Carolyn MacDiarmid has been with the CCRW since 1997 and is currently the Youth Initiatives Coordinator. As an author with a visual disability, Carolyn believes in focusing on people's abilities. “People write books — disabilities do not. Therefore, it's important to focus on people's abilities.”

James Tuer is a student of Illustration at the Ontario College of Art & Design in Toronto and has been working with Adobe Photoshop since 1997. He has designed advertisements, logos, film props, t-shirts, and even skateboards! CCRW is pleased and honoured to announce that Teen Wendy Blair: No Time to Spare is the first storybook James has illustrated…and he’s only just begun!
About This Book...

This book is a project of the Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work, a national, non-profit organization that promotes and supports the meaningful and equitable employment of persons with disabilities.

Teen Wendy Blair: No Time to Spare is the third in a series of five storybooks developed for youth education regarding disability issues. Wendy Blair, the main character, is now a teenager who faces new challenges as she enters the world of work. As a wheelchair user, she is faced with the challenge of getting to work on time when the wheelchair bus breaks down, and the service is already limited. Happily, she and her boss are “driven” to find a solution together.

In the first two storybooks, I’m Wendy Blair, Not a Chair! and Wendy Blair and the Assignment, Wendy, as a young girl, clearly demonstrates to others that she is a person first and that her abilities take precedence over her disability. As Wendy grows, she continues to uphold the same positive message and convey to others that “Wendy Blair” means “capability, promise, and potential”.

Wendy Blair storybooks have achieved both national and international acclaim. Wendy Blair realistically represents persons with disabilities around the world who brim with skills and talents and require opportunities to share their abilities. While the storybooks are a welcome addition to children’s venues, employers have also included them in workplace disability awareness training. The range of topics addressed in the storybooks provides food for thought, and the content is written in a lively, rhyming fashion to delight readers.

Carolyn MacDiarmid
The Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work
Teen Wendy Blair
No Time to Spare

This project is funded by Great-West Life, London Life and Canada Life through their shared national program for corporate citizenship.
Wendy Blair received a perk —
“I got the job as office clerk!”

She spun her wheelchair very fast,
“I have a summer job at last!”
Nippy Chips is where she’d be,
A well-respected company.
Soon began a working day,
But setbacks got in Wendy’s way.

The wheelchair bus was not in service —
This made Wendy very nervous.
“Okay,” she thought, “I will not fuss. I’ll simply take the public bus.”
She waited at a crowded stop
In front of Wanda’s Coffee Shop.
The bus arrived, but it was tight  
With passengers from left to right.  

The crowd got on. It wasn’t fair —  
There wasn’t room for Wendy’s chair!  

“I’ve waited longest,” Wendy sighed.  
“The first in line should get a ride.”
Soon there came another bus.
Thought Wendy, “Please take all of us.”
With a ramp to bridge the climb,
She boarded in a moment’s time.
As Wendy got her seatbelts on,  
She heard a restless person yawn.
Then suddenly a small mishap
Caused juice to spill on Wendy’s lap.
To her boss she placed a call,  
“My challenges have not been small.”
Wendy finally got to work —
A dampened summer office clerk.

“An hour late — I want to hide!
I’m so afraid to go inside!”

Wendy felt completely stressed.
“I’ll just go in and do my best!”
Said Wendy’s boss, Ms. Redcanoe, “Hello, and welcome to the crew!”
Wendy noticed, “Just like me, 
She has a disability.”

Ms. Redcanoe had vision loss, 
But she had skills and was the boss.

One item that she did require: 
A highly powered magnifier.

With magnifier in her fist, 
She read out Wendy’s duty list.
The crew showed Wendy right away
Where she’d perform her tasks each day.
Wendy worked so carefully;  
Her documents were error-free.  
All her jobs were neatly done  
As she went through them one-by-one.
Shortly after 4 o'clock
Her boss said, “Wendy, come, let’s talk.”
The first concern that was discussed was Wendy’s challenge getting bussed.

“My parents work at 8 a.m.,
So I cannot drive in with them.
For those of us with wheelchairs
The bus we use is in repairs.
The public bus I do not mind,
But when it’s packed, I’m left behind.”
Wendy paused to heave a sigh.
“So I was late, and that is why.”
The boss sat back and raised a brow
For she was thinking hard right now.

“I understand your situation —
Let’s find other transportation.
I think I know what we could do —
An office worker lives near you.
I’ll chat with her, and she might say
That you can drive with her each day.”
Then gladly Wendy raised her cup, “And mum and dad can pick me up.”
The plan seemed like a magic spell —
When put in place, it worked out well.

Wendy drove with Mrs. Phipps,
An office clerk from Nippy Chips.
And every evening — “Here they come!”
She drove home with her dad and mum.
The boss expressed a compliment, "Your work, Wendy, is excellent! I focus on ability — That’s why you’re with this company. I’m glad you’re here — I’m very thrilled For I can see you’re highly skilled. And now that you can get to work, You’ll be our summer office clerk.”
Then suddenly Ms. Redcanoe
Leaned forward to improve her view,
“Wendy, you have orange lips —
Have you been eating Nippy Chips?”
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Teen Wendy Blair
No Time to Spare

Story: Carolyn MacDiarmid
Art: James Tuer

A Project of
The Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work