



**BARRIER  
FREE  
CANADA**

**SANS  
BARRIÈRE  
CANADA**

The Barrier Free Canada – Canada Sans Barrières January, 2021 Newsletter – Fourth Quarter

Dear friends,

Barrier Free Canada-Canada Sans Barrières would like to thank you once again for your continued support and words of encouragement for it is only with you and through you that we as an organization can continue to thrive and to encourage others to speak up, speak out, and engage each other in meaningful discussion and constructive criticisms, feedback, and suggestions. Barrier Free Canada also wishes you the best during this time, and we hope that you and your family are staying safe and healthy.

**A message from our President – Donna Jodhan**

Dear Friends: I do not think that anyone would argue that 2020 has been the most difficult year of our lives but we sincerely hope that 2021 will be a much better one with life returning as close to normalcy as possible.

For 2020, we at BFC-CSB continued to work extremely hard to be the representatives and voices of Canadians with disabilities. Our mission continues to be that of promoting and encouraging individuals to speak up, speak out, and reach out. We are bound and determined to give individuals the opportunity to express themselves by either posting their thoughts and feedback to our bfc advocating for change facebook group or to just reach out to us at BFC-CSB.

In November 2020 we were very pleased to expand our board from six members to 11 members in order to more fully represent a wider spectrum of Canadians with various disabilities. We are pleased to share that our board now consists of 11 members who are parents of children with a disability, and members who are part of the deaf/blind community and those representing the voices of those with physical disabilities.

In addition, we have added members with vast knowledge and experiences in the fields of federal government relations, human rights and disability rights matters, and entrepreneurial ventures.

We have also managed to expand our board membership to include reps from Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and Vancouver. It is hoped that in the near future we will be able to seek more representation from other provinces.

I personally am extremely proud and excited to be working with each and everyone of our board members and we have already hit the ground running so to speak.

On December 03 BFC-CSB introduced an award to coincide with the United Nations International Day of persons with disabilities. We awarded the Chris Stark distinguished advocacy award jointly to Chris Stark posthumously and to his wife Marie.

BFC-CSB plans to make this an annual award and will be announcing more details of this and other awards in the new year.

We are also planning to embark on other initiatives that would enable us to enhance our profile federally and to promote greater collaboration and communication between all levels of government and Canadians with disabilities.

As of August 2020 BFC-CSB initiated a mini monthly survey consisting of 3 questions which are meant to encourage and motivate members of the bfc advocating for change facebook group and others to share their responses to questions.

This mini monthly survey is by no means meant to be a formal one; just informal with the mission of seeking responses from participants. I am happy to report that the number of respondents for each month presently ranges at around the 20 participant mark. Responses and respondents are kept confidential and we will be sending the results for the third and fourth quarter to Minister Qualtrough, and to other federal government departments.

I'd like to wish everyone the very best for 2021. Let's work together to put 2020 in the rare view mirror and to find new and exciting ways to ensure that the accessible Canada Act will be able to fulfill the hopes and expectations of Canadians with disabilities.

On behalf of Barrier Free Canada - Canada sans barrières

Wishing you a brighter and better 2021

Donna J. Jodhan president

## Board Recognition

Quadriplegic living in Calgary wins award for making spaces more accessible

<https://bit.ly/3peFyMj>

### [Important Articles/Videos Related to Barriers](#)

Here are some important articles and videos related to barriers. These are just some examples of barriers that persons with disabilities face on a day-to-day basis.

Calgary accessibility advocate reminds people to clear snow and ice from sidewalks

<https://bit.ly/3pgQuc6>

Accessibility and Remote Classrooms — Are Your Digital Learning Tools Leaving Students Behind?:

<https://bit.ly/3qHuFCW>

CDC Adds Down Syndrome To COVID-19 'Increased Risk':

<https://bit.ly/2Y7e5jM>

Disability advocates call for easier access to 'life-changing' technology

<https://bit.ly/2KIQJ0G>

W3C Publishes Working Draft of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 3.0

The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) has published the First Call Public Working Draft of its Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 3.0, which are developed through the W3C process in cooperation with individuals and organizations around the world. WCAG 3.0 provides new ways to evaluate web content accessibility for people with disabilities by addressing more types of disabilities, concentrating on both mobile and desktop applications, and developing new tests and scoring to determine accessibility. For more information please see <https://www.w3.org/> "

### **News Items Posted to our Website**

The following is a list of news items that have been posted to our website from November, 2020 to January, 2021.

November, 2020

People with Disabilities Last in Line. A Disability Inclusion Plan. Finally ... But Will It Deliver?

