

Educate. Connect. Empower.

Issue 106
February 2019

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We have lots going on this month! From events, to workshops and training opportunities make sure you check out the "What's Happening at WRFN" section.

We also have a fantastic article by Cristina, our Self-Advocacy Liaison. Cristina shares some of her insights on grieving a diagnosis through different life stages. If you'd like to discuss this, or other topics, with Cristina please feel free to reach out to her through the Ask A Self-Advocate [online booking form](#).

Have a wonderful month!



Support WRFN Today

Waterloo Region Family Network
www.wrfn.info
info@wrfn.info

SEAC Updates

Waterloo Region District School Board - Special Education Advisory Update

Submitted by Carmen Sutherland , WRFN Representative

SEAC elections were held. Janine Oosterveld is SEAC's chairperson again and Jennifer Checkley is the Vice Chairperson.

Tawyna Callaghan, the program leader for the Work and Transition Support Program (WATS), which is the co-op program for Alternative Continuum of Education (ACE) students, came to share about it with the group. She talked about how there is a progression of how the students do placements, beginning with classroom jobs, then jobs in the classroom from other sources outside the classroom, then jobs at other places in the school with small groups, then students working independently within the school, then students working in groups with staff in a community setting, then working independently in a community setting. The program has been running for 30 years, and has been very successful.

There was discussion of a kindergarten emotional regulation initiative, wherein schools fill out a pre survey that details specific skills that their students need to know, learn strategies to assist students where they need to improvement, and then fill out a post survey to indicate whether the strategies worked. This has been very successful with the schools that have implemented it so far.

The next SEAC meeting is Wednesday, February 13, 2019 at 7p.m. at the Education Centre, 51 Ardel Avenue, Kitchener N2C 2R5.

Waterloo Catholic District School Board - Special Education Advisory Update

Submitted by Sue Simpson, WRFN SEAC Representative

School System Operational Business

At the January 9, 2019 meeting SEAC received a presentation on Safe Schools from Judy Merkel, Superintendent of Learning: St. David Family of Schools, Leadership Strategy, Safe Schools and 21st Century Learning. There are four key components at the foundation of Ontario's well-being strategy:

- Positive Mental Health
- Safe & Accepting Schools
- Equity & Inclusive Education
- Healthy Schools

Well-being is that positive sense of self, spirit and belonging that we feel when our cognitive, emotional, social and physical needs are being met. To this end, many strong initiatives that support these pillars in relation to Safe and Caring Schools in WCDSB have been implemented.

Mental Health and Wellness

The promotion of a positive and safe school climate is frequently cited as being effective at preventing student suspension and expulsion. The WCDSB has taken a well-rounded approach to improving school/board culture. In addition to our distinct Mental Health Strategies school boards are required to conduct school climate surveys of students, school staff and parents at least once every two years as they all play a key role in contributing to a positive school climate.

Safe and Accepting Schools

Positive behaviour is promoted through the Catholic Values lens as students are provided many opportunities to correct behaviours, seek reconciliation and be given opportunities to redeem themselves. The measureable goal for Safe Schools at WCDSB is the reduction in the number of suspensions and expulsions issued to students through effective utilization of restorative justice, progressive discipline and careful consideration of mitigating and other factors. Safe School Teams in each school collaborate to develop a Safe School Plan.

SEAC Updates Cont'd

Equity and Inclusive Education

Under the guiding principle of “Reaching Every Student,” secondary schools in Ontario use many strategies, interventions and innovative alternate programs to support, assist and meet unique learning needs of students. There is a small but distinct group of students whose needs are not met by traditional in-school programs and interventions. These 14 – 17-year-old students are offered the Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL) program as an option.

Healthy Schools

The WCDSB is committed to using the Healthy Schools Framework to assess ongoing needs and areas for growth in each of our schools.

Current Initiatives and Next Steps

- Bullying Prevention & Intervention Policy is moving to align our prevention philosophy with a board-wide focus on teaching well-being as a skill.
- Restorative Training Practices and Conflict Mediation will be re-engaged for full implementation in all schools.
- Alternative to Suspension Program is a pilot program in collaboration with the Cambridge YMCA. It focuses on supporting students on short-term suspensions.
- Alternatives to support long-term suspensions and expulsions are also being investigated for the 2019/2020 school year.

