



As we reflect over the last 3 months, I am reminded that the true gift of our community is connection. From festive gatherings and shared meals to moments of laughter and celebration, the holidays brought many opportunities for people to come together and feel a sense of belonging.



We are pleased to share that our respite apartment is once again in use. This supportive space provides the opportunity to learn and practice important life skills, build confidence, and experience greater independence in a safe and encouraging environment. Seeing this space being used in such meaningful ways speaks to the importance of growth, independence, and continued connection within our community.

Looking ahead, we are pleased to welcome Developmental Services Ontario (DSO) and the Passport Program to NHCIA on March 26th from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. If you are interested in learning more about the DSO process or how Passport funding works, please contact our office for more information.

Louri Snider
Executive Director

Experiencing Independence is such a unique and meaningful opportunity, especially for someone who hasn't often had the chance to try things fully on their own. Having an apartment that is entirely his—even if just for one night—has clearly been a positive and confidence-building experience for Jesse.

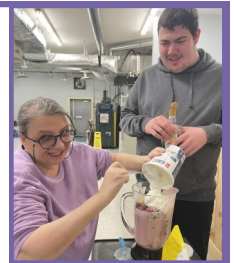
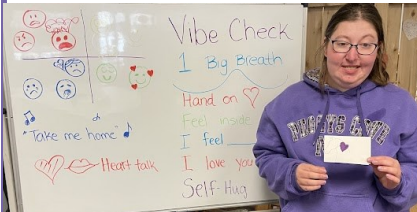
One of the ways Jesse is embracing his independence is by using the cooking app Look Cook & Eat. The app allows him to choose a recipe, create a shopping list, and follow step-by-step video instructions. This not only supports him in preparing meals successfully, but also builds practical life skills. He has especially enjoyed making meals to share with friends, which adds a social and welcoming aspect to his time in the apartment.



Staying at the apartment also gives Jesse the flexibility to plan activities around his visit and fulfill commitments, such as attending board meetings in his role as a Self-Advocate Consultant. Being closer to town makes participation more convenient and reduces the cost of travel, something Jesse appreciates.

Overall, Jesse's experience reflects growth, responsibility, and pride. He values having his own space, the opportunity to manage his time independently, and the chance to build both life skills and community connections. It's not just about a place to stay—it's confidence, independence and growing your social circle.

Healthy Baking, Healthy You.... is a very special Community Participation workshop series that brings together a lot of collective learning about our emotions and the importance of nurturing ourselves. Each session begins by preparing a healthy snack and the last hour we have a mental health professional facilitate the group. The facilitator helps us develop tools for greater emotional self-awareness and self-regulation. The group is currently working with Jenny Katz, MSW and RSW. Jenny has developed the Vibe Check tool to help us all identify what we are feeling and to validate those feelings. The group talks about what brings us comfort and explore these through drawings and singing. Those attending are experiencing beautiful growth and transformation....everyone needs a Vibe Check!



Giving Back....the Self-Advocate Committee held a bake sale, raising \$160 in support of Bancroft and Area Kids in Need! In addition, handmade knitted items created by Aleta Mountney were sold, with 100% of the proceeds going toward the Committee's Kids In Need initiative.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to making a difference in our community!!





Bancroft Lions Club.... And NHCIA partnered to provide Sensory Friendly Santa nights. This event creates meaningful, inclusive spaces where every child can experience the magic of the season in a way that feels safe and joyful. Moments like these— filled with smiles and laughter-truly show the power of community collaboration. It's a beautiful reminder that when we design experiences with inclusion in mind, the impact reaches far beyond a single evening.



Youth Leadership Retreat...held in January at Cedar Ridge was an inspiring and empowering experience for everyone who attended.

