A Library for the Future

CNIB Library Year in Review
2011-2012

cnib
seeing beyond vision loss

inca
voir au-delà de la perte
de vision
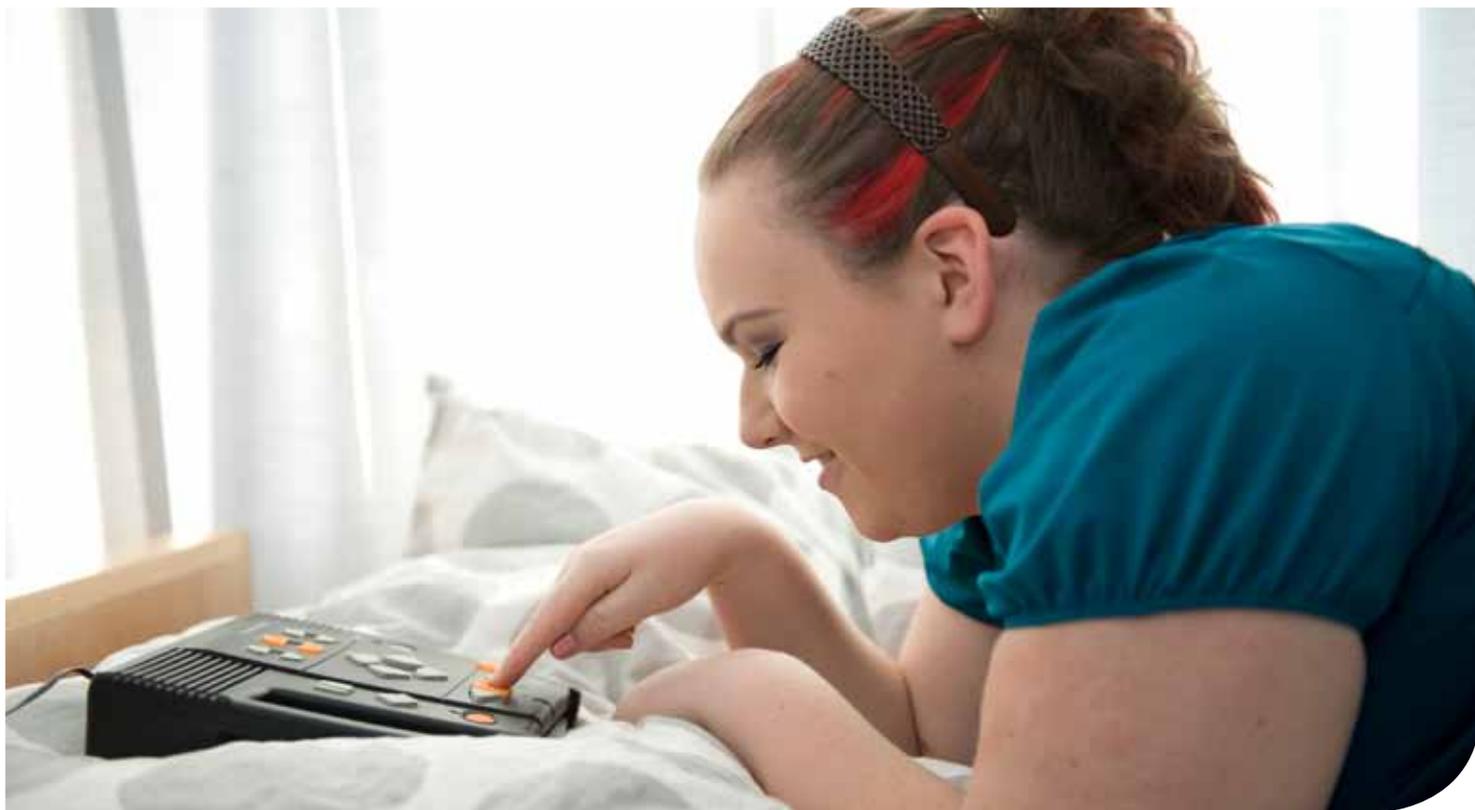
A Cutting-Edge Library for Canadians who are Print-Disabled

Tech guru Steve Jobs once said, "Innovation distinguishes between a leader and a follower." This, and more are what the past year has been all about at our world-class CNIB Library.

With the generous support of the Government of Canada, we have delivered on an ambitious plan to transform nearly every aspect of our library into a modern, state-of-the-art institution perfectly positioned to become the keystone or "hub" of a nationwide accessible library service for Canadians with print disabilities. In the pages that follow, you can read more about the amazing progress we're making – from the revitalization of our core library systems, to the completion of a multi-year effort to convert our analogue collection into digital formats, to a 30 per cent increase in new client registrations and so much more.