Ministry Update

There were no ministry updates at this time.

Trustee Update

Trustee Jeanne Gravelle presented updates on the following items from the Board of Trustees December meeting:

- Bill Conway is the new Chair; Melanie Van Alphen is the new Vice Chair
- Director of Education’s Annual Report
- New Multi-Year Strategic Plan
- Equity Action Plan

The next SEAC meeting will be on Wednesday, 9, 201, at 6pm at 35 Weber St. W, Kitchener. All meetings will now begin at 6 pm.

SAVE THE DATE

04.26.2019

IN SUPPORT OF WATERLOO REGION FAMILY NETWORK

EVENING OF ELEGANCE

Join us as we journey back to our roots at WRFN's 5th annual signature fundraising event in The Great Hall - Luther Village on the Park.

Enjoy an elegant evening of mixing and mingling while tasting delicious wine, beer and cider - all paired with appetizing food selections.

All proceeds go directly to supporting exceptional families in our community, so they can thrive.

Early bird tickets coming soon!



What's Happening at WRFN



SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES IN WATERLOO REGION

Monday, February 11, 2019

7:00 - 8:30 PM

Room 2015 at The Family Centre - 65 Hanson Ave. Kitchener

Register: <https://bit.ly/2E4mJY9>

In this session you will have the opportunity to:

~ Hear highlights from the Provincial Ministry of Education Learning Disabilities Pilot Project 3-year initiative with a focus on:

- Literacy development
- Parent engagement
- Social/emotional skill development
- Use of assistive technology as an accommodation

~ Try activities that highlight supports in both school boards:

- Empower
- Lexia
- LD simulation
- Social Emotional Supports
- Assistive technology (Google R&W, calendar)

Presenters: Antonietta Leonardo WCDSB Special Education Liaison & Barbara Williams WRDSB Special Education Liaison Consultant

Supported by:



Jenkins Sauer Fund



What's Happening at WRFN

JOIN US ON MONDAY FEBRUARY 11TH

2019 SUMMER CAMP & RECREATION FAIR

Showcasing Programs and Services for Children, Youth and Adults with Special Needs.



The Summer Camps, Recreation Fair is a great place to learn about the variety of options available for your family in Waterloo Region. Connect with camp and recreation providers to ask and find out which programs are the right fit for your family. This is a drop-in session, no registration necessary.

WHEN Monday February 11th, 2019 @ 6:00-8:00 pm

WHERE The Gym at The Family Centre- 65 Hanson Ave, Kitchener

For more information, please contact Krista McCann, WRFN
krista.mccann@wrfn.info or 519-886-9150 ext.2

Registration not required.

Event is completely FREE and open to all families!

Offered in partnership with:



What's Happening at WRFN...

FASD - SUPPORTING CAREGIVERS - SUCCESS FOR ALL

with Dan Dubovsky

Caregivers of individuals with FASD have multiple areas of need and concern, and experience high levels of stress. This training will help service providers and peer facilitators better understand how to support caregivers resulting in more success for all.

Identify loss issues that those with FASD, caregivers, and providers may experience

Describe ways to validate the perspectives of caregivers

Examine the importance of building social supports for caregivers

Discuss the notion introducing the concept of self-care

Thursday, February 21

8:30-4pm

Room 2015,

The Family Centre

65 Hanson Ave.

Kitchener

Cost: \$50

Dan has worked for over 40 years in the field of behavioral health, in residential, outpatient, and hospital settings. Dan has been involved in the field of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD) for over 25 years, 14 of them as the FASD Specialist for the SAMHSA FASD Center for Excellence. For this work, his son Bill has been his mentor and best teacher.

Register at <https://bit.ly/2T1Jsrb>

If you have questions please contact Krista McCann

Krista.McCann@wrfn.info or 519-886-9150x2



FASD | WATERLOO REGION



What's Happening at WRFN...

NOURISHING THE CAREGIVER LIVING WITH FASD - THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF CARE with Dan Dubovsky

Raising children with FASD can be challenging and overwhelming. As a caregiver, it's not uncommon to constantly put the needs of your child before your own. This training for caregivers focuses on the importance of self-care and supports.