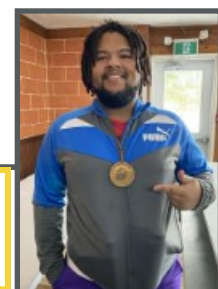
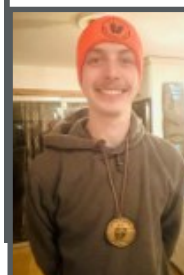
Reaction4Inclusion representative, Moira Robertson, facilitated workshops focused on advocacy and leadership. In the first session she shared her personal experiences as a youth with autism and spoke about the individuals in her life who supported her advocacy journey. Her openness and insight provided meaningful guidance to participants as they begin their own advocacy plans-both for themselves and for others.

The second session centered on leadership development. Through interactive activities, participants explored and identified their individual strengths. Small groups were then given a challenge that encouraged teamwork, communication and problem-solving skills. This was a powerful opportunity for youth to build confidence, connect with peers, and strengthen their voices as upcoming leaders.

Over the past few months ...our inclusive group events have brought individuals together for so many memorable experiences. From skating, sledding, and snowshoeing to cookie decorating and making pizza, every gathering has been filled with connection and joy. One of the highlights was tubing at Joy Bible Camp-an adventure packed with excitement big smiles and great memories.



Snowshoe Hustle...coincided with the Youth Leadership Retreat at Cedar Ridge. Several individuals participated in the snowshoe event while others volunteered to help out with the race. Volunteers worked at the start and finish lines keeping track of the participants time and names. Two of the youth from the Leadership team came home with medals.



Keenan and Masiah
bringing home medals-
congratulations!

Volunteering at Breakfast Club.... each Monday morning at York River Public School, Julie, Child & Family Support Facilitator, joins a dedicated group of volunteers to prepare and serve a nutritious breakfast for students attending Breakfast Club.

Breakfast Club provides more than just a meal-it creates a warm, welcoming environment where students can start their day feeling supported and connected. The relaxed setting also allows Julie to engage with teachers and children in a positive, informal way, strengthening relationships, building trust and maintaining open communication. This initiative continues to play an important role in supporting student wellbeing and family engagement.



MARCH BREAK

Bowling & Rock Climbing

THURSDAY MARCH 19 2026

LUNCH INCLUDED!

Ages 7-16

Cost \$40

Drop off beside Subway in Bancroft 9:00 am

Pick up at Subway 5:00 pm

Spaces are limited, to register email j.vardy@nhcia.ca or n.braybrook@nhcia.ca or call 613-332-2090 by February 25 2026

MARCH BREAK OUTDOOR FUN DAY

@ CEDAR RIDGE CAMP

March 18th 2026

Ages 7-16

Cost: \$40 Includes Lunch

Drop off at 8:30 am beside Subway in Bancroft

Pick up at 4:30 pm at Subway

Spaces are limited to register email j.vardy@nhcia.ca or n.braybrook@nhcia.ca or call 613-332-2090 by Feb 25 2026

Moments That Mattered....Christmas & New Year Highlights. There was certainly no shortage of activity around the festive season at NHCIA this year! Staff were busy supporting individuals as they prepared for the holidays—connecting with their families to schedule festive get togethers, shopping for gifts, helping decorate their homes, and participating in community events such as Christmas concerts and scenic drives to enjoy the beautiful holiday light displays.

Throughout December, staff and individuals also took part in weekly games at the office for a chance to win some fun prizes, adding extra excitement to the season.

On Christmas Eve, individuals were invited to Alice St. for an afternoon of games and gift exchange, followed by a warm bowl of chili. Then, on New Year's Eve, everyone gathered at the Design Room to ring in the new year with karaoke—and wow, who knew we had so much talent? LOL!

It was truly a season filled with connection, laughter, and meaningful moments that made the holidays special for everyone. A huge thank you to our Executive Director, Louri, and the management team for their dedication and support in helping make such a busy season more enjoyable and less stressful for everyone.



Ornament making at the Design Room.

Duncan enjoying time with his friend Ian at the Christmas lunch held for the Fish Hatchery.



Kathryn was successful selling her handmade ornaments at the "Creative by Nature" fair in Maynooth. She also displayed her products at the office, everyone loved the tree ornaments.



