

May 2025, Issue 3

# The CASS Report

CALGARY ALTERNATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES NEWSLETTER

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## Welcome!

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Hey there, welcome to April's edition of The CASS Report! As we transition into spring, it's a perfect time to refresh our routines and focus on wellness—both in and out of the office.



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## CASS Client Advisory Council

**When:** Thursday, May 22

**Time:** 11:00am

**Where:** CASS Main Office

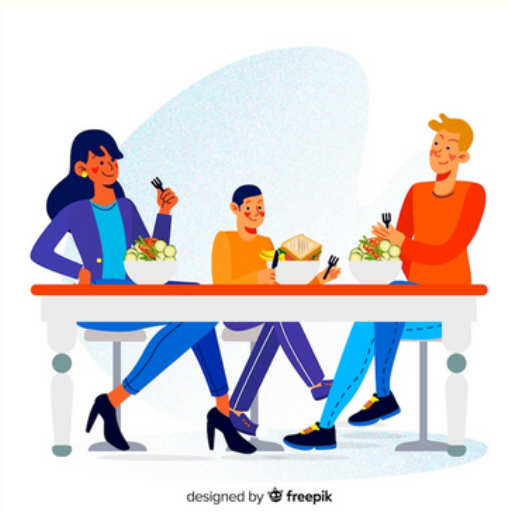
**Hosted by:** Melanie Gilbert-Chiu

Meet up with people!

Enjoy lunch together!

Talk about Relationships!

Questions? Call or email Melanie at [friendship@c-a-s-s.org](mailto:friendship@c-a-s-s.org) or (403) 283-0611 ext. 511. We can't wait to see you there!



## Crisis Prevention Institution (CPI)

### Nonviolent Crisis Intervention Training

**When:** May 12

**Time:**

**Where:** CASS Office

**Facilitated by:** Darvin & Shawna

## CPI Concept Review:

### Mitigating Risk

Once we objectively analyze the level of risk of a crisis or potential crisis, we can implement reasonable and proportionate strategies to mitigate the risk. These can be preventive approaches that reduce the likelihood of the behavior will happen. And if the behavior does happen, we plan reactive approaches to reduce the severity of harm.

JOIN US FOR OUR

# DISABILITY AWARENESS TRAINING

**MONDAY**  
**MAY 26, 2025**  
11:00 AM- 2:00 PM

JOIN US

IN THE  
KITCHEN!!

Hosted by CAES

In recognition and celebration  
of:

**NAAW**

National Accessibility Week

May 26-June 1, 2025

“Inclusive from the  
start”

Please  
wear a Red  
Shirt

Red Shirt Day  
May 28th



EXPERIENCE DIFFERENT DISABILITIES  
TO CREATE AWARENESS HOW WE  
SUPPORT CLIENTS.



