



**GARY TINKER FEDERATION
FOR THE DISABLED INC.**



From *Compassion*

to *Action*



Report and Action Plan

**September 11 & 12, 2009
La Ronge, Saskatchewan, Canada**



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The Gary Tinker Federation is a community based organization open to northern persons with a disability. It strives to make long term improvements in the lives of disabled persons residing in the north. Services offered expand opportunities for members to achieve vocational skills & job training

What We Do

- Identify the special needs of northern people with a disability and then create awareness everywhere.
- Help establish self-help groups in local communities & affect community action.
- Help establish a peer support network for people with disabilities.
- Work with government and non-government agencies regarding service provision for northern people with disabilities.
- To expand opportunities for disabled people to achieve vocational skills and job training
- The Gary Tinker Federation for the Disabled Inc's main goal is to make long term improvements in the lives of disabled persons that reside in northern Saskatchewan.
- The Gary Tinker Federation for the Disabled Inc (G.T.F.) is a non-profit organization established in 1989 to identify and address the needs of disabled persons in northern Saskatchewan. We publish a quarterly newsletter.

The Gary Tinker Federation is a Member of:

The Northern Labour Market Committee (NLMC)

Northern Human Services Partnership (NHSP)

Supported Employment Training Initiative (SETI)

Cognitive Disabilities Strategy (CDS)

Disability Income Support Coalition (DISC)

Affiliate member of Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres (SARC)

Saskatchewan Mental Health Coalition (Saskatchewan Mental Health Association)

Program Implementation Advisory Team for Ministry of Social Services

Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability

Membership:

Regular membership in the Federation is open to northern persons with a disability (18 yrs and over). Only members of the Federation have the right to hold office and the right to vote.



From **Compassion**



to

Action



Report and Action Plan

Available on-line at www.garytinker.ca

Overview of the Session

The gathering was held in La Ronge and was designed to bring together people with disabilities (from across Northern Saskatchewan) to discuss current realities, identify strengths and limitations and to establish an action plan to move forward together.

Number of People in Attendance: 74 (37 persons with a disability and 6 family members; 10 disability sector services providers; one participating elder; 11 facilitators and scribes; four speakers, presenters and observers; three support staff)

Hopes from the Gary Tinker Federation

The Gary Tinker Federation wanted to provide the opportunity and encouragement for individuals to speak for themselves with a focus on their personal stories and interests.

It was also a Celebration

A celebration of the 20th anniversary of Gary's walk was a central feature of the gathering and set the stage around positive actions and optimism while keeping in mind that there is still a long way to go to get from compassion to action.

Facilitator

Flo Frank – Common Ground Consulting Inc., Meacham SK





Summary of the Conference

This was the first gathering of its kind, where the vast majority of participants (80%) represented themselves as northern people with disabilities. It was a very enthusiastic group with a large contingent of deaf/hard of hearing individuals who were active and engaged throughout the event. They, as a result of the opportunity to meet together, have formed a new association (the Northern Aboriginal Association for the Deaf) and intend to stay connected through technology and other means.

The total group formed a bond and made a commitment to work together on issues and to help each other with areas of need related to the action plan in this document. Everyone was grateful for the opportunity to get together and talk together about things that matter in their daily lives.

The conference overall presented a wide range of topics that were discussed, personal stories of hope and challenges that were shared, and a growing sense of collaboration and optimism began to take shape. There is a strong sense that the people in the room can and will work toward improving the north for those with disabilities and those who care for, work with and love them.



Theme from the North

Voiced by many, agreed upon by all, endorsed by the group

There is a desire to work together as a group to improve conditions in the north and to establish a plan for action NOW and for the future. Each person here is committed to continuing with this direction and we all support the goals and priorities that are highlighted in this document.

Declaration from the North

Together we can make a difference — from compassion to action we are all in it together and we are ready, willing, and able to help ourselves and others to a better future. A future in which people with disabilities enjoy the same quality of life as everyone else and a standard of living that is equal to that of others.

A Vision for the North

In northern Saskatchewan, people with disabilities will be more visible, better understood, more integrated and welcome in mainstream society. Our basic needs will be met and we will have a high quality of life. Our families will not be afraid for our futures. We will be more empowered to find solutions to issues, to take advantage of opportunities for participation and our voices will be heard as united

We need to do things in the north for the north – and be our own advocates. Together we can make things happen and build on this work we have done. The issue will be to maintain momentum and continuity to the process and we are hoping that the Gary Tinker Federation and all our partners will help to keep things going.





Ten Steps Toward a Brighter Future

The following are concrete goals and priorities that form the basis of an action plan for the north, for people with disabilities.

