

**For Immediate Release  
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**The Power of Partnership**

Recreation and leisure pursuits are an important component of health and well being, and yet these are often the most difficult opportunities to access for people with disabilities. Barriers include physical design, affordability, a lack of belonging or entitlement and attitudinal barriers. We know that a concerted effort to improve access and inclusion will trigger transformational change.

Easter Seals is delighted to have played a role in building an exciting, some have called it historic, partnership with the disability community and the movie theatre industry. Together we have built a partnership that works to provide access to entertainment and recreational opportunities for people with disabilities. We launched the Access 2 Entertainment card – a totally unique card for persons with disabilities who require attendant care to become active participants in one of the few recreational opportunities available to them. The card provides free admission (or a significant discount) for support persons accompanying a person with a disability to movie theatres.

**Access 2 Entertainment Cards**

The card is currently accepted by 95% of theatres across Canada and almost 20,000 persons have signed up in the first year!

The collaboration between disability service groups, the disability community and the corporate sector has produced such incredible results that we are now committed to taking the success realized thus far – and extending it to other leisure and entertainment sectors.

Over the next couple of years, with the support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation, we will be expanding the benefits of the card to include access to a wider variety of entertainment, recreational and cultural venues.

We are pleased to have been able to offer the first 20,000 cards free in the first year. From September 1, 2006 onwards there will be a \$20 fee to acquire the Access 2 Entertainment Card. The card will be valid for 5 years and will include 2 free movie passes valued at approximately \$20.00.

**Disability Partnership**

The disability organizations who developed and continue to promote the card include: Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians, Canadian Abilities Foundation, Canadian Association of the Deaf, Canadian Association of Independent Living Centres, Canadian Hard of Hearing Association, Canadian Paraplegic Association, Easter Seals Canada, Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada and People First of Canada.

Diversity WorX and the Multi-Ethnic Association for the Integration of Persons with Disabilities have joined the core group to promote the ongoing development and expansion of this program.

Easter Seals administers the applications and delivery of the card.

**Corporate Partners**

Cineplex Entertainment and the Motion Picture Theatre Association - our key business partners' honour the card at their venues and contribute financial and in-kind services to support the management and promotion of the card. They are also key stakeholders in attracting other business/industry partners.

**What People Are Saying**

“Our many thanks to those who made the Access 2 Entertainment card available for our family member, Ryan.

He So enjoys the movie theatres. His social life and general knowledge have both increased, due to his attendance made possible by this service of yours.

Your cost-saving venture for those who are eligible removes a financial barrier, which so many people with disabilities face too often.

Thank you for your humanity.”

From Ryan’s Family, Ontario

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