

June 2009

CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS
FILM PROJECT ON AUTISM

Who is Give Shoe Productions?

Give Shoe Productions is a Vancouver-based partnership formed for the purpose of creating a film about autism. Shannah Berge and Tlell Raffard are two mothers with children on the autism spectrum, and whose backgrounds include acting, film editing, play writing, and production.

Shannah and Tlell are members of Autism Community Training, the Autism Society of British Columbia, and various other local support groups and training seminars. They formed Give Shoe Productions when they realized that so much of the literature and documentary work available on the subject of autism seem to focus exclusively on the challenges faced by those with the disorder and their families. We see the humour and joy in quirks and differences.

Give Shoe Productions takes its name from an exercise that Shannah's young son undertook to associate words with objects, and commands with action. He was diagnosed as autistic PDD at 18 months, and five years later is now able to communicate and participate with his family and schoolmates. Tlell's teenage son lives with Asperger's Syndrome, and while he often feels outside the status quo, he has developed a keen sense of self-awareness and is learning to accept and embrace his uniqueness.

What is the Project About?

Our film project seeks to explore the unique capabilities, creativity, and ingenuity of autistic children and adults. We take the view that autism provides those with its symptoms access to distinct inner experiences and singularly gifted perspectives. In these ways, autism is not an obstacle to be overcome, but rather that it enriches all our lives through humour, achievements, inner strength and forgiveness.

Give Shoe Productions will be interviewing and filming participants over the coming six months and aims to launch the completed film by summer 2010.

How Can I Get Involved?

If you or someone you know has been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder, and you have a story you would like to share, we want to hear from you. We will include references to struggles and challenges, however, our aim is to bring light to the view of autism through humour, positive self-awareness, and artistic or inventive accomplishments. We seek stories of proud and joyful moments, acceptance and embracing of different perspectives, and positive experiences shared by those with autism and their families. Participation is on a purely voluntary basis without remuneration.

Please contact us by phone at 604-574-4948 or by email at give.shoe@gmail.com.

