

Canada's
History
for KIDS

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Canada's History Magazine for Kids

Kayak

DisAbility



**FAIRNESS
AT SCHOOL**



**WAR VETERANS
HELP**

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Psst! These symbols spell "Kayak" in Inuktitut.



Cover illustration: Hannah Teakle

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FROM-THE-EDITOR



If you've seen *Kayak* before, you'll notice it's smaller now. The new size saves a LOT of paper, and that's good for the environment. And if you're new to *Kayak*, welcome! Every issue looks at a different subject from Canada's past. This time we're talking about people with disabilities, especially kids.

Nancy

SPONSORS

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Canada



HUDSON'S BAY

EVERYONE COUNTS

IN 1882, NOVA SCOTIA PASSED A LAW ENSURING
FREE EDUCATION FOR PEOPLE WHO WERE BLIND.



14 GOLD, 5 SILVER, 2 BRONZE
MEDALS WON BY CHANTAL
PETITCLERC IN PARALYMPIC
WHEELCHAIR RACING.
SHE BECAME A CANADIAN
SENATOR IN 2016.

ABOUT 3 IN 100 CANADIAN KIDS HAVE A LEARNING DISABILITY,
MORE THAN ALL OTHER KINDS OF DISABILITY PUT TOGETHER.

MAY 20, 2013
CANADA'S
SUDARSHAN
GAUTAM BECOMES
THE FIRST PERSON
WITHOUT ARMS
TO CLIMB MOUNT
EVEREST WITHOUT
USING ARTIFICIAL
LIMBS.



1977 The Canadian government makes it
illegal to discriminate against people with disabilities.



CHANGING MINDS

Everyone's body works differently. Everyone thinks and feels differently. And everybody needs different kinds of help in life to get around, to learn, to communicate and more.

Ableism (AY-bull-izm) is a kind of discrimination. It says that some people's bodies, minds and ways of behaving are better than others.

For hundreds of years, many families in Canada were ashamed of kids with disabilities. Some religious people believed a disability was a judgement for something bad the person or their parents had done. People with disabilities saw little of the world outside their family's home. They often died young because there were few treatments or devices to help them. Even adults with disabilities were usually seen as unable to live on their own and not valued as a part of their communities. There were many negative attitudes about people with disabilities, and society didn't bother to do things that would include them.



In many Indigenous cultures, each human being is believed to have a unique gift they can share with the world. For instance, on the Anishinaabe **Mino Bimaadiziwin (The Good Life)**, everyone develops and grows in a way that is good for them — there is no one “right” way to be.

Who says it’s a disability?

People who are autistic often point out that they have a unique way of experiencing the world. Many deaf people say they have no disability — they just use a different language. A lot of blind people say they read with their fingers instead of their eyes. Many people others call disabled use a capital letter on words like Autistic, Blind or Deaf to make it clear they are part of a unique culture.

JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE

Jordan River Anderson of Norway House Cree Nation was born in 1999 with several disabilities. During his short lifetime, Canada and Manitoba fought over the cost of his care (and who should pay for it). As a result, he didn't get the help he needed to improve his life. After Jordan died in 2005, the First Nations Child & Family Caring Society fought to get equal care for Indigenous children with disabilities. Today, Jordan's Principle makes sure that First Nations children living in Canada have access to medical equipment, mental health services, educational supports and much more.



Stockphoto, National Film Board



Stettler, Alta., 1913

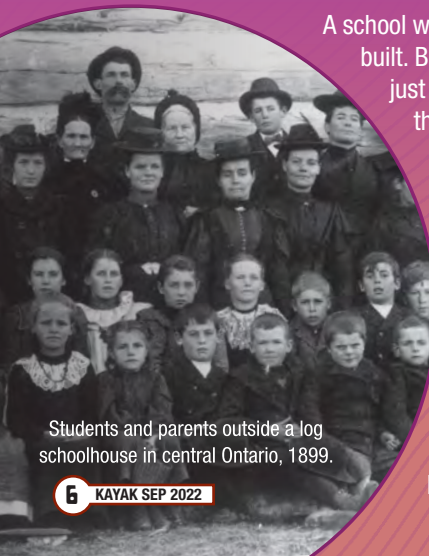
LEARNING FOR ALL

Kids with disabilities and their parents fought a LONG time for fairer treatment at schools.