Staff, volunteers, partners and the support from the Government of Canada have been critical to our progress. Our provincial government partners in Ontario, Alberta, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island continue to set the standard, expanding access to accessible resources for citizens with print disabilities through the growing CNIB Library Partners Program. Finally, stakeholders across Canada's library community have contributed to our

evolution, and we look forward to their continued input in the year ahead.

With more than three million Canadians living with a print disability, there has never been a greater imperative to break down barriers and provide community-based access to accessible formats. There will be much work to do to create an equitable, accessible library network – and thanks to our recent innovations, the CNIB Library will be at the heart of the solution to this critical issue.

To all who have played a part in our success this year, again, thank you. Your support has enabled us to deliver on a bold agenda, and begin to create a library for the future for all Canadians with print disabilities.

Betty Nobel
Chair, CNIB Library Board

Margaret McGrory
Vice President,
Executive Director, CNIB Library

Fostering Equitable Access

At the CNIB Library, we passionately believe that the **3.4 million Canadians with print disabilities** deserve equitable access, like any citizen, to publicly funded libraries and published materials in formats they can read – including audio, braille and electronic text.

Our one-of-a-kind library is available to all Canadians who are blind or partially sighted, as well as to people with other print disabilities through the innovative CNIB Library Partners Program, which offers local library access to our collection in **Alberta**, **Ontario**, **New Brunswick** and **PEI**.

Print disabilities as defined in the Copyright Act include:

- **Seeing** – blindness or partial sight
- **Agility/mobility** – the inability to hold or manipulate a book
- **Learning** – impairments related to comprehension

- **10 per cent** of Canada's population has a print disability.

- **7 per cent** of internationally published material is available in formats for people with print disabilities.

Leading the Way

As a global leader among alternative-format libraries, the CNIB Library offers the largest public library-type accessible collection in Canada, providing comprehensive services and equitable access to information for Canadians with print disabilities.

Our collection includes:

- **80,000 books** (braille, e-braille, printbraille, e-text, DAISY, online audio)

- Popular audio magazines including '**Maclean's**', '**Chatelaine**', '**Canadian Business**', '**Reader's Digest**', and '**Le Bel Âge**'

- Research tools such as the **Encyclopedia Britannica Online** and the **Oxford English Dictionary**

- More than 50 community, national and international newspapers

The CNIB Library is unique in offering multiple formats, but our service also adheres to standard library practices in other ways:

Collections

English and French reading materials (books, magazines, licensed online content, newspapers and DVDs), ensure the collection offers variety and depth and reflects users' reading interests in their format of choice.

Access

Bilingual digital library where users can choose materials to read online, download or have mailed to their homes.

Reader Services

Bilingual helpline, handling toll-free phone inquiries and email inquiries: 1-800-268-8818 and reader.services@cnib.ca.

How We're Different

This year, the CNIB Library circulated 2.6 million books, magazines and newspapers to people with print disabilities across Canada, in a range of formats including:

🔊 Audio

Records more than 600 new digital audiobooks and several magazines every year.

📖 Braille

Creates more than 300 braille books every year though braille translation software. Staff and volunteers trained in braille resolve complex formatting issues, prepare books for circulation, and post for online reading.

🖱 Electronic

Creates encoded text files that will later be "read" by adaptive technology, transformed into braille, enlarged on a computer screen, and rendered in DAISY* format.

We also manage the distribution and return of audio books and magazines on CD, braille books and described videos.
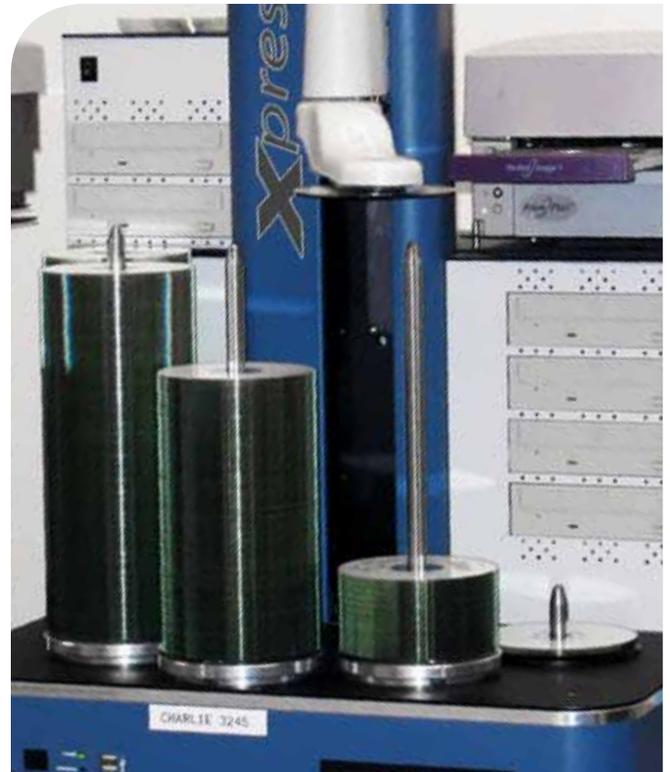
*DAISY (Digital Accessible Information System) is an internationally recognized book format intended for people with print disabilities. It allows users to listen to and navigate within a text in a way that is far superior to traditional audio books.

