

Healthy People, Strong Communities



United Way
Central & Northern
Vancouver Island

Reducing Social Isolations for Individuals in Wheelchairs

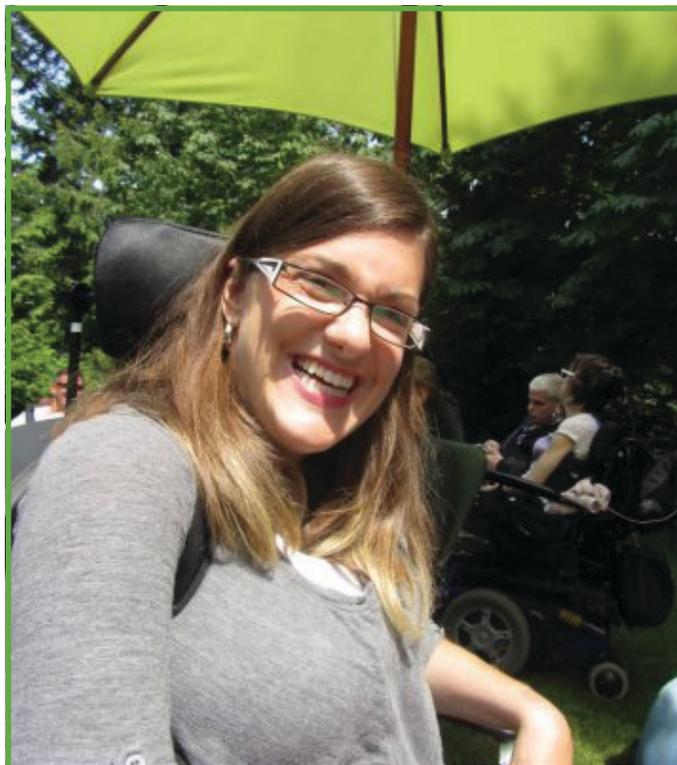
After our last peer coffee meeting Fred*, one of our peers who is a very positive individual, took me aside and commented that he thought the coffee meetings, a United way funded program, were really valuable because he watched others who were struggling with adapting to life in a wheelchair interact with others at the coffee shop and leave afterwards feeling happy and cheerful, including himself.

Fred also noticed that they were able to interact with other people that could relate to their experiences or had similar difficulties and they had the opportunity to voice their concerns to people who actually understood them. For some of these individuals with spinal cord injuries, the coffee groups are the only interaction they get. And this made him happy to see.

Your United Way donations give people with spinal cord injuries who are adapting to life in a wheelchair the opportunity for social interactions and activities with others in similar situations. Without your generous donation, some people like Fred wouldn't have any social interaction with others who can relate to life in a wheelchair.

These peer coffee meetings are hosted once a month in Nanaimo and Courtenay with an average attendance of 12 to 15 people. They are also hosted quarterly in Campbell River with an average attendance of five people. There is also one occassionally in Parksville.

**Names have been changed.*



Angela, a member of the peer support group, has cerebral palsy and is an active young woman who plays power soccer. Angela participates in many of their peer social events and especially enjoys the annual summer BBQ where she has the opportunity to play tennis and bocce.

"I love these events. I get a chance to chat with people who are going through the same things as I am. It makes me realize that I don't have to deal with this by myself."

To read more stories about people you have helped, visit uwcncvi.ca.