- 1.** Establish a “centralized resource centre “(a resource hub or central clearing house) for information, resources, service and connections for people with disabilities – a one stop service centre with a training and capacity building mandate
- 2.** Seek additional funding for more human resources – helpers, interpreters, care givers and respite workers and for technology to help reduce isolation and disconnections
- 3.** Develop and implement a public awareness campaign related to perceptions and acceptance of people with disabilities (how to include people with disabilities into mainstream life) – and provide more training to improve relationships
- 4.** Provide more treatment services including lifeskills for people with disabilities (many have other issues including addictions and depression in addition to their disability)
- 5.** Increase and coordinate the northern “voice” – develop an advocacy agenda to help people with disabilities to speak up for themselves on matters that will improve our quality of life and standard of living
- 6.** Determine way to improve employment opportunities and encourage employers to hire people with disabilities
- 7.** Improve current conditions related to housing, transportation and health issues and develop an evaluation framework to measure progress and results in these areas
- 8.** Reduce violence and abuse of people with disabilities – zero tolerance
- 9.** Develop a data base of people with disabilities and use it to maintain a constant source of connection and input for people with disabilities (interactive web-sites)
- 10.** Provide support for the newly formed Northern Association for Deaf that was formed at the conference and has started its work as a team

Recommendations and Next Steps

- Based on the mandate given to proceed, review the notes and determine how an overall strategy might be developed (An Action Strategy for the North for People with Disabilities).
- Refine the goals and priorities above and turn them into an concrete Action Plan include the details provided in the action plan basics (table talk discussions) in the notes below as well as the visions drawn on the colored sheets.
- Form committees to work on the various action items and develop a Terms of Reference for each committee in order to keep moving forward.
- Each person at the session volunteered to continue with this work, and will need to be contacted to keep connected and to see where they might be able to fit in.
- Prepare a budget and seek funding to create the plans and form a network across the north – structures and role need to be established and a communication plan put in place asap.
- Share contact information from the session so that a network can be formed and people can stay connected to each other and the process as it unfolds.
- Ask the Gary Tinker Federation to provide continuity and support to maintain momentum and to provide leadership to the process.
- Evaluate progress between now and next year so that the conference next year will be about progress made and success stories as a result of this gathering.
- Hold another conference and working session like this next year.





Attendees

Participants

Persons with a disability and caregivers

Aaron Misponas	Pinehouse
George St. Pierre	Wollaston Lake
Thomas Linklater	Pelican Narrows
Linda Napope	Saskatoon
Rae-Lynn Tinker	Pinehouse
Napoleon Joseyounen	Wollaston Lake
Linda Charles	Stanley Mission
Dion Hardlotte	Stanley Mission
Adam Hardlotte	Stanley Mission
Rocky Fernwald	La Ronge
Daisy A Ross	La Ronge
Max Morin	Ile a La Crosse
Reji Martin	La Ronge
Calvin Laliberte	Green Lake
Rebecca Laliberte	Patuanak
Noah Ballantyne	Pelican Narrows
Carmen Iron	Canoe Lake
Max Iron	Canoe Lake
Clinton Carriere	Cumberland House
Harvey Fiddler	La Ronge
Gary Tinker	Pinehouse
Dianne Christianson	Creighton
Bronson Christianson	Creighton
Warren Maurice	Patuanak
Kristen Maurice	Patuanak
Lorraine Sha'Oulle	Hatchet Lake
Wayne Ross	Montreal Lake
Jennifer Throassie	Black Lake
Margaret Sha'ouille	Hatchet Lake
Chris John Owczar	Patuanak
Brian Caisse	Ile a La Crosse
Mark Intalan	Patuanak
Marie Sayazie	Black Lake
Elmira Bekkatla	Buffalo Narrows
Samantha Shaoulle	Wollaston Lake
Robert Nepinak	Patuanak
Shane Delaney	La Ronge
Jimmy Herman	Dillon
Antoinette Herman	Dillon
Brian Herman	Dillon
Clara Nashacappo	Saskatoon
Janelle Dron	La Ronge
Burton Bird	Montreal Lake
Jerry Nashacappo	Saskatoon

Service Providers

Bev Duncan	Regina
Randy Stomp	La Ronge
Patsy Thimpson	La Ronge
David Nelson	Moose Jaw
Edna Willis	La Ronge
Dorothy Thimpson	La Ronge
Josh McBride	Prince Albert
Carol Samuels	La Ronge
Audrey Sanderson	
George Ward	Prince Albert

Elder

Henry W Roberts	La Ronge
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Facilitators & Scribes

Flo Frank	Meacham
Shannnon Cholin	La Ronge
Karen Eckhart	La Ronge
Earl Cook	La Ronge
Rhonda Hueser	Prince Albert
Joan Johnson	La Ronge
Alistair MacFadden	Saskatoon
Carla Martynuik	Regina
Tracey Meyers	Prince Albert
David Radchuk	La Ronge
Michelle Turner	Prince Albert

Speakers

Clem Chartier	Ottawa
Alison Schmidt	Regina

Presenters

Isobel M Findlay	Saskatoon
Maria Basualdo	Saskatoon

Support - Volunteer & Staff

Nancy McKenzie	Pelican Narrows
Clarence Neault	La Ronge
Sharon Feschuk	La Ronge

Observers

Lynn La Rose	Saskatoon
Michelle Martin	Saskatoon

Conference Sponsors

Areva Resources Canada Inc.