Service Highlights

The CNIB Library exceeded service targets and increased the number of clients reached, with the mandate to improve access to information for more Canadians with print disabilities:

- **2.6 million items** borrowed by library clients, both by mail and online - an **18 per cent** increase over last year.

- **4,500 new clients** were registered for library service — a **30 per cent** increase since 2010.

> "**I have been legally blind since 2007. I can't tell you how much I appreciate this service and the very kind people who work there.**"
> — CNIB client

In the last year, our Reader Services team responded to:

- More than **49,000 service requests**, a 15 per cent increase, including more than 31,000 phone requests and 10,500 emails.

- Ahead of the June 2011 postal disruption, the number of CDs burned nightly increased four-fold from **3,000 to 12,000** as Reader Services encouraged clients to order additional books before mail service ceased.

CNIB Library Partners Program

The CNIB Library Partners Program offers **all public library patrons with print disabilities** access to CNIB's entire collection through their local library:

- Books, magazines, newspapers, online services

- Materials in audio (including DAISY), braille, described video and other formats

- Bilingual collection, Canadian content, new titles and backlist favourites

- Material for all ages and interests

Since its inception in 2010, the new Partners Program has **grown exponentially** to include even more public library systems serving patrons with print disabilities.

- **500 public library systems** in Alberta, Ontario, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island provide access to CNIB Library collections and services.

- **700 frontline staff** at Partner Libraries across Canada received specialized training in order to better serve patrons with print disabilities.

- **223 libraries** hold deposit collections, receiving more than **36,000 DAISY books** increased annually.

The program is supported by:

- Flexible service options (long-term deposit collections, inter-library loan, free home delivery)

- Online, teleconference and in-person training for library staff

- Bilingual telephone and email support for library staff and patrons

- Marketing material such as bookmarks and posters to support local library outreach programs

For more information:

Web:
cnib.ca/librarypartners

Email:
PartnersProgram@cnib.ca

Phone:
1-800-563-2642, ext. 7055

Alberta   Ontario

New Brunswick / Nouveau Brunswick
Be...in this place · Être...ici on le peut

Prince Edward Island
CANADA

Systems and Infrastructure Highlights
All systems go!

With funding from the Government of Canada, the CNIB Library fully replaced its 15-year-old library system and its production and storage systems with modern, cutting-edge technology that will form the foundation for the national digital hub:

- CNIB launched a **new library user interface** at cniblibrary.ca, giving users direct access to the library's digital collection. Developed in consultation with Canadians who are print-disabled, the interface offers a range of service enhancements and value-added features such as the ability to download DAISY books, to manage loans and holds, browse by category and create reading lists.

- A **state-of-the-art production tracking system** was introduced to facilitate the creation of alternative-format materials by managing production workflows, tracking resources, scheduling volunteers and simplifying the management of metadata.

- **Recording studios** in Toronto and Montreal were upgraded with new computers, microphones, soundcards, wiring and network linkages.

- A new **CD duplication system** was added to meet increased circulation of books and magazines.

- A robust new data storage and archive system now provides **202 terabytes of disc storage**, with new safeguards against performance lags due to drive failure, and scalability to accommodate future growth.

- A pilot project was initiated to test **online delivery of books** to new internet-enabled DAISY players in the homes of library clients across the country without computers – an innovation that could significantly reduce the need for physical distribution.

"**Just a little word to say how much I appreciate your new interface. I find everything is clear and it's easy to search for a book. Great work and much appreciated!**"

— CNIB client

Production and Technical Services Highlights

The CNIB Library collection grew significantly through improvements to technology and the successful completion of CNIB's analogue-to-digital conversion project:

- A total of **13,000 records** were added to the catalogue, including:

  - ☐ **597 new audio books** produced in CNIB's recording studios

  - ☐ More than **150 issues** of monthly magazines

  - ☐ **319 braille books** and music scores

  - ☐ More than **2,200 digital titles** from commercial publishers and international sources.