Discuss the importance of incorporating self-care into your life when caring for someone with FASD

Learn more about the importance of formal and informal supports with a focus on peer support

Wednesday,
February 20
6:00 - 8:30pm
Room 2015,
The Family Centre
65 Hanson Ave.
Kitchener

Dan has worked for over 40 years in the field of behavioral health, in residential, outpatient, and hospital settings. Dan has been involved in the field of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD) for over 25 years, 14 of them as the FASD Specialist for the SAMHSA FASD Center for Excellence. For this work, his son Bill has been his mentor and best teacher.

Register at <https://bit.ly/2FKW6HF>

If you have questions please contact Krista McCann
Krista.McCann@wrfn.info or 519-886-9150x2



FASD | WATERLOO REGION



What's Happening at WRFN...

Ask a Self-Advocate

Do you need to look at a challenge you are facing with a new perspective?

Would you like to bounce ideas off someone who can relate to what you, or your loved one, are going through?

Get new insight and ideas
Discuss your questions and concerns

Cristina was diagnosed with exceptionalities as an adult. Since then she has become active in the local special needs community serving as a mentor, public speaker, and self-advocate.

To request an appointment online:
www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZPGCC3Q

Or contact us for more information:

519-886-9150 ext. 4

Erin.Sutherland@wrfn.info



Open to people with disabilities, their families, or professional supports

Autism in High School

“[Autism in High School](#)” is a web-based guide to help students with Autism Spectrum Disorder and their families as they navigate the transitions and common challenges of high school. This website was developed as a joint initiative between Extend-A-Family, Waterloo Region Family Network, members of the former Autism Services Waterloo Region, the Waterloo Region District School Board, the Waterloo Catholic District School Board, and the University of Waterloo with generous funding from the [Sifton Family Foundation](#).

What's Happening at WRFN...

School-Issue Parent Support Group—Do you have questions/concerns about school issues for your child/youth with special needs? Join us at our peer-led parent support group. This is a great opportunity to share questions, concerns and successful tips in a safe environment while learning from others.

The support group is held the last Wednesday of every month (except December). Learn more [here](#).

WRFN Outreach at Early ON Child & Family Centres—Through our partnership with the local EarlyON centres we are pleased to provide monthly drop in support at EarlyON centres throughout the region. Erin is available to meet individually to discuss your concerns, no need to book an appointment. The EarlyON schedule can be found [here](#).

Kaleidoscope Kids—Kaleidoscope is a free drop-in program. There is no age limit, and you are encouraged to bring your children with special needs, siblings, or come by yourself.

Kaleidoscope Kids meets every Friday from 10-11:30am. Learn more [here](#).

Communication My Way—Communication My Way is a peer-led augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) group for all ages and levels of AAC users and their caregivers. The group aims to connect AAC users and their caregivers in a friendly environment to develop skills and create friendships. Learn more [here](#).

Coffee Club Update

Hi Guys,

It's time to say hello to February. Here is how we are doing that.

Monday, February 4, 7-9 PM (The Studio, 109 Ottawa Street, South): Coffee Club Valentine's Day Party! We will be having a DESSERT potluck and watching *Sleepless in Seattle!*

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0108160/?ref =nv sr 3> I'll take care of the beverages. Please feel free to where something festive to celebrate the day.

Monday, February 25, 7-9 PM The Studio (109 Ottawa St., South Kitchener): We will be having a drum circle with Organic Groove. The cost will be \$10 per person **Please RSVP AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!**

If for any reason you need to contact me, please use the information below:

(519) 500-7153 (Cell Phone) E-mail: carmen.sutherland@wrfn.info

Carmen

The Cycle of Grief and Acceptance Across One's Life Stages

*By Cristina Stanger
Self-Advocacy Liaison, WRFN*

In speaking with a parent recently about my work in the Ask A Self-Advocate Program, I mentioned how there can be an element of grief intertwined with the presenting issue. She immediately launched into an explanation of her grieving process following her child's diagnosis, and while her experience is truly valid and important, that wasn't what I had meant. I was referring to grief that can be experienced by the person *with* the exceptionality, and that may not occur at the time of diagnosis. Depending on the individual, periods of grief may recur over the course of our lifetime. At various life stages, we may need to lament our exceptionality before we can come to, or return to, a place of acceptance.