Cameco Corporation

Lac La Ronge Indian Band

Mamawetan Churchill River Regional Health

Metis Nations Council

Ministry of Advanced Education Employment & Labour

Ministry of First Nations and Metis Relations

Ministry of Social Services

Northern Lights Community Dev Corporation

Northlands College

SIGA – Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority

Transwest Air

Thank you for your support!



**GARY TINKER FEDERATION
FOR THE DISABLED INC.**

The Gary Tinker Federation for the Disabled Inc.

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Turning Compassion into Action

...at 10,000 feet



This milestone report — and a video of my tandem skydive — are available on our website; where you will also find the plain English and academic versions of the Ile a la Crosse Park Rangers (summer employment program) case study.

Follow our activities as we turn compassion into action...

Gary A Tinker



*From Compassion to Action
Report and Action Plan*

From

Compassion

to

Action

Appendices

Summary Notes from the Sessions
- and other materials from the conference

Pull-out

Appendices

Summary Notes from the Sessions

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DAY ONE – FRIDAY September 11, 2009

Key Points from: Clem Chartier – Metis Nations President comments

- Establish focus group
- Implement national training forum
- Undertake to prepare disability services toolkit
- Provide direct client services (40 people - \$10,000 per client)
- From Oct 2009 – Mar 2011
- Waiting for decision from HRSD to implement program

Key Points: Environmental Scan – What’s Going on In Saskatchewan

Allison Schmidt – Sask Voice of People with Disabilities

- education is important issue & striving for change
- lack of understanding & myths
- lack of understanding about abilities for employment
- isolation is an issue for education, employment and communication
- abuse is an issue (male & female)
- transportation can be a challenge
- limited amount of homecare
- limited amount of housing and cost has increased
- SK gov implementing program SK Assured Income for the Disabled (SAID)

TABLE TALK SESSION ONE: What is going on from your perspective?

- need central resource
- where is the \$\$
- need person to work on \$\$ request
- housing, employment, respite, drop-in centers, education programming
- minimal workers from community living in northern sk
- northern SK is very resourceful – rely on family & friends
- getting assistance with regards to equipment
- housing issues, social and supportive issues
- bigger disability the more likely having to move to bigger centre
- more awareness of how people can apply for & run a care home
- reserve group home services have limited funding
- need someone to take primary role for obtaining funding for group home
- lack of awareness by southerners & northerners
- accessibility – take decisions makers to northern communities to see lack of accessibility
- transportation is minimally available
- why does gov’t have tough restrictions on approving people for assistance
- no portfolio for band councillors for people with disabilities
- lack of interpreters, employment, specialized equipment for deaf
- less than 50 interpreters in SK

TABLE TALK SESSION TWO : TELLING OUR OWN STORIES

HERE IS WHAT WE HAVE TO SAY:

- interpreters are a shortage
- need support when working
- would like to take courses but no interpreter
- would like to have videophones
- don't speak English may read lips
- 2 individuals from Black Lake – employed at school – not receiving vacation & sick benefits
- Difficulty learning English
- Living alone – need caregivers
- Reliable transportation
- Get a driver's licence
- Need financial help for basic essentials
- Need computers, videogames
- Need more opportunity for training
- Respite – caregivers need relief
- Need more facilities to provide respite
- Family will share the disabled person
- Assistance from GTF to secure employment very important
- Caregivers worry about future of disabled – caregivers getting older
- Have permanent/long term needs but assistance is short-term
- Want to be involved in decisions that affect disabled
- Access to services – most services are offered in the south
- Minimal mobile clinics to come to the north & not always accessible
- Basic physical wheelchair accessibility in north
- Cognitive disabilities – FASD awareness, trying to take care of FASD people
- Limited access to homecare
- Would like to keep people out of group home & allow people to stay home
- Lack of understanding of mental health
- Limited treatment options for mental health
- Visibility concerns in northern SK
- Rights to individuals regarding employment
- Develop a network for info exchange
- Could create discussion groups
- Educational institutions need to increase disability awareness (need for books on tape)
- Educational institutes need to be aware of where support is & who to talk to (told to talk to A, talk to A and is told talk to B)
- Literacy is a need
- Need independence – parents/community are too protective
- No-one available to help with suicide thoughts when dealing with disability

TABLE TALK SESSION THREE:

FOCUSED DISCUSSIONS ON KEY AREAS OF CONCERN IN THE NORTH

Health

- more family docs, medical health specialists
- mental health issues overlooked
- more education about basic nutrition
- reduce cost of healthy food choices
- community gardens