Picture a tiny one-room schoolhouse from, say, 200 years ago. Who do you think would be sitting in the desks? Do you see any kids using sign language or Braille? Is there anyone besides the teacher to work with kids who need help to learn? Is there space for a wheelchair or a quiet spot for kids who need it?

A school was often one of the first things European settlers built. But kids who had any kind of disability mostly just didn't get an education. Many people didn't think there was any point trying to educate kids with disabilities. They helped around home, but anything they learned had to come from hard-working parents or older kids in the family.

Even at bigger schools in towns or cities, kids with disabilities weren't welcome. Teachers didn't know how to teach them. Schools weren't built for them to get around in easily. Kids who needed help to look after themselves were often sent away to live in hospitals, which had even less interest in helping them learn.



Students and parents outside a log schoolhouse in central Ontario, 1899.

DIFFERENT NEEDS

All of us need things to help us learn. Some of us get these things, known as access needs, met more easily than others. Needs that may be less common or even disapproved of usually get met less often. Examples of different access needs include extending learning time for kids who learn slowly, quiet learning space for kids who get distracted in noisy environments, and ramps and wide doorways for kids who use wheelchairs and assistive devices to move around. For most of the time that settlers have been in Canada, many kids with access needs have just been ignored by schools.



Singer Alma Faye visits a school for children with disabilities in 1977.



Library and Archives Canada, Halifax Public Library

By the late 1800s, people were starting to think that maybe it was important for kids with disabilities to work and earn money. To do that, they needed an education. The first school here for kids who were deaf opened in Quebec City in 1831. Halifax opened the first school for the blind (shown above) in 1871. Kids with disabilities were still rarely able to go to school. Students who learned more slowly were often made fun of and punished. Well into the 1900s, kids with disabilities were seen as a hardship for their families and a problem to be kept away from other students.



Some of the teachers at a Manitoba school for deaf children, 1908.

In 1833, Quebec's Antoine Caron became the first deaf person to teach deaf kids in Canada.



SPECIAL SCHOOLS

For students who were deaf or blind (or both), there were good parts to having their own schools where they both lived and learned. Kids met and made friends with others like them. Instead of having a limited life at home, they could learn in a way that was better for them. They learned skills that would help them get jobs and be part of their communities. Sometimes, though, teachers and other staff in these schools treated students badly, from cruel comments to beatings. These students also had to live away from their families for long stretches of time. But in one big way, special schools were very important. They helped kids with disabilities realize that they weren't alone, and that they deserved to be treated like other people, with fairness and respect. After they graduated, young people who had gone to schools for the deaf started joining together to fight for their rights. They described themselves as Deaf — people who couldn't hear but had their own language and culture.



Children who are deaf exercise outside their Manitoba school, 1905.



Starting in the 1950s, more students with disabilities began going to regular schools for what was known as special education. They were usually stuck in separate classes away from other students, though. People thought that if kids with disabilities were in regular classes, they would slow down learning for others. By the 1970s, that idea was being proven wrong. Over the next two decades, schools gradually welcomed students with disabilities into the same classrooms as other kids. Instead of shutting kids with disabilities away, schools started making plans to help them learn alongside everyone else. Today, although students with disabilities aren't always treated fairly, they are usually not sent away or refused an education. Canadian schools try to give all kids a chance to learn in the way that works best for them.

Alamy

**HOW DOES YOUR SCHOOL
MAKE SURE ALL STUDENTS
GET THE SUPPORT THEY
NEED TO HELP THEM LEARN?**



CLEVER CREATIONS

Since before there was a Canada, people have been coming up with smart ways to help those with disabilities get around, communicate and do everyday things more easily.

