

The Art of Advocacy for Parents of Children with Special Needs

How to help your child access the services they require to reach their potential

Presented by Clair Schuman, Executive Director
ACT – Autism Community Training

8:30 AM – 4:00 PM

February 2, 2008 – **Surrey**

March 1, 2008 – **Nanaimo**

April 5, 2008 – **Castlegar** – Co-Sponsored by West Kootenay Community Group for Autism

April 26, 2008 – **Kitimat** – Co-sponsored by Kitimat Child Development Centre

About the Workshop

Many parents are confused and frustrated by the complexities of systems they must navigate to find help for their child with special needs. These systems include: the Ministry of Health for diagnosis, Community Living BC, the Ministry of Children and Family Development for early intervention and out-of-school services, and the school system for services for their school-age children.

This workshop offers parents an overview of how to develop skills they need to navigate successfully through the hurdles they may sometimes encounter. Using the school system as an example, parents are guided through the components of empowerment necessary to become an effective advocate for their child. Specific guidelines and tips will be provided in this positive, practical, user-friendly and interactive seminar. This workshop is not disability-specific, but will be especially helpful for parents of children with “invisible” disabilities.

Topics will include:

- Knowing your rights and responsibilities
- Understanding roles and responsibilities of players in the system
- Decision-making and problem-solving
- Managing your choice of words, temperament and body language
- Learning the jargon
- Making a plan, including Individual Education Plans
- Documentation and the paper trail
- Collaboration and negotiation
- How to make a complaint
- A handout on contracting with service providers will be distributed.

About the Presenter

Clair Schuman has worked for over 20 years in the area of special needs for both government and not-for-profit agencies and is a social worker.

The parent of a teenage son with an Autism Spectrum Disorder, Clair has extensive experience as a workshop presenter on education issues and is recognized for her commitment to training families in the advocacy skills they require to ensure their children are receiving the supports they need. Prior to her appointment as Executive Director of ACT – Autism Community Training, Clair was the Provincial Coordinator for Education and Family Support for the British Columbia Association for Community Living and is a former Director of Programs and Services for the Autism Society of British Columbia.

In her own community, Clair has been the volunteer facilitator for the Tri-Cities Autism Community Group since 1999. Clair has degrees in Social Work and Psychology.



Workshop Schedule

8:30 – 9:00	Registration
9:00 – 10:30	Session 1
10:30 – 10:45	Break – coffee/tea provided
10:45 – 12:30	Session 2
12:30 – 1:30	Lunch – on your own
1:30 – 2:30	Session 3
2:30 – 2:45	Break – coffee/tea provided
2:45 – 4:00	Session 4

Just Ask! ACT Information & Support Services

ACT is a registered not-for-profit society, founded by parents of children with ASD in 2003. ACT's Information Officers are available to answer questions on which of our events would be relevant for the child or student you support. ACT also offers extensive information and support to families and community professionals on diagnostic, treatment and educational topics. We can be reached by telephone at 604-205-5467, toll-free at 1-866-939-5188, or e-mail info@actcommunity.net. Want to know more about our mission and the people behind ACT? See www.actcommunity.net/about_us.

Acknowledging Our Community Partners

ACT thanks the many parents and professionals across BC who volunteer their time to support our work. Our community volunteers range from local parents and community groups to members of our advisory board who provide a range of expertise. ACT gratefully acknowledges the Consortium for the Advancement of Child Health – SFU for co-sponsoring our events and providing excellent facilities in Vancouver at a reduced cost. See www.sfu.ca/autism-lab/. Most of ACT's events outside Metro Vancouver are made possible through subsidies provided by the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD). The commitment of our presenters is particularly appreciated.

ACT Bursaries

Parents may use part of their autism funding to pay for training workshops and travel costs. Check with MCFD's Autism Funding Unit for details of what percentage is permitted. Bursaries for low-income participants and/or those traveling from outside their region are available, funded in part by MCFD. Call ACT's office for more information or e-mail info@actcommunity.net with your request before registration. Bursaries are provided as reduced registration fees. For details, see our website at www.actcommunity.net. Donations to ACT for our bursary fund are gratefully received and enable us to make our workshops more affordable as many receive no external subsidy. ACT is a registered charity: #86169 1236 RR0001. Tax receipts are issued.