Housing

- a lot of space in communities could be used for housing
- Home Modification Grant is good but needs to be increased
- More housing for various categories – family, single, empty-nesters
- Jointly funded housing programs, fed, prov, municipal, band
- Need Fairness in funding
- Different types of housing

Caregivers

- in south they work 7 days a week
- need patience
- inadequate care
- need unlimited access in north
- need to understand common sense & point of view of client
- LTD does not cover enough
- MLA/MP offices should be wheelchair accessible
- Northern areas should receive better service
- Need outreach worker for northern areas
- Band needs portfolio for disabled
- Caregivers should escort clients to appointments
- Employment need
- Need automatic doors
- Need adequate income
- Teach lifeskills or communications, apprenticeship, job training, computer access training
- Access to co-ops to market the work

Transportation

- taxi, bus, air
- accessibility and affordability
- have space for wheelchairs
- medical taxis to have wheelchair lifts
- subsidies for taxi

- STC on west side
- Medical services should pay for counselling & disability services
- Challenging highways in the north

Employment & Training

- people need chance to prove they can do the job
- employers need interpreters
- internet has helped for communication & research
- tutors are very helpful
- need awareness of websites
- form a group to look at technologies to start communicating with each other
- like to see a school for the deaf so they can learn to speak the same language
- need to change people's perceptions of what they can do
- have to provide to people they have abilities & skills
- public education & awareness is important
- need more interpreters
- focus on educating youth & families on different services
- youth camp for deaf – need to be more aware of services
- expand to educate families for awareness

Recreation

- Kikinahk Friendship Centre – is good
- Not a lot of recreation activities in rest of north
- Pinehouse is starting a community centre
- Lake provides lots of opportunities
- NSCRD has canoes to borrow
- LA hospital has activities for long term care
- Need more opportunities – bowling, swimming, crafts
- Funding for opportunities
- Transportation to/from activities
- Support for drug/alcohol abuse – recreation helps
- Need wheelchair accessibility at arenas

Addictions/Recovery

- more treatment centers in the north
- continuity between education levels
- continuity between jurisdiction
- MOU between jurisdictions would help
- Need advocacy for client services

Accessibility

- about interpreters
- there is more funding in bigger centres

- lack of services in rural communities
- connection to highspeed
- videophones
- be more aware of programs/services/equipment
- deaf have moved from their communities to other provinces
- hoping to access info from Census Canada - # of deaf people in province
- maybe RCMP trained as interpreter
- more schools for deaf

Abuse

- police would benefit from training about disabilities
- may assume person is drunk because they move differently
- Victim services working well
- Women's shelter is helpful
- ICFS is helpful
- Schools have guidance/family counsellors
- More training & stronger qualification for guidance/family counsellors
- Need elder/men's shelter
- Need programs/services about elder abuse
- More hiring based on qualifications

Awareness

- elders are important resource
- one-on-one support can be available
- GTF help to educate employers/disabled
- Elders & disabled need to feel respected
- Physical accessibility is not always considered
- More awareness of transportation issues
- Housing programs need to be adapted if you don't have kids
- Radio stations could be giving more info about disabled/elders
- More accessibility of buildings
- More awareness of programs for renovations for accessibility

TABLE TALK SESSION FOUR: TAKING ACTION

Who should do what?

- individualized funding program not doing well. Has been around 5 years through Homecare. You hire own attendant, you are employer, you choose person. Want someone you can relate to instead of stranger in your house. Family members are not included – certain circumstances would allow family. Take out of Homecare & put in Sk Health. Need help to put pressure on government to change.
- Elmira would like to work as outreach worker out of PA.
- Need earlier diagnostic done of learning disability for children. Eliminate frustration & allow kids to remain in school. Need early intervention.

- Don't know what is available out there. Secrets of the funding. Need resource centre for funding, grants, programs.
- Need centralized resource centre
- Sarcan and Sarc website
- Sacl.org
- People First
- Resources on GTF website
- Need resources that can be read & culturally appropriate. Different types of media for different types of people
- Who should do what in the north not just in the south?
- Encourage people with disabilities to become more vocal. Push ourselves. Push MLA/MP.

PANEL PRESENTATION

Diane Christianson – Creighton – disabled son Bronson

- thankful for GTF
- son in high school until 22
- what do we do after that?
- Employment through GTF
- 6 years of employment
- Bronson walks to work & back
- Work for 8 years
- We all need purpose, Bronson needs purpose
- Need to know where we are going & why we are there
- Has girlfriend for 9+ years, talk of marriage & life together
- Wants lifetime work

Clara Nashacappo – Saskatoon

- wanted to see Gary jump out of plane
- 5 kids, 3 grandkids, married 22 years
- Born with polio
- Could not walk until 5
- 2 brothers taught how to walk
- Hard struggle
- Criticized, laughed at
- Used to have low self-esteem, learned to love herself
- Talks for first-nation people with disabilities
- Office on her reserve
- Band funded program \$450 every 2 weeks
- 2005 spoke at FSIN assembly about disabilities, lacking opportunities, homecare, education
- Lots of issues that have not been brought forward
- Helped child with CP go to school Had to get assistance from INAC for the child to go to school