Roland Galarneau was born with just a tiny bit of vision. He learned Braille at a school for the blind in Montreal. Back home in Hull, Que., he took night classes while working as a janitor. In 1952 he invented a microscope that let him read printed words for the first time. Inspired by the success of his “roloscope,” Galarneau started on another project in 1966. After thousands of hours, he came up with the Converto-Braille. It changed letters as you typed into raised Braille symbols that blind people could read. His invention led to modern computer Braille software.



HELPER CARDS

Nadia Hamilton’s brother Troy is autistic. When they were growing up, she drew him pictures to help him with everyday things. Those pictures are now MagnusCards, an app from her Toronto company. The step-by-step digital “cards” guide users through things from brushing their teeth to ordering food in a restaurant.

ROLLING FREEDOM

Watching his aunt push a chair across the kitchen floor for balance, Norman Rolston thought there had to be a better way. So in 1986 he came up with what he called the Able Walker — a frame whose four legs had wheels on the bottom that swivelled and hand brakes to stop the walker from rolling away. His invention was a big improvement over existing walkers. It gave new freedom to people who just needed a bit of support to walk. Rolston, who was born in Saskatchewan and lived in Alberta, the Northwest Territories and B.C. over his lifetime, could have made piles of money from his invention. But he shared his plans for free, a generous act that earned him an award from the International Society of Inventors.



RAMPING UP

In 2002, Luke Anderson was mountain biking in British Columbia. He tried to jump a huge gap but crashed and ended up with a spinal cord injury. His new life in a wheelchair soon showed him how many buildings had steps that made it impossible for him to get in. He realized there wasn't much he could do about a huge set of steps, but a single step might be something he could fix. The result was the StopGap. It's a brightly coloured wooden ramp with rope handles. When someone who uses a wheelchair or walker faces a single step at the door to a building, someone from inside can bring out the StopGap. Businesses, schools and other buildings all over the world use ramps from his Toronto charity StopGap Foundation to welcome anyone who needs a bit of help.

UNIQUE SIGNS

Indigenous sign languages have a lot to tell us about who belongs and how we include people with disabilities. The bonus?

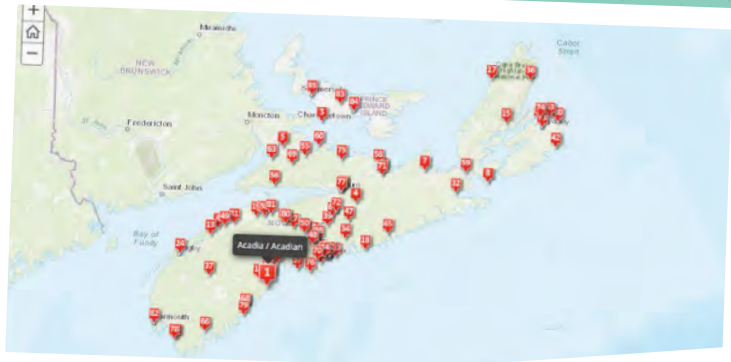
These distinctive sign languages didn't just help deaf and hearing people to communicate. They also made it possible for people to talk (with their hands) when they met others who didn't have the same spoken language. (Think of an Ojibwe person who speaks Anishinaabemowin and a Scottish person who speaks Gaelic still being able to trade because they both sign.) **Plains Sign Language** was once widely used from what is now Saskatchewan through to Mexico. People who could hear used it as they told stories. People who couldn't hear used it to communicate. And everyone could use it for trade. Many different First Nations in what is now central and southern B.C. used **Plateau Sign Language**. It was eventually replaced by the prairie version and **Chinook Jargon**, a spoken language that mixed Indigenous and English words. Like many other Indigenous peoples, Inuit don't see deafness as a problem. **Inuit Sign Language (ISL)** grew out of the hand signals people used out on the land to hunt and gather in what is now Nunavut. Hearing people and those who are deaf use ISL, although fewer kids know it now that they often go south to schools where they learn American Sign Language or Langue des signes québécoise.



HERE'S HOW TO SPELL THE NAME OF THIS MAGAZINE IN AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE.



Most Deaf communities across Canada use American Sign Language or Langue des signes québécoise. In eastern Canada, Maritime Sign Language was used for more than a century and still remains in use even today by people living in Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.



