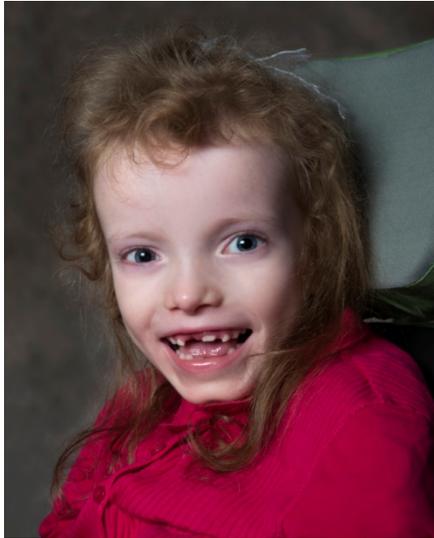




EMPOWERING *people with disabilities*



Portia Dugan

2014 Northern Alberta Youth Ambassador

Portia is a 7-year old and currently attends Evansdale Elementary School. She lives with her parents Isabel and Michael in Edmonton.

Portia is a happy and energetic young girl. At 10 days old, she had a bilateral hemorrhage which led to a stroke. As a result of the stroke, Portia has Cerebral Palsy and sometimes experiences epileptic seizures, and she is not able to move about independently and is non-verbal.

With Portia growing every day, it became increasingly difficult to transport her between the garage and the house. As a result, the family contacted Easter Seals Alberta for assistance. The family had the yard removed and replaced it with a cement pad. Thanks to Easter Seals Alberta, they were able to install a wheelchair lift and landing. The family now has the ability to move Portia safely between the house and the garage.

Portia enjoys art, swimming, and Rebound Therapy. She also has a love for books and is currently a "Brownie" with the Girl Guides of Canada. In the summer, she rides her modified bike which gives her much joy. Her parent's hope is that one day Portia will be able to move about independently and be able to effectively communicate on her own.

In the future, they want to purchase a modified van, as transportation is becoming a challenge as Portia and her wheelchair become bigger and heavier. Modifications to the home still need to be done, especially the bathroom. Due to Portia's developmental and physical challenges, she requires attention 24 hours a day, so the family has a need for more respite care workers, which will greatly assist their day-to-day lives.

Portia's mother, Isabel, would like to leave us with this final thought: *"Those who underestimate a person by what they only see, lose out on discovering the potential of greatness."*