- Frustrated with treatment of CP child at school by a teacher. Band has now hired someone for one-on-one with child
- Helped child with dystrophy and Children's Wish Foundation to "pimp my ride". Built a new van the way he wanted it. He didn't want a new van wanted to fix his own vehicle.
- Thanks to her kids for helping her & treat her like mother & respect her. Understand her everyday life.
- Golf tournament 11th year – Sep 24 in North Battleford Golf & Country Club

Gary Tinker

- Wonderful things have been happening
- Tough for me growing up down south
- Didn't know I was an aboriginal until I was 5
- My family is very strong & happy they support him
- My brother forget my crutches when went boating. Family forgets he is disabled
- Realize people have depression with disability. Get help right away
- Had to keep up smile even when heart was hurting. Family helped
- Wants to help people with disabilities. Has compassion
- Should I stay bitter or get better?
- Dad committed suicide – very tough. Missed out on knowing dad because he grew up down south
- 20 years have been great – ups & down. Can't give up. Support has taught him lots & he has taught them lots
- Learned how to blend in
- Sometimes people don't listen & do the opposite of what we want
- Why don't people listen to the disabled?
- Everyone is responsible – doesn't matter who is in power
- Met prime ministers, queen – good feeling when people with disabilities are recognized in the north
- Blessed to be a voice for the disabled in the north
- People pull together in the north
- And sometimes I fall on the floor – still laugh
- Do not give up
- Awesome experience of skydiving
- Met Jean Chretien – have hired the guy, can fire the guy
- Made decision of what the mandate will be & announce tomorrow
- My mom had 18 kids – family really cares
- Happy to see people here & will make a difference
- Will try my best to take the mandates to the politicians
- Someday I may be premier – how much \$\$ do you want?
- Had very compassionate coaches & that is why he is here today
- Thankful to board members
- Come up with a good message & have some compassion

DAY TWO – SATURDAY September 12, 2009

KEY POINTS - Things that are most Important from yesterday:

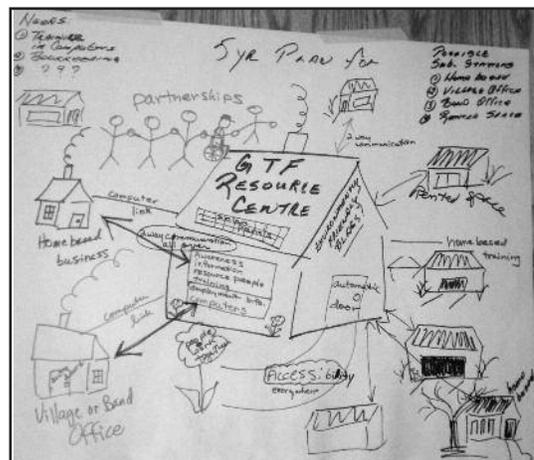
- needs for resource service to find what they need
- housing needs – availability & access
- this type of meeting is new experience
- prefer services in the north
- education/awareness on disabilities for general public
- disabled people need to know the rights
- limited service for deaf
- educational committee needs to provide better/consistent resources
- enjoyed meeting new people
- afford housing
- no sign interpreters in north
- transportation not readily available – afford & fit
- need long term action plan for disabilities in the north
- use plan for funding
- central resource for getting info & assistance with applications
- could people with disabilities be put into a database so they could receive info that relates to them (save time)
- needs are same today as 20 years ago – slight improvement in education/employment
- ignorance of disabilities in the north by public
- need/where to find resource people
- good to have computers at GTF for people to use
- enjoyed hearing stories at table yesterday
- need for interpreters
- need employment opportunities in the north

WORKING TOGETHER – A PICTURE OF THE FUTURE

Small groups drew pictures of the ideal future to create a vision for people with disabilities in northern Saskatchewan. Here are the key points made by each group.

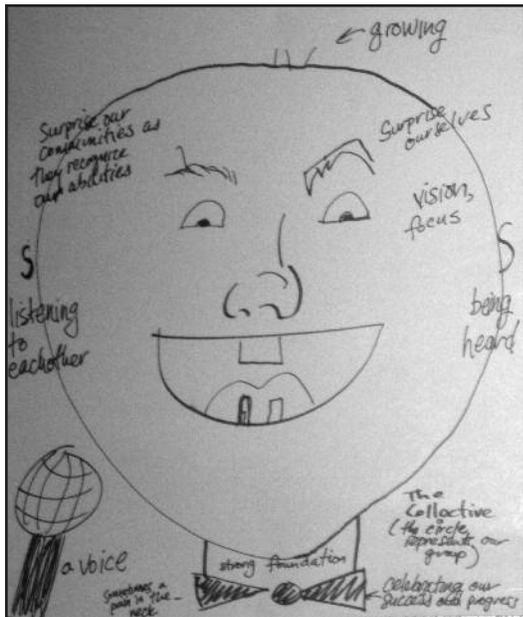
1 – green - house

- everything environmentally friendly (solar/wind)
- GTF resource centre
- 5 year plan to build & develop 10 mini resource centres
- Solar panels on roof
- Could be home based businesses
- Mobility challenged use computer likes to GTF
- Awareness, resource people, employment