The Atlantic Provinces Sign Language Place Names Map shows the names of communities all over Atlantic Canada in ASL and MSL. A team from Saint Mary's University in Halifax worked with members of the local Deaf community, who sign the names in the map's video. The signers (like Betty MacDonald, above) come from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Newfoundland and Labrador. You can find the map at smu.ca/apslpn.

YOUR STORY

FAIR PLAY

Having fun outdoors is good for everyone, especially kids. But playgrounds haven't always been for all.

HOW WELCOME DO YOU THINK KIDS WITH DISABILITIES FELT AT THIS PLAYGROUND IN 1905?



Places that are accessible are easier for everyone to enter and move around in. Think of a beach with hard pathways for wheelchairs or a building with signs in Braille as well as printed words. More and more modern playgrounds include things that will be fun for as many kids as possible.

Alamy

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO HAVE PLAYGROUNDS THAT ALL KIDS CAN USE?



This playground at the Logie Street Park in Lindsay, Ont., offers fun stuff for all kinds of kids. It has everything from saucer spinners to a log tunnel and sand excavators.

WOULD YOUR FAVOURITE PLAYGROUND BE FUN FOR ALL KIDS?

When play areas are designed with all kinds of abilities in mind, they're just as much fun as ever. But now everyone can enjoy them!



JumpStart Playground in
Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.



Shut Away

Written by Allyson Gulliver • Illustrated by Arden Taylor

ORILLIA, ONTARIO, AUGUST 1960

“I dare you!” The words were bouncing around in Diane’s head. Why hadn’t she just said no? Now if she didn’t touch the fence and run back to her friends, they’d tease her forever.

She swallowed hard. It was just a fence. So what if everyone said the huge red brick building behind it was full of scary people? All she had to do was take a few more steps forward, then a few more ...

“Hi.” The voice was soft and gentle but it still made Diane gasp in shock. This must be one of those scary people! She should run!

But the girl who came out from behind a bush on the other side of the fence wasn’t frightening at all. She had a round face and friendly eyes that sparkled with a shy smile. “I’m 12 and my name is Lily. What’s yours?”

Diane’s hammering heart slowed down a bit. This girl looked nice. She managed a little smile. “I’m Diane. I’m just here to touch the fence.” As soon as she said it, she felt bad. After all, she could

turn around and go back home. But Lily was stuck on the other side.

“Do you live in there?” Diane asked, pointing at the towering building.

Lily’s face clouded over. “Yes. I don’t like it. One of the helpers is nice but the other one hits me when I get things wrong. I miss my mum and dad and my sisters and my baby brother.” She stopped and her eyes filled with tears. “He was so little and I loved to hug him.”

Diane’s stomach felt awful. She couldn’t imagine being away from her own family. “What’s it like in there?”

The other girl didn’t answer right away. “It’s not nice,” Lily finally said. “The paint is coming off the walls and it smells like a bathroom everywhere.” She waved her hand toward a smaller brick building. “They call that place a cottage but I think cottages are supposed to be nice places in the woods and that cottage is bad. We have to sleep all squished together.”

Lily sighed. “I used to have a friend but she got really sick and then she went away.”

Before Diane knew what she was saying, she blurted out, "I can be your friend! I'll come see you again tomorrow after school."

Lily clapped her hands and danced around in a circle, a huge smile brightening her face. "I have a friend! I have a friend!" Just then a bell rang loudly, and her smile disappeared. "Oh no! Goodbye Diane!" She turned and ran toward the smaller building without another word.

Diane had been waiting for ages. She was going to have to go home soon for supper, but she still couldn't see her new friend. Where was Lily?

She couldn't stay any longer. It had been okay when she had the other girl to talk to, but

without Lily's cheerful smile, the building was making her nervous. Sadly, she turned for home.

"Wait, Diane! Wait!" Lily ran up to her side of the fence. Her face was dirty and streaky and the sleeve of her dress was torn.

"What happened?" Diane asked.

Lily looked like she might cry — she looked like she'd been crying already.

"One of the big girls said I was ugly and stupid and my parents didn't want me and then they all laughed at me and poked me and ripped my dress."

