

# Lend a Hand Campaign

Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. Galatians 6:2

April 2023



Bethesda



## Many Ways Donating Benefits Families

Family support requests come in all sizes, shapes and forms. Sometimes the requests are for long term support, sometimes they are for a specific situation, and sometimes they are for both. In this newsletter, we highlight a few examples of how family support meets the needs of families raising children with diverse abilities.

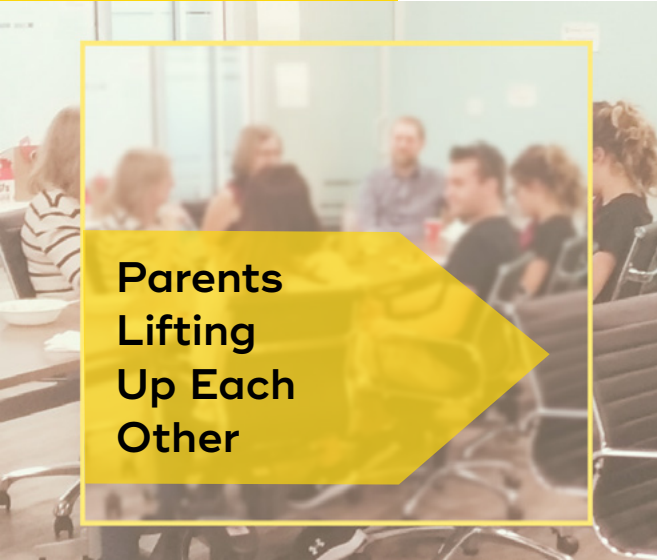
The stories here involve services Bethesda provides to families that are only funded through donations. There is no government funding for them. To continue to offer these services, we depend on the goodwill and generosity of donors.

Read how your donations have helped families in other ways this past year at [www.bethesdabc.com/blog](http://www.bethesdabc.com/blog).

Learn more about the Lend a Hand campaign at  
[www.bethesdabc.com/lend-a-hand/](http://www.bethesdabc.com/lend-a-hand/)



The annual Lend a Hand campaign raises funds that pays for services for people with diverse abilities and their families. Services that are not covered by government funding.



## Parents Lifting Up Each Other

## Sharing Together Builds Community

Who doesn't welcome a place to speak freely, to share struggles and celebrate those small victories! Once a month a group of parents meet to enjoy a cup of coffee, maybe a Timbit™ or two, and to share how things are going with their families. When a burden is shared, it often becomes less frightening or at least more manageable. Sitting together and praying is always life-giving and we do this at our meetings.

Sometimes others are unable to understand that families' struggles are different when there are family members with diverse abilities. Having a place where there is an understanding of what it is like to support children or siblings with diverse abilities is a huge blessing.

## Walking with Families Through Complicated Decisions

A family reached out to the Bethesda's family support team. Eight of their ten children have diverse abilities and there was a very real struggle for the parents to be able to support their children. Their request was simple, could someone from Bethesda come with them to a meeting with the Ministry of Children and Family Development? Just to help make sense of what was being said and to help them walk through the decisions they would have to make. Bethesda was happy to do this and continues to support this family as they journey through this life that is a little more complicated due to their commitment to follow the Lord in supporting all His children.

We share this story and a few other examples of what supporting families looks like in our blog "A Few Ways We Support Families" at [www.bethesdabc.com/blog/supporting-families/](http://www.bethesdabc.com/blog/supporting-families/).



Rodney Wiebe supports families with children with diverse abilities. Requests come in all shapes, forms and sizes and require a spirit of love and compassion and "doing whatever it takes" to support families.



## Message from Jody Siebert, CEO

Your donations make a difference! Family Support services exist because of donation dollars from you. Because of you, Bethesda is able to offer vital services that are not funded by the government. These services often mean the difference between a family finding strength to carry on vs. buckling under the weight of a load not meant to be carried alone.

When I hear stories of people receiving support they wouldn't otherwise receive, I am so deeply grateful to you and all our supporters. By giving to the Lend a Hand campaign, you show

a love that transforms our communities into places of belonging, where no person is left behind. When people are in need, our Family Support services fill the gaps and truly make a difference.

You will appreciate the stories in these pages as you see how your generosity changes lives.

Thank you for your willingness and commitment to lending a hand.

