for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all dimensions of society, including the workplace, schools, sports, and leisure. This year's theme is "*Sustainable Development: The Promise of Technology.*"

According to the United Nations, this year's theme highlights the role of technology - in disaster risk reduction and emergency responses, enabling fully inclusive work environments, and sustaining development goals. In particular, technology has the potential of making more equitable the social, educational, economic, political, and emotional lives of persons affected by disabilities. Greater autonomy and independence is possible through the development, adaptation, and use of innovative services and technology.

"CCPA is proud to support international day of persons with disabilities every year," said CCPA President Blythe Sheppard. "CCPA's counsellors and psychotherapists recognize the need for social justice advocacy and service delivery for persons with disabilities across the lifespan. Disability can affect any one of us at any time in our lifetime. Our goal is to enhance the well-being of all persons in Canada by providing timely, appropriate supports for mental health."

More than one billion people, or 15% of the world's population, are living with disabilities - the world's largest and most disadvantaged group. "CCPA recognizes that approximately 14.3% of Canadians are affected by disabilities ranging from the more obvious - physical disabilities - to the less visible, such as disabilities related to mental health, learning, speech, and development. Our counsellors and psychotherapists are committed to assisting those living with disabilities by increasing their quality of life through advocacy, and mobilizing supportive programs while also attempting to break down the barriers to physical, mental, and social wellbeing."

Proclaimed in 1992, this annual observance aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights, and well-being of persons with disabilities. It also seeks to increase awareness of gains to be derived from the integration of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic, and cultural life.

CCPA is dedicated to the enhancement of the counselling and psychotherapy profession in Canada and advocates for accessible, effective, professional mental health supports,

particularly for those who are vulnerable or oppressed. CCPA has over 5,000 members who are professionally trained counsellors and psychotherapists who work in diverse areas such as education, employment and career development, social work, business, industry, mental health, public service agencies, government, and private practice.

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The Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA) is a national bilingual association providing professional counsellors and psychotherapists with access to exclusive educational programs, certification, professional development and direct contact with professional peers and specialty groups. CCPA promotes the profession and its contribution to the mental health and well-being of all Canadians. For more information on the counselling and psychotherapy profession, please visit www.ccpa-accp.ca or www.talkingcanhelp.ca.

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