She stuck her chin out.

"But now my friend Diane is here."



Diane could feel herself getting angry. “Those girls are wrong.” She held out her hand to show her friend what she’d brought.

“You brought me a beautiful flower!” the other girl gasped. She reached through the fence and took the stem, ever so carefully. “It’s orange and I love it!”

“It’s a lily,” Diane said. “They grow all along the road by my house. It made me think of you.”

Lily — the girl — held her flower up to her face and brushed it along her cheek. “I’m a flower. I’m Lily.” She looked at Diane and smiled. “And I have a friend.” K

Huronia Regional Centre, 1982

Lily is a character we made up, but her story is based on a real girl who spent her teenage years in the Ontario Hospital School. It was usually just known as Orillia, after the town in Ontario where it was located. (It was renamed the Huronia Regional Centre.) It opened in 1876, and was supposed to care for people who had intellectual disabilities — ones that affected their brains and ability to learn and live on their own. There were many such places in Canada. The people who lived there were often treated very badly. At the time of our story, a visiting reporter described Orillia as terribly crowded with an overpoweringly bad smell. It closed in 2009. The next year, people who had once been shut away there and in two other Ontario facilities took the province to court. Some people who survived Orillia started a project called Remember Every Name to honour the thousands who died there.

BEYOND WAR

ILLUSTRATED BY ALEX DIOCHON - WRITTEN BY NANCY PAYNE





EDWIN BAKER AND ALEXANDER VIETS WERE BLINDED WHILE FIGHTING IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR. ALONG WITH CHARLES DICKINSON AND SCHERMANN SWIFT, THEY STARTED THE CANADIAN NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND. IT BEGAN AS AN ORGANIZATION FOR VETERANS WHO'D LOST THEIR SIGHT IN THE WAR. BEFORE LONG, IT WAS HELPING ALL CANADIANS WHO WERE BLIND OR HAD PARTIAL SIGHT.

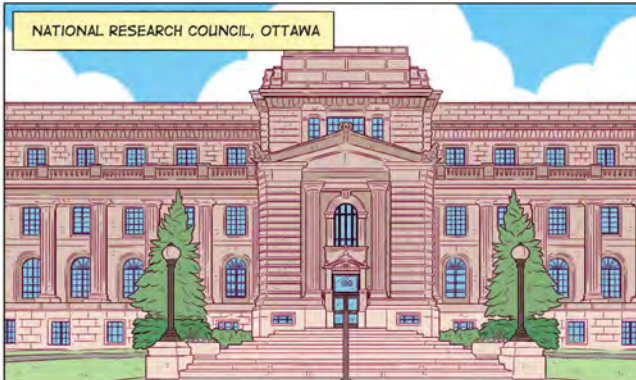
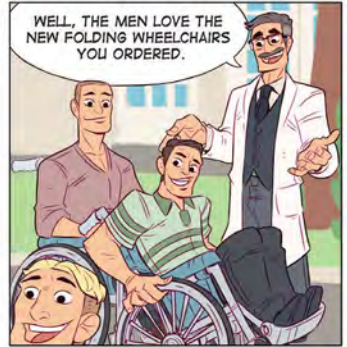
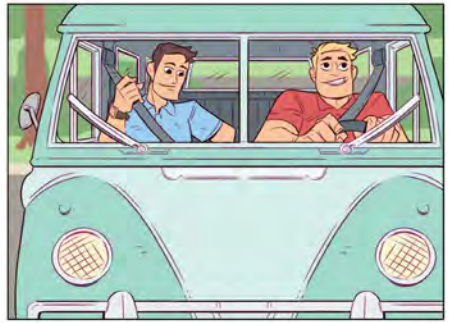


*SOMEONE WHO INJURED AN ARM OR LEG SO BADLY THAT A DOCTOR HAD TO CUT IT OFF.





