

Respite... YOU deserve it!

Accessible Nova Scotia Vacation Spots

May 29, 2009

Are you planning a summer vacation in Nova Scotia? Families traveling with a child/adult with special needs may have to do some extra planning. Some ideas for you to think about:

Where do I look for accommodations and activities?

There are accessible vacation spots in Nova Scotia. An excellent website to look at is the Canadian Paraplegic Association site: www.thespine.ca. At the left of the homepage, you will see Accessible Locations Database. Click on the link and you will see a page asking 1. what category you are choosing, and 2. what location (city or area) you want. If there are accessible choices in the database, they will be displayed. When you look at Accommodations, for example, there will be a description of the accessible services provided for that location.

Another good link on the site is the Recreation and Leisure choice. It lists different recreation choices available in Nova Scotia to persons with mobility challenges. You can find it on the homepage at the left, farther down the list. Be sure to explore the website carefully, there is lots of information which may be helpful to you.

The next website is www.access-able.com. It provides information on disabled travel and activities worldwide. Although most of the information is American, you can search Nova Scotia and find information on accommodations, things to do and see, accessible museums, amusement parks, etc. Enter the home page and click on World Destinations. Choose North America on the map, and then choose Nova Scotia on the drop down menu. You will see information on accommodations, transportation options and different attractions.

Check out Mersey River Chalets www.merseyriverchalets.ns.ca/index.html for a family stay. The accommodations and activities are designed to be fully accessible. The developers wanted to create a place with limited barriers. Mersey River offers a wheelchair swing, wide nature trails and a dock to allow access to swimming and boating.

Fun things to do in Nova Scotia

There are many things to do in Nova Scotia during the summer. Some of these are fully accessible, some have limited accessibility, and some are not accessible at all. If you are interested in exploring some of the attractions in Nova Scotia, it would be important to check and see if the site is accessible for your family. For example, to get in to Fortress Louisbourg everyone leaves their car in a parking lot and boards a special bus. The bus is handicap accessible, but may not meet the needs of your family. You can contact the office before you

arrive, and receive permission to drive your own vehicle to the site. The Fortress site itself has limited accessibility. Information can be found at www.pc.gc.ca/lhn-nhs/ns/louisbourg/visit/visit4_e.asp .

For information on:

- Provincial Parks, click on www.novascotiaparks.ca/misc/parks.asp
- Museums
www.virtualmuseum.ca/PM.cgi?mark=Museum&LM=MuseumFlash&AP=vmc_search&LANG=English&theme=2&scope=Museum&start=1&prov=Nova%20Scotia
- Upper Clements Amusement Park www.upperclementsarks.com/park-info.html
- Sailing (Halifax-Dartmouth) www.sailable.ca
- Hiking Trails www.novascotiatrials.com . Click on Find at Trail in Nova Scotia (left side of webpage) to find accessibility information on each trail.

Public Transportation

You have chosen a place to go, but wonder how you will get around. Check these websites; they will direct you to information about the different transportation options available in different Nova Scotia communities.

<http://www.accesstotravel.gc.ca/main-e.asp> . Click on Local Transportation, and then choose Nova Scotia. A list of different communities will come up. Click on the community you plan to visit and you will find contact information, as well as a brief description of the transportation offered.

In the Halifax Regional Municipality: Metro Transit has some routes equipped with Accessible Low Floor (ALF) buses. These buses have no steps, and the bus floor can be lowered to the curb level. The doors are extra wide and there are 2 wheelchair tie downs to secure the chair from movement during the bus ride. There are restrictions on the size of the wheelchairs, and not all chairs can be accommodated. For more information click on www.halifax.ca/metrotransit/accessible_services.html

Do you know of other accessible vacation places in Nova Scotia? Please let us know in a return email – we will be happy to share your information with the rest of the group!

Happy planning!

The topic of next week's Family Caregiver Weekly is: Vacation Spots that provide Respite

This article can also be found at: www.caregiversns.org

Previous issues of the Family Caregiver Weekly can be found at:
<http://www.caregiversns.org/RespitePartnership.php>

Comments? **Talk to us!**

See you next week!

The Nova Scotia Partnership on Respite, Family Health, and Well-Being is made up of:

Autism Society of Nova Scotia; Caregivers Nova Scotia Association; Central Region Respite Society; Halifax Association for Community Living; IWK Health Centre – Autism Research Centre; IWK Health Centre – Children’s Health Program; IWK Health Centre – Social Work; Northern Region Respite Services; Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women; Nova Scotia Association for Community Living; Nova Scotia Department of Community Services (Services for Persons with Disabilities); Nova Scotia Disabled Persons Commission; Progress Centre for Early Intervention; Society for the Treatment of Autism; Spina Bifida Association; and Yarmouth Association for Community Residential Options (YACRO).

The information contained in this Family Caregiver Weekly article is not intended to be formal legal or financial advice. It has been gathered from a variety of sources and is provided as an introduction to the topic. It is not complete and should not be used in the place of professional advice or consultation.

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