info, bank of computers

- Bank connected to people in 10 communities
- In 10 years might have 20-25 stations in north
- should be home based
- create employment for people
- some are homes, village offices/band office, rent space in building
- what is needed? – need building & purchase computers
- order from Bill Gates/gov't surplus
- need training for people from substations
- talk about needs for education of people
- auto doors/wheelchair accessible/interpreters

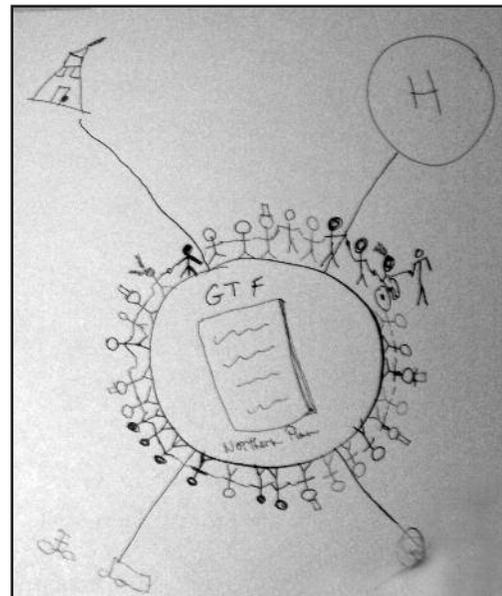


2 – orange - face

- started with nice circle – representing people with disabilities
- future having a very strong voice
- circle turned to happy face
- Ears for listening/being heard
- Eyes defining clear vision/focus
- Eyebrows for surprise communities about people with disabilities & strength
- Hair – growing
- Neck – strong foundation (starting here)
- Bowtie – sometimes we will be a pain in the neck & celebrate success
- Nose – to the grindstone, sniffing out deals, keeping it clean
- Teeth –

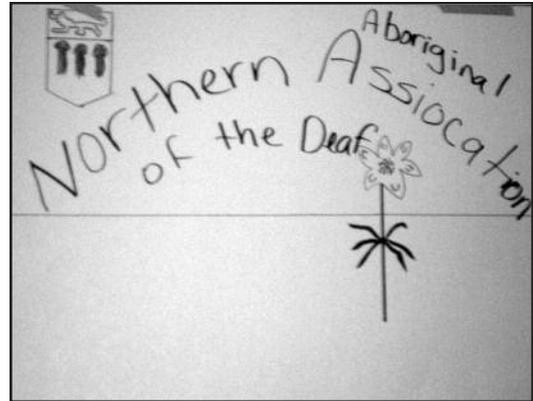
3 – green – circle with people

- Geronimo
- Pull people together in circle & focus on all people with disabilities in the north
- Talk about housing, hospitals, physio, whatever, speech people
- funding – where is your cheque book not just look good for photo op
- services for vehicles/buses
- federation in the future will handle all the politics in the north up to PA
- GTF will represent for the north in the future
- Would like to see 5 year plan
- Possibility of structure, action based on priorities & principles



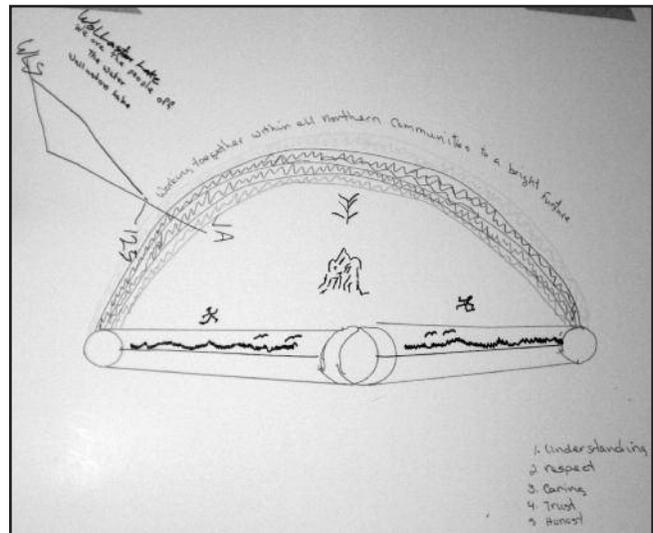
4 – yellow - province

- northern aboriginal association of the deaf
- Need help & improve wellbeing of deaf/hard of hearing
- Need help setting up association
- Don't want anymore deaf to be isolated
- very focused structure – has happened