CASS





# COMMUNITY DISABILITY SERVICES PROFESSIONAL APPRECIATION WEEK

Wednesday

May  
**21**

## ROTARY CHALLENGER PARK

11:00am – 2:00pm

*Transit and Walking Encouraged  
Dress for the weather (Outdoor Event)*



**LUNCH INCLUDED  
RSVP REQUIRED**



**BRING YOUR OWN LAWN CHAIR  
AND/OR PICNIC BLANKET**



**LIVE MUSIC, SPEECHES AND  
ENTERTAINMENT**



**LIMITED PARKING**

**SPONSORED BY**

**ADWA**  
ALBERTA DISABILITY WORKERS ASSOCIATION



COMMUNITY  
REHABILITATION  
SERVICE PROVIDER  
COUNCIL OF CALGARY

**Use the QR Code to  
RSVP attendance and  
lunch**

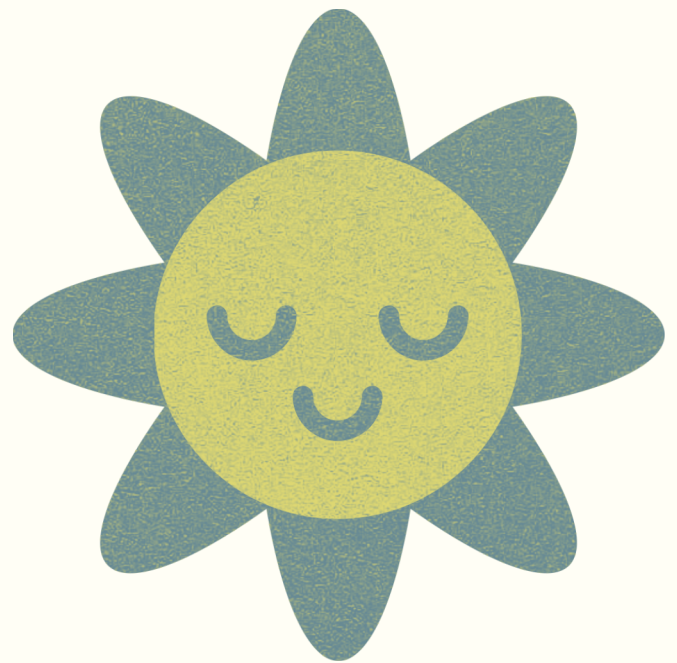


**Or find 'Community  
Disability Services  
Professional Day' on  
Eventbrite**

**Red Shirt Day**  
is a day to show solidarity with and in support for  
people with disabilities and their families.

**Red Shirt Day**  
May 28th, 2025





## CASS Dinner Club

**What:** CASS Dinner Club

**Where:** Toscana Italian Grill (8330 Macleod Trail, SE)

**When:** Wednesday, May 7

**RSVP:** Tuesday, May 6

The CASS Dinner Club has been one of the most successful programs to date. On the first Wednesday of every month a group of clients go out for dinner at a different restaurant.

Please note that reservations are a must. The restaurant will not accommodate larger numbers than are reserved for.

RSVP to the dinner club at [dinner-club@c-a-s-s.org](mailto:dinner-club@c-a-s-s.org) or call 403-283-0611



## Wellness Corner

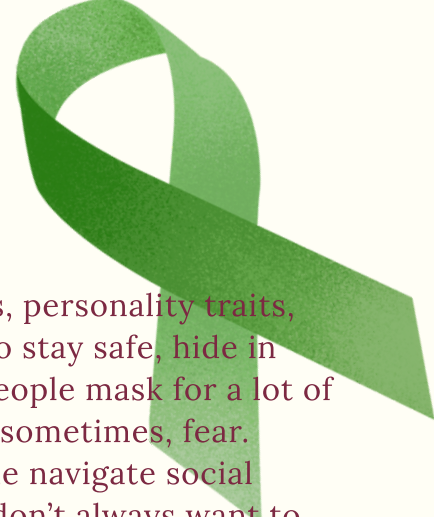
As the days get longer and the weather warms up, it's the perfect time to refresh your wellness routine. Here are three simple ways to boost your well-being during the workday this April:

1. **Embrace Nature** – Step outside, even for just a few minutes. Fresh air and sunlight can improve your mood and energy levels. Take a quick walk around the block or enjoy your coffee outside.
2. **Practice Gratitude** – Take a moment each day to jot down one thing you're grateful for. This simple practice can help shift your mindset and reduce stress.
3. **Stay Hydrated** – It's easy to forget, but drinking enough water is key to mental clarity and energy. Keep a water bottle at your desk and aim to refill it throughout the day.

**Pro Tip:** Remember, while embracing nature is great, so is telling your emails to take a hike for a bit. Prioritize your peace!



# Health & Safety



## WHAT IS MASKING?

Masking is hiding or suppressing something about ourselves — emotions, personality traits, behaviours, or symptoms — from others. It's a coping mechanism used to stay safe, hide in plain sight or “fit in,” and we may even do it without being aware of it. People mask for a lot of different reasons, including social acceptance, economic necessity and, sometimes, fear. Masking can be a helpful tool in our day-to-day lives — it can help people navigate social situations, feel safe, and maintain personal boundaries and privacy. We don't always want to share everything about ourselves with every person we interact with, and masking lets us decide who gets to see which parts of us. Unfortunately, people with mental illnesses and addictions often feel the need to mask to keep a job, find housing, or simply be accepted. When asked how we're doing, many of us respond with the socially acceptable “I'm fine” or “I'm good” even though we might be having a bad day or struggling with something bigger. People with mental health or addiction struggles often wear that “I'm fine” mask every day and, over time, constant masking — whatever the reason — can lead to other or worsened mental and physical health concerns.

Other examples of masking include:

- Hiding one's gender identity or sexual orientation to stay safe, physically and psychologically.
- Hiding an invisible disability, including a mental illness, so as not to be seen as “weak” or different.
- Hiding natural characteristics of neurodivergence (atypical brain function including autism, ADHD, dyslexia) to fit in with what's deemed normal.<sup>1,2</sup>
- Hiding a substance use problem or using substances to cope with stress or symptoms of mental illness and distress.
- Presenting an idealized image of one's life on social media.