Hotels

In order that parents can keep their costs down, ACT tries to negotiate preferred rates for hotel rooms in all the communities we work in—whenever practical. You must book early and mention ACT. Check our website at www.actcommunity.net or call us at 604-205-5467, toll-free 1-866-939-5188 for hotel information for the community presentation you are considering.

REGISTRATION FORM

The Art of Advocacy

You may register online at www.actcommunity.net, unless you are requesting a bursary or registering as part of a group.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Province/State: _____ Postal/Zip Code: _____

E-mail: _____

Do you wish to receive ACT info by post? Yes Do you wish to receive workshop updates by e-mail? Yes

ACT is committed to respecting your privacy. We do not share information with any other organization or individual. See www.actcommunity.net for privacy policy.

SURREY – February 2, 2008 – Sheraton Vancouver Guildford Hotel, 15269 104th Ave.

- Early Bird (postmarked by January 11, 2008)
- Regular (postmarked January 12 – January 25, 2008)
- Late Registration (postmarked after January 25, 2008 & at the door)

NANAIMO – March 1, 2008 – Coast Bastion Inn, 11 Bastion Street

- Early Bird (postmarked by January 25, 2008)
- Regular (postmarked January 26 – February 22, 2008)
- Late Registration (postmarked after February 22, 2008 & at the door)

CASTLEGAR – April 5, 2008 – Sandman Hotel Castlegar, 1944 Columbia Avenue

- Early Bird (postmarked by February 27, 2008)
- Regular (postmarked February 28 – March 28, 2008)
- Late Registration (postmarked after March 28, 2008 & at the door)

KITIMAT – April 26, 2008 – Kitimat Valley Institute, 1352 Alexander Avenue

- Early Bird (postmarked by March 14, 2008)
- Regular (postmarked March 15 – April 18, 2008)
- Late Registration (postmarked after April 18, 2008 & at the door)

COST:

ACT is no longer required to charge GST

PARENTS, STUDENTS & PARA-PROFESSIONALS:

- Early Bird Rate = \$65 CDN/US
- Regular Rate = \$100 CDN/US
- Late Rate = \$120 CDN/US

PROFESSIONALS:

- Early Bird Rate = \$90 CDN/US
- Regular Rate = \$130 CDN/US
- Late Rate = \$160 CDN/US

GROUP RATE: If registrants are not benefiting from other bursaries, three or more registrants paying at the same time, with one payment, requiring one receipt, receive a 20% discount. **NEW:** When both parents register to attend an event, the second parent pays only 50% of the registration fee.

Please check if you are the parent of a child with ASD

Please indicate your professional or para-professional status: _____

Para-professionals include group home staff, childcare workers, special education assistants, behaviour interventionists, preschool & supported childcare staff and foster parents. Students, please attach copy of student ID.

METHOD OF PAYMENT:

- Cash Cheque
- Mastercard VISA

Name on Card: _____

Card #: _____ Exp. Date: _____

In addition to on-line registration, ACT accepts telephone registration using a credit card at 604-205-5467, toll-free 1-866-939-5188 or by fax at 604-205-5345. Registrations are accepted only when accompanied by payment. Refunds for registration, less a \$25 handling charge are available until seven days prior to the workshop. Details of the cancellation policy are available on ACT's website. Cheques that are not honoured will result in a loss of registration status. Bank charges incurred by ACT as a result of a NSF cheque are the responsibility of the registrant. Cheques or money orders should be made out to: ACT – Autism Community Training. Mail to: Suite 240–2250 Boundary Road, Burnaby, BC Canada V5M 3Z3. To confirm registration, e-mail info@actcommunity.net or telephone 604-205-5467, toll-free 1-866-939-5188.

ACT is cutting back on our mail-outs. To help save trees and postage, please join our confidential e-mail list at www.actcommunity.net.