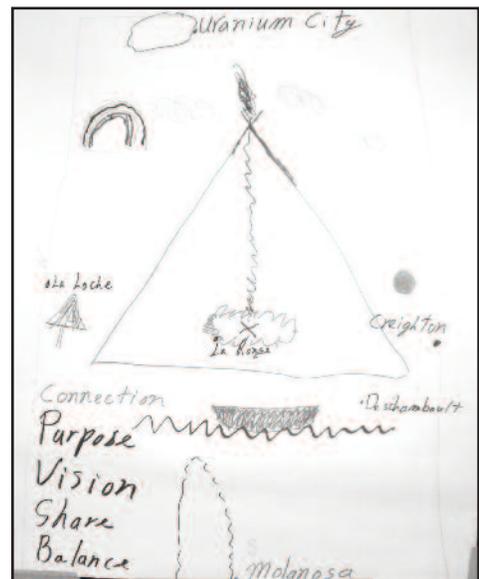
5 – white - rainbow

- talk about north
- a lot of people like us are disabled
- am a trapper – work in construction
- think about grandchildren
- to understand each other
- to care, love, respect each other
- to be honest
- grandfathers
- new born baby is our future
- our world is polluted & disabled
- want to help the young people & make them understand what this means
- would have drawn better picture but I am blind
- will draw better to make you see
- tools & a very personal connection to it
- rainbow represents my elders say in the summer when you see a rainbow you have another year – so we have another year to keep going



6 – yellow - teepee

- do a good job
- amazing what we can do
- given a special gift that we are sharing with each other
- bring me home from the old ways
- we were still in balance back then
- the sun is going down
- temporary home on this earth & have to make our choices as we go along



GROUP DISCUSSION – WHERE ARE WE HEADING?

Where do we go from here??

- Gary Tinker has done a lot for disabled people

Clarence

- Does what board members want
- This conference is for getting action items
- Make sure that at every step people with disability were involved

Gary

- thanks to deaf/hard of hearing for being here
- very strong message this evening
- take this mandate seriously
- want something to take to politicians
- no time to argue about who is responsible & who is responsible for what

ACTION PLAN BASICS – Getting Started

The following is an overview of the things that need to be addressed in each topic area. We want to support and build on the things that are working and fix the things that are not. Our recommendations need to be heard and we are committed to following up on this excellent start.

Education & Training

What is working?

- Gary Tinker Federation

Needs improvement

- Psychological educational assessment
- Vocational training
- Need tutors for students
- Life skills
- Train tutor in sign language
- Employer benefits
- Prevention of substance abuse

Recommendations

- do this as soon as a problem arises – don't wait until they are an adult
- need vocational training
- train more tutors for young adults in high school & when they leave
- make more life skills training available in northern communities

- more training opportunities in home communities
- give employers more tax breaks for employing handicapped people
- more education to reduce substance abuse

Housing

What is working?

- space is available in communities to build
- home modification grant

Needs improvement

- adequate housing for all people – especially for people with disabilities
- fairness in allocation of resources

Recommendations

- housing to address various categories – family, single, disabilities, childless couples
- increase home modification grant
- jointly funded housing program (feds, prov, municipality/band)
- fairness in allocation of housing/grants/programs
- explore models of housing shared co-op

Accessibility

What is working?

- accessibility to programs/funding are more prevalent in larger centres (Saskatoon)

Needs improvement

- connection to high speed
- \$99 for purchase of the video phones
- Awareness of programs/services/equipment
- Education – School for the Deaf closed in Saskatoon (1991) – closed too early
- Result of closure was communities become smaller
- Sharing of information (get info from census)

Recommendations

- need for more interpreters – at least one in each community
- video phones – every deaf person has a phone in their home & school
- \$\$ needs to be accessible
- Open up the School for the Deaf in Saskatchewan (1 in north & 1 in south or one in PA)

Employment & Training

What is working?

- do have opportunities – just need a chance to prove it
- internet – can do research & communicate this way
- Gary Tinker is funded to go into schools – deaf person to go with Gary Tinker & an interpreter
- Tutors are helpful
- Transition planning is in schools
- Webex/skype – works well but needs awareness of this
- Bing is a search engine
- Have more access than we realized
- Everyone has high speed internet

Needs improvement

- change people's perceptions/perspectives – frustration – have experience but not getting jobs
- deaf may only have just their own home language
- need to learn ASL so everyone can communicate with each other to decrease isolation for everyone
- is important to learn about the deaf & their challenges & their abilities
- lessen isolation of deaf youth
- not enough awareness of deaf & hard of hearing association & services they offer such as the youth camp & funding to attend the camp
- Tracy will give the group a list of resources following this conference to review/use
- Deaf & hard of hearing – youth camp up to age 30 – starting another group with families soon

Recommendations

- more interpreters
- need public awareness & education campaign
- educate youth/deaf (families) – travel to communities to present options (maybe along with Gary Tinker when he visits the schools with an interpreter)
- build a network (like persons around the table) to get together & communicate via internet
- download webex/skype & give this a try for the group
- use netmeeting.com
- bing.com suppose to be more intuitive than google

Abuse

What is working?