Jen visiting her friend and chosen family member Elaine. They spent the day doing a little shopping and then out for lunch before heading back to Elaine's home to exchange gifts.

Making Christmas ornaments at Seven Sisters Pottery Studio in Maynooth.



Reindeer games and gift exchange Christmas Eve!



New Years Eve fun as the ladies took over Karaoke and the dance floor. Others chose to play card games and a fun game of charades.



Staff and Board Members enjoying Christmas potluck lunch, then onto gifts!



NHCIA Mission Statement

North Hastings Community Integration Association, through partnerships with community, inspires people with developmental disabilities and their families to live as fully participating citizens.

Staying ConnectedEmma and Lindsey, NHCIA Staff, along with a few of Stephen's friends travelled to Picton to be with him for his 60th birthday.



Recently Stephen made the trip to Bancroft to visit friends and staff at the Valentines Day drop in on February 13th. Stephen moved to Picton in 2021 but continues to keep in touch with his Friends at NHCIA.



Cody's 1st Concert! ...held at the Design Room, was an amazing success! Cody, joined by Kevin Taylor, entertained the crowd with a lively mix of

Christmas favorites and country tunes. The audience clapped, danced, and sang along, creating a warm and fun atmosphere throughout the performance. A computer was set up to connect with the gang from Cedar Ridge, allowing them to

join in and enjoy the concert virtually. It was an afternoon of music, smiles, and community spirit—a wonderful start to Cody's musical journey!



Meeting up with old friends..... Ashala and Cheyenne, who were summer students at NHCIA a few years ago. Both are now working full time at Silent Lake Provincial Park.

They are always so welcoming to the individuals they once supported and worked with during their time at NHCIA. During this visit, they were excited to give Jeff, who was curious about the yurts, a tour of one of the newest yurts and after they led a guided walk along one of the parks trails.



Reconnecting with Cec Andrus....of Rockfield Farm was a special experience. Cec was a good friend of the late Eugene Prince who was supported through NHCIA. Cec loved taking Eugene and his friends on a horse drawn sleigh ride—a fun tradition that is carried on!



This past December, staff and individuals journeyed out to the farm to enjoy the hour long scenic sleigh ride through the beautiful property. Upon returning, a welcoming fire and cups of hot chocolate awaited everyone, creating the perfect ending to a great day of friendship, memories, and community.

Bev Lloydafter 33 years— and yes she did take a brief break from us when she ventured to Madoc Cope—is retiring from NHCIA. Bev began her journey with NHCIA in 1992, and now in 2026, she is not just retiring from a job; she is closing a chapter of lived history in side this organization.

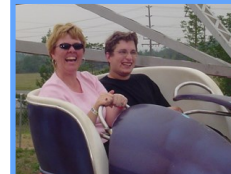
How many hats can one person wear? Maintenance. Decorator. Attending Ministry meetings. Support Staff. Manager. Mentor. Mental Health Facilitator. Health & Safety lead. And wherever she was needed. The list is long.

If you needed a good story Bev had those too—from work experience to personal (apologies to Sean, family & pets...we know about it!). She brought laughter, perspective, and honesty to her job.

Over the years, Bev has made strong and meaningful connections with the individuals she supported. She has also been the go-to person for staff—the one you call when something needs fixing, figuring out or finishing. Thank you for your dedication, your stories and your leadership.

Bev We truly wish you all the Best!

You are welcome to join us at the Design Room on April 2nd anytime between 12:00–4:00pm as we say goodbye to Bev and celebrate her retirement.



Show Your Support Become a Member

Membership.....By choosing to enroll in NHCIA's annual membership you are showing support to persons with developmental disabilities. Your contribution will assist NHCIA in achieving our mission of inspiring these individuals to live as fully participating citizens.

Name:

Address:

Postal Code:

Email Address:

Phone:

Non Voting Memberships (as per our bylaws)

Self Advocate (\$5.00)

Staff (\$20.00)

Family (\$15.00)

Single (\$5.00)

Business /Agency (\$25.00)

NHCIA will provide or arrange for accessible formats and communication on request.