Jody Siebert, CEO



## A Safe Place for Families to Play

Parents often talk about the stress of taking their child out to public playcentres and how hard it is to endure the pointed looks people give them and even the hurtful remarks they sometimes get if their child is struggling. So it was encouraging to see families with kids with diverse abilities having a great time at our first Family Fun Evening last fall. We were able to offer a safe space for kids to be themselves and parents to relax knowing there was no judgment, only love and unquestioning support. The response to the event was so positive, and so clearly showed a need in our community, that we are adding Family Fun evenings to the services we offer. To offer a simple place of belonging for people craving connection and acceptance is a blessing.

Visit and subscribe to our YouTube channel, Bethesda Christian Association, and watch the [Family Fun Evening video](#).



Families participated in the many activities offered at the Family Fun Evening in October: face-painting, jenga, animal-shaped balloons, crafts, lego building, and unstructured play time in a safe and accepting space.

## Respite Gives Families Space

This is a story about a family who have five children, three of which have diverse abilities. One of their children, an 18-year-old son was diagnosed with palsy, a seizure disorder, and cognitive delay. His parents do what any parents do, they shower their love on him and do whatever they can to support him. Mom and dad persevere and try to be what each child needs. There was little time or energy left for each other or their other children.

At some point they could no longer do it alone. That's when they reached out to Bethesda's Family Support team, Rodney Wiebe and Jeremy Vis, for help. Rodney and Jeremy helped set up respite services for the family and bridged the gap until their son becomes eligible for CLBC funding when he turns 19.

Donations to Bethesda help us act upon immediate needs like these in ways that wouldn't be possible otherwise. Read "Helping a Family with an Urgent Need" at

[www.bethesdabc.com/blog/urgent-need/](http://www.bethesdabc.com/blog/urgent-need/).



## Curious? Talk to us!

We invite you into our ongoing story, building a vision of a world in which we can all grow together.

Are you interested in becoming a donor and would like to know more? To connect, contact Rodney or Jeremy at 604-850-6604 or [life@bethesdabc.com](mailto:life@bethesdabc.com).

Find us on social media or go to our website.



@BethesdaChristianAssociation



@Bethesda.Christian



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[www.bethesdabc.com](http://www.bethesdabc.com)



# Summer Camp: Respite for Families, Fun for Kids

For many of us, summer is a time to unwind. For parents of children with diverse abilities, summer is a time when there is more to do. Without the support of the school system, parents become full time caregivers for two months!

To make the extra responsibility just a little easier, Bethesda runs summer camp every year. The day camp provides respite opportunities to families, and a fun and supportive place for the school-age campers.

Last year, Bethesda's family support team welcomed Eva to day camp.

As a first-timer, she settled in quickly, making new friends, exploring her community, and trying new things with the support of Bethesda's summer staff.

For Eva's family, it provided a respite opportunity. Maggie, Eva's mother said, "We did not have to plan anything but a ride for Eva on camp days, and we knew she would be very happy and tired out when she got home".

Read Eva's summer camp story on Bethesda's blog at [www.bethesdabc.com/blog/](http://www.bethesdabc.com/blog/).



First-time summer camper, Eva, enjoyed doing crafts, baking, singing, and visiting places like Mill Lake.



## SUMMER STUDENTS

ARE YOU:

- between 19 and 30 years old.
- enrolled in full-time studies in a related field.
- a driver with a Class 5 driver's licence and able to obtain a Class 4 by date of hire.

GET READY TO:

- make a positive impact on kids with diverse abilities.
- experience personal and spiritual growth.
- gain hands-on experience in social work.

Training is provided.

Work at summer day camp!

LEARN MORE

[www.BethesdaBC.com/careers/#current-jobs](http://www.BethesdaBC.com/careers/#current-jobs)



Apply by **April 28**

## Lend a Hand

Donate today and help a family.



Often people with diverse abilities and their families need a community of support all their lives. At Bethesda we connect families with support groups, help families navigate a bewildering labyrinth of systems and processes, and we respond to various needs, such as respite or other services, to bridge the gap until adult funding is in place.

[www.bethesdabc.com/donate/](http://www.bethesdabc.com/donate/)

Bethesda delivers community living services for people with diverse abilities with funding from Community Living BC, a crown corporation that contracts to service providers, and Ministry of Children and Family Development. The amount of funding received by Bethesda is based on the assessed needs of each person we support. However, there are always gaps. That's where Lend a Hand comes in.

## Student Bursaries

Bethesda Christian Foundation provides \$1000 bursaries to post-secondary students engaged in full-time studies leading to work supporting people with disabilities and their families.

Students may apply for the 2022/2023 school year by requesting an application package from Bethesda at 604-850-6604 or [life@bethesdabc.com](mailto:life@bethesdabc.com).

## Bethesda

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