*A PERSON UNABLE TO USE THEIR LEGS BECAUSE OF A SPINE INJURY





ALTHOUGH WE IMAGINED THEIR CONVERSATIONS, THE MEN WE NAMED ARE ALL REAL. AFTER BEING INJURED IN WAR, THEY CAME BACK TO CANADA AND STARTED GROUPS TO HELP OTHERS LIKE THEM. AT TIMES, THESE VETERANS WERE SEEN AS DESERVING HELP MORE THAN OTHERS WITH SIMILAR CONDITIONS WHO DIDN'T GET THE SAME HELP. BUT THE ORGANIZATIONS THEY CREATED HAVE MADE LIFE BETTER FOR THOUSANDS OF CANADIANS WITH DISABILITIES: THE CANADIAN NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND (CNIB), THE CANADIAN PARAPLEGIC ASSOCIATION (NOW SPINAL CORD INJURY CANADA) AND THE AMPUTATIONS ASSOCIATION OF THE GREAT WAR (NOW THE WAR AMPS).



PEOPLE FIRST



There are many ways to learn more about the stories of people with disabilities in Canada.

Every fall, **Terry Fox** events raise money for cancer research in memory of this great athlete who cared about making life better for others.

The **Canadian Museum for Human Rights** in Winnipeg doesn't just talk about equality for all people. It also has all kinds of features for visitors with disabilities, from maps you can touch to ramps instead of stairs to special apps.



Many theatre companies now provide what's known as **relaxed performances** like this production at Langley, B.C.'s Royal Canadian Theatre Company. Also called sensory friendly performances, these shows welcome people with intellectual or communication disabilities or who are on the autism spectrum.

CELEBRATING ACHIEVERS

On **Canada's Walk of Fame** in downtown Toronto, you'll find stars for some famous people with disabilities. Rick Hansen wheeled more than 40,000 km around the world on his Man in Motion tour starting in 1985. He raised more than \$26 million for research into spinal cord injuries. There's also a star for legendary rock and jazz guitarist Jeff Healey, who became blind as a child.



IN APRIL 2022, THE MUSEUM OF VANCOUVER MARKED **WORLD AUTISM ACCEPTANCE DAY** WITH SPECIAL EVENTS DESIGNED FOR PEOPLE WITH AUTISM TO ENJOY.



Next time you're waiting to cross the street, look for bumps like these. They guide people who are blind.

MORE THAN TELEPHONES

Alexander Graham Bell's mother and wife were both deaf. Besides famously inventing the telephone, he spent much of his life focused on education for people who were deaf. But he also thought deaf kids should learn to read lips and speak to be more like hearing people, even though sign language was easier for them. You can learn more at the **Alexander Graham Bell National Historic Site** in Baddeck, Nova Scotia. Or visit the home in Brantford, Ont., where he and his family lived after coming from Scotland in 1870, now the **Bell Homestead National Historic Site**.



SPOT THE DIFFERENCES

How many changes can you see between these two photos?

We found at least eight!



Answers on p. 30.



HIDDEN PICTURES



How sharp-eyed are you? See if you can find each of these objects or images in the comic **Beyond War** that starts on p. 20.

SPOT THE DIFFERENCES P. 28



HIDDEN PICTURES P. 29



TEACHER'S CORNER

You can find classroom material in both French and English to go with this issue of *Kayak*. Just visit CanadasHistory.ca/disability or HistoireCanada.ca/incapacite.



KayakMag.ca

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Iconic Dreams

Inspired by the Hudson's Bay Point Blanket, the luxurious duvet cover set is a fresh way to bring the Canadian icon home.



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His story. Canada's history.

Basel Al Rashdan was ten years old when he and his family fled war-torn Syria for Canada. When he arrived in Charlottetown, he was greeted by cold weather – and a warm welcome.

Just four months later he took part in a provincial Heritage Fair, where he shared the story of his journey to Canada and made connections to his new home.

Basel is one of more than two million students who have benefitted from the Heritage Fairs program since its creation in 1993 by the Charles R. Bronfman Foundation. These young storytellers are curious and thoughtful, inspiring others to use the lessons of the past to forge a better path forward for all Canadians.

Explore their stories at:
CanadasHistory.ca/Youth

CANADA'S
HISTORY

| Stories behind
the history