<https://bit.ly/2Nvu6hn>

Barrier Free Canada – Canada Sans Barriers October 2020 Newsletter – Third Quarter

<https://bit.ly/2LXhwac>

A Historic Day for All Canadians: November 29th 2020 Blind Canadians Applaud 10th Anniversary of Donna Jodhan's Victory in Landmark Website Access Case

<https://bit.ly/2NrrgtD>

December, 2020

The Accessible Canada Act Promises a Barrier-Free Canada for People with Disabilities. Will it Deliver?

<https://bit.ly/3iEpctX>

Introducing the Annual Chris Stark Distinguished Advocacy Award 2020 Recipients: Chris Stark (Posthumously) and his Wife Marie Stark

<https://bit.ly/3qM6V0t>

January, 2021

An Open Letter To Prime Minister Trudeau, Minister Hajdu, and Minister Qualtrough Regarding COVID-19 Vaccines From Barrier Free Canada / Canada sans Barrières

<https://bit.ly/3o8f6Tj>

### The BFC third quarter monthly mini survey

In August, we introduced a new feature on the BFC advocating for change group page to encourage visitors to take our mini survey with the goal to have persons provide their feedback on certain topics of the day. We have named our survey the Truthful Thursday survey whereby on the first Thursday of each month we will present visitors with a list of three questions. We will ask them to rank these questions and on the last Thursday of each month we will post the results.

Several persons have participated for October, November, and December. Below you will find the questions that we have asked along with the results for each month thus far.

October 2020:

Yes or no responses were required

1. Do you think that your province is doing enough to help those with special needs? Yes or no
2. Do you think that the Federal government is doing enough to help Canadians with special needs? Yes or no
3. Do you think that tele communications companies should be doing more to help Canadians with special needs? Yes or no

*Results:*

The overwhelming response to questions 1 and 2 was a resounding no, while for question 3 almost 80% responded with a yes.

November 2020:

1. Do you think that Canada is prepared to assist Canadians with special needs to face a winter of Covid 19? Yes/no
2. Do you think that Minister Qualtrough is communicating enough with Canadians with disabilities? Yes/no
3. Do you think that online education for Children with special needs are being adequately addressed in your province? Yes/no

*Results:*

The resounding response to all 3 questions was no.

December 2020 :

This was a yes/no response.

1. Do you think that agencies that provide services for persons with disabilities are doing enough to meet the needs of Canadians with disabilities during Covid? yes/no
2. Are you planning to become involved in discussions for expanded disability assistance at the federal and provincial levels? Yes/no
3. Do you think that federal and provincial governments are engaging persons with disabilities in covid consultations? yes/no

*Results:*

The overwhelming response to question 1 was no.

For question 2, 80% responded yes and 20% responded no.

For question 3 there was a 70% yes response and a 30% no response.

### Question of the Quarter

Please help us to better understand your concerns/challenges by answering the question below. Please send your response to [info@barrierfreecanada.org](mailto:info@barrierfreecanada.org) and we'll include them in our next newsletter.

Do you think that the Federal Government should prioritize the giving of vaccines to Canadians with disabilities? That is, to designate that those with a disability be placed towards the head of the line? If so, then what criteria should they be using?

### Social Media Initiatives

The BFC Advocating for Change Facebook group continues to have ongoing active chatter and posts. We have a total of 351 members. We have also been continuing to use twitter for both @BFC4Change and @Barrierfreeca to tweet and retweet relevant articles and messages.

If you are interested in making your voice heard, please join our Facebook group, BFC4change at the following address:

<https://bit.ly/3juptOY>

[Barrier Free Canada also has a brand new Linked In page. Please feel free to follow it:](#)

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/barrier-free-canada-0704b81a8/>

### **Contact Us**

If you are a person who would like to stay up-to-date in the disability world, we would like to invite you to contact us in one of the following ways:

Email: [info@barrierfreecanada.org](mailto:info@barrierfreecanada.org)

Webpage: [www.barrierfreecanada.org](http://www.barrierfreecanada.org)

Twitter: @barrierfreeca or @bfc4change

Facebook: at <https://m.facebook.com/barrierfreeca>

### **Barrier Free Canada – Canada Sans Barriers Executive**

Donna Jodhan – President, Ontario

Albert Ruel – Vice President, British Columbia

Anthony Tibbs - Treasurer, Quebec

Charlene Young – Secretary, Saskatchewan

Louise Gillis – Director, Nova Scotia

Michelle Buckland – Director, Ontario

Lorne Mackenzie – Director, Alberta

Betti-jo – Director, China

Penny Leclair – Director, Ontario

Megan Fultz – Director, Manitoba

Sean Krump – Director, Alberta

Respectfully submitted by

Charlene Young, secretary for Barrier Free Canada