



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Disabled need action now

Keenan Wellar
The Ottawa Citizen

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Re: Ottawa's disabled live in poverty: report, Feb. 3.

The findings of this report will come as no surprise to anyone in the disability community and shouldn't really be a surprise to anyone on city council.

The City of Ottawa has been aware of these problems for years, as a result of the work of the disability issues advisory committee and the current accessibility advisory committee as well as the advocacy and awareness efforts of countless community organizations.

Hopefully, this report signals the last opportunity for anyone in the community to be shocked and appalled to learn that there are substantial barriers preventing people with disabilities from enjoying a healthy and productive life as included citizens. As Councillor Alex Munter stated, this reality is abundantly clear, and it is time to move "from understanding to action."

In fact, there is already a great deal of determined action going on, since various agencies and family coalitions have been working together for years to try to address these problems. Most of these efforts run on people power with few resources.

While Mayor Bob Chiarelli's support for ongoing research is welcomed, I hope the work on the frontlines will not be forgotten. The priority for allocation of funds should be toward supporting effective initiatives already in place.

Keenan Wellar,
Ottawa

Co-founder and CEO
LiveWorkPlay for young people with developmental disabilities



CREDIT: Jean Levac,
The Ottawa Citizen

Keenan Wellar says the fact that Ottawa's disabled people live in poverty should come as no surprise. It's time to act, he says.