Professionalism and politeness aren't the same as masking. Managing your reputation by behaving professionally in the workplace, or politely in public, is not the same as masking. Being kind and courteous, even when we're struggling, is practicing compassion. Masking is more about hiding things about ourselves so that others accept us and requires constant effort. It's the difference between showing up as your best self at a job interview (managing your reputation in a specific situation) and constantly maintaining that idealized self so others will accept you.

## There's more to me

There is no normal. We all exist within a diverse range for all sorts of aspects of who we are, what we look like, and how we feel. While some behaviours may be more common, that doesn't make those behaviours normal.<sup>1</sup> What's considered normal is based on the popular beliefs in a society at any given time. Normal is a social construct, and what's considered normal changes over time, and there really is no “normal” way to feel, behave, and act. There's more to any one person than meets the eye and we should all be free to be seen, heard, and to express ourselves without fear. Addressing stigma and discrimination and practicing compassion can help us create a society where people feel safe to share and be who they are. Let's unmask mental health together

## Fun Facts About May

- May is **National Mental Health Awareness Month**.
- The name "May" comes from Maia, the Roman goddess of fertility and spring.
- Victoria Day celebrates Queen Victoria's birthday which was May 24, 1819. It also marks the unofficial start of summer.



## Important Dates:

**Cinco de Mayo** - Monday, May 1

**Mothers Day** - Sunday, May 11

**Victoria Day** - Monday, May 19

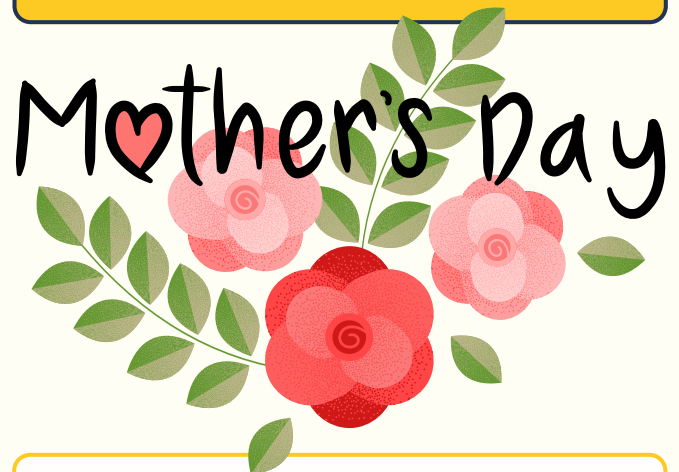
**Disability Services Professional Appreciation**- Wednesday, May 21

**Accessibility Awareness Training**- Monday, May 26

**Red Shirt Day**- Wednesday, May 28

**NAAW National Accessibility Awareness Week** - Monday, May 26- Sunday, May 31

**ACDS Impact Conference** - Wednesday, May 28 & Thursday, May 29



## Newsletter Contributions

Share your stories, updates, and ideas with us by sending your contributions to the email above. Your content could be featured in our next newsletter issue! Don't miss the chance to be part of our community's conversation.

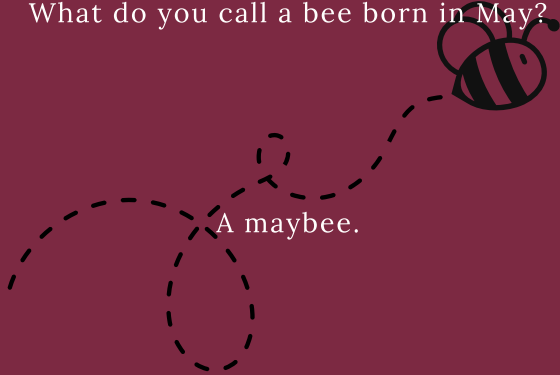
Please send your contribution ideas to [newsletter@c-a-s-s.org](mailto:newsletter@c-a-s-s.org).





## Joke of the Month

What do you call a bee born in May?



A maybee.

## Happy Birthday!!

*If you'd like a birthday shout out- email me!*

Birthdays are a time to reflect, celebrate, and feel special, and we love celebrating them with our CASS community! Whether it's a milestone or just another year of awesome, we're all about recognizing the wonderful people who make CASS what it is. If you've got a birthday coming up, let us know! We'd love to help you celebrate and make your day extra special. Here's to another year of growth, laughter, and good times ahead!



## Flower Power



ASTER	HONEYSUCKLE	ORCHID
CROCUS	LAVENDER	PANSY
DAFFODIL	LILAC	SUNFLOWER
DAISY	LILY	TULIP
GERANIUM	MARIGOLD	VIOLET