  - ☐ **8,000 audiobooks converted** to digital formats, completing a multi-year initiative and making a wide range of classic titles and perennial favourites available to library users for the first time since 2007.

- Renowned vocal coach, Elaine Overholt, ran a seminar filled with fun and effective exercises to help volunteer readers improve their vocal stamina and resonance.
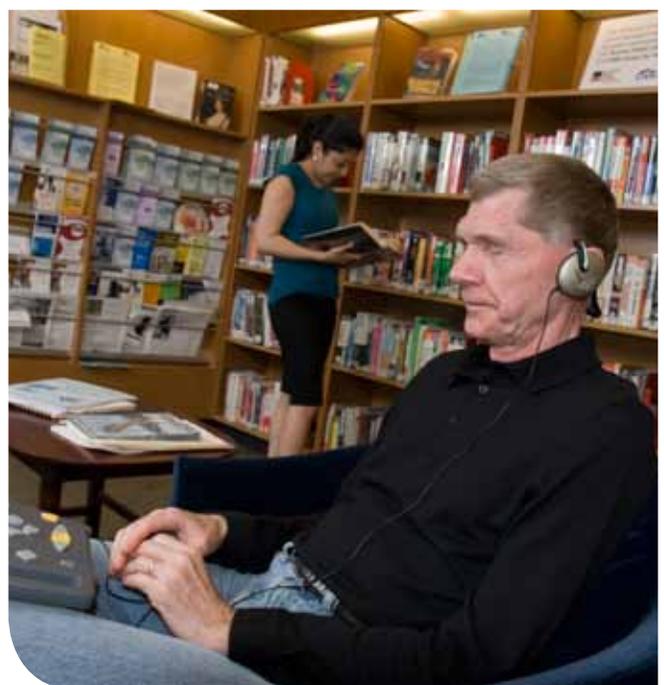
Program Highlights

This year, CNIB Library programs drew wide interest from children and youth with vision loss from across Canada. We once again took part in the **TD Summer Reading Club** thanks to the generous funding of TD Bank Group. This year's program – called "Splash!" – made waves, allowing young participants the opportunity to nurture their love of reading alongside their sighted peers.

- Increased **TD Summer Reading Club** registration by **16 per cent** this year, meaning more children and youth with vision loss took part than ever before.

- Engaged children and youth in **914 program-related activities**, including writing book reports and stories and taking part in chat sessions.

- Inspired 50 young writers to develop their braille literacy and writing skills in the annual **Braille Creative Writing Contest**.

- Empowered children with sight loss to participate in the Ontario Library Association's **Forest of Reading Program** by creating reading materials in braille or audio.

"The library gives me the opportunity to read what my classmates are reading. I feel more included and not different from anyone else. It helps other students accept who I am and makes the concept of having a blind classmate less scary."

— CNIB client

Looking Ahead

2010-11 saw the Government of Canada invest more than $7 million in the CNIB Library. That investment enabled the library not only to revitalize its systems but also to take its place at the centre of an exciting new plan to extend library access to all Canadians living with print disabilities.

Reading, Re-imagined

In the past year, as part of the federal government funding agreement, CNIB built on an extensive consultative process to create a long-term conceptual model and business plan for a nationwide network of accessible library services for people with print disabilities, provided through public libraries.

The specialized resources and infrastructure of the CNIB Library will be transitioned to form the 'hub' of the network over a five-year period. 2012-13 will be the first year of this exciting transition, during which we propose to create a separate division within CNIB with services and operations aligned with the hub business plan.

Getting to the Source

At the CNIB Library, we have witnessed firsthand the development of the universal digital publishing format EPUB 3 and recognize its potential for "inclusive publishing". We are working closely with the publishing community to encourage the universal adoption of this standard.

Our recent work with HarperCollins Canada brought current, in-demand audio books to CNIB readers, showing how accessibility is becoming top-of-mind for mainstream publishers.

Beyond Borders

CNIB will also continue to play a leadership role in the Trusted Intermediaries Global Accessible Resources (TIGAR) initiative of the World Intellectual Property Organization. Working with participating publishers, this exciting project is putting in place the technologies and business processes to ease the cross-border transfer of copyrighted works in accessible formats between trusted institutions and libraries. The elimination of regulatory barriers will enable the CNIB Library to import a wealth of international reading materials to its collection, and expand multilingual content.

For more information on the
CNIB Library:

1-800-268-8818

cniblibrary.ca