- police
- victim services

- women's shelter
- Indian child & family services
- Schools have guidance counsellors & family counsellors
- Social workers

Needs improvement

- police can show prejudice & that needs to be addressed
- need more training & stronger qualifications for service providers

Recommendations

- police would benefit from training on disabilities (sometimes assume people with disabilities are drunk)
- place for elders/men to go (no equivalent to women's shelter)
- programs & services to address elder abuse
- hiring based on qualifications

Recreation

What is working?

- Kikinahk Friendship Centre (for children & youth) (floor hockey, basketball, dances)
- Indoor swimming pool for high school students in La Ronge
- Pinehouse is starting a community centre
- Public library in La Ronge
- Lake provides opportunities for swimming, camping, boating etc.
- Sports & rec has canoes for free rental in La Ronge
- Community halls are used for events (bingos, dances)
- Hospitals has programs for people in long term care

Needs improvement

- opportunities for adults

Recommendations

- bowling alley
- swimming pool
- movie theatre
- craft programs
- funding for recreational resources & programs
- transportation to & from programs
- supports to address drug & alcohol abuse (from children to older adults)
- wheelchair accessibility of arenas

Health

What is working?

- nil

Needs improvement

- need more family doctors
- need more health specialists
- mental health issues are overlooked
- more money to buy better food
- more education about basic nutrition

Recommendations

- hire & train more doctors
- hire & train more specialists like physiotherapists, physical education training
- need people to help disabled people do physical training
- reduce the cost of healthy food choices
- educate the population in terms of proper nutrition
- fund community gardens

Advocacy

What is working?

- GTF
- FSIN/MNS
- Victim services in northern Saskatchewan
- Disability income support coalition
- Provincial interagency network on disabilities

Needs improvement

- additional resources to expand services
- provide opportunities & resources to network
- information sharing & communication re programs, services, resources, rights

Recommendations

- provide additional funding
- 1-800-disability helpline for references
- Education & awareness of rights & forms of abuse (computers)
- Culturally appropriate info available in print/radio
- Train effective people on basics of advocacy
- Education to develop curriculum sensitive to disabilities so stigmas are abolished

Addictions & Recovery

What is working?

- nil

Needs improvement

- availability of treatment centres/programs
- services for referrals
- advocacy for client services
- continuity between education levels/jurisdictions (MOU)

Recommendations

- more treatment centres in the north

Transportation

What is working?

- Athabasca region – taxis, bus service, air
- Ambulance

Needs improvement

- accessibility
- affordability
- highways

Recommendations

- space for wheelchairs & taxis with wheelchair lifts
- special subsidy to accommodate wheelchair patients
- bus service to expand routes in northern SK
- medical services to subsidize additional services rather than just medical needs

Awareness

What is working?

- elders
- one-on-one help
- GTF helps to education employers, persons with disabilities & community agencies
- Also provide assistance to find & keep employment

Needs improvement

- elders & others with disabilities should be respected
- discrimination remains an issue (eg some jobs are designated only for some pop-

- ulations)
- physical accessibility is not always thought of
- awareness of transportation needs

Recommendations

- housing programs are not always helpful to people without children
- radio stations could give more emphasis on elders & disability
- accessibility of buildings needs to improve .. need, to be aware of programs that support renovations

Employment

What is working?

- nil

Needs improvement

- housing to permit people to work
- Cameco & AREVA could create opportunities for disability workers
- Government & private companies providing opportunities
- Northern communities providing job opportunities
- Many places in north & south not accessible
- Automatic doors, accessible in northern community for public access
- People with disabilities need adequate income

Recommendations

- teach Life Skills (communication, decision making)
- provide education
- provide apprenticeships
- provide job training
- provide computer access training
- entrances should be a standard level to be accessible
- people with disabilities of all kinds need to have access to employment opportunities/training
- people with disabilities need to have access to co-ops to market their work

Caregivers

Working Well

- In the south, caregivers work 7 days a week
- Persistence and sense of humour by consumer in the advocacy

Needs Improvement

- Inadequate care in home community
- Northern communities have limited access; no ramps

- No transportation
- Caregivers need to understand common sense and point of view
- Northern area need communication skills
- LTD does not cover enough
- Attitude toward those with disability
- Isolation of disabled people in the North
- Northern communities need better access at stores, etc.

Recommendations:

- MLA/MP offices should be wheelchair accessible
- Accommodations more suitable to disability
- Northern areas receive better services
- Housing in cities for people from the North
- Outreach workers for northern areas
- Band to have portfolio for people with disabilities
- Caregivers should escort clients to appointments