As someone who acquired a diagnosis of an invisible disability as an adult, my grief process may look different than that of someone who was diagnosed early in life or whose difference is more visually apparent. As validating as my diagnosis was in saying, yes, my struggles were real, it also solidified the fact I have an exceptionality, and I always will. I grieved the help I needed but never got. I grieved the psychological scars that developed over time because I didn't understand why I was different. I grieved the years I lost trying to be something I wasn't. I grieved the relationships that were never formed and the career that didn't turn out as I expected. And of course I asked the question, "Why me?".

This was an important and necessary process. I needed to come to terms with what I have been dealt in life. To get to a point where I was okay with it, a point where I was ready to move forward. This was *not* something I could rush. As much as I cognitively understood that my own self-acceptance would pave the way for the acceptance of others, I couldn't force it.

With time, I gained an understanding that this is my journey and let go of the past. I learned more about what challenges I face, and I learned how to carry them with grace and self-compassion. Once I accepted my limitations, I had more energy to figure out how to work around them. The more I become comfortable with myself, the more others are comfortable with me and the way I operate. I acknowledge that, yes, sometimes things are hard, but that is okay, and I can get through it with the strategies that I have developed and with the help of the support network I have built. This didn't happen overnight and required a lot of dedicated effort.

The Cycle of Grief and Acceptance Across One's Life Stages

But then I get surprised. Something happens. Life changes. I start a new chapter. And my exceptionality suddenly takes on a new, and often unanticipated, meaning. I have to learn to navigate my disability *again*, just when I thought I'd sorted things out. I have to unpack what living with a disability means for me now in this new scenario, and sometimes that means I need to grieve again. Grief that my needs force my family to do things differently. Grief that the timeline of my life looks different from my peers. Grief that there will always be things that are hard for me, but easy for others. Grief that I still have a disability (because I got so good at managing it, I sometimes forget it is there).

For example, when my daughter started school, I knew she would need to adjust. But, I completely underestimated the way this new aspect of our lives would impact me directly. New interpersonal connections to navigate, new social expectations to decipher, new routines to adjust to, new demands on my limited organizational abilities. And I grieved again because these changes directly collided with areas where I tend to struggle. Just when I thought I had reached a new level of self-acceptance life happens, and I start to question things again. Let me be clear, I don't sit at home wallowing in my own self-pity. My disability doesn't cause suffering, but it does create challenges I have to work through. New strategies are required. I have to figure out what I need and then advocate for it. Over time, the periods of acceptance in my life have become greater, and the periods of grief have become smaller.

Grief may revisit us across our life stages, but hopefully, you can see there is cycle and that acceptance can prevail. I felt it was important to highlight that grief is not a process unique to the family members of an individual with an exceptionality. Grief can be a part of the exceptional person's experience. And even for those who are aware of their disability from very early on, it will take on new meaning for them as they grow and develop, as they see how they are exceptional in a new light and what that will mean going forward. What it means for them in middle school, in high school, as a young adulthood, starting a new job, in middle age, and so on. I have to actively accept my limitations on a daily basis, and then embrace the gifts that lie within my differences. And I go about my days leading a full life, just as anyone else tries to do.

If you or your family members would like to discuss this, or another topic, please reach out to Cristina through the Ask A Self-Advocate program (AASA) via our [Online Booking Request Form](#).

Upcoming Events

EVENTS

Steps Towards Inclusive Community

This event is planned by Guelph Services for the Autistic: Bridges Over Barriers and will:

- Highlight innovations that promote community inclusion and volunteering
- Feature new short films such as Andrew Goes Running
- Focus on supports for adults of all abilities, including those with complex needs
- Display information by autonomous groups, organizations and individuals

Saturday, March 30 from 10-1p.m. at

Evergreen Seniors Community Centre, 683 Woolwich Street ,Guelph. Register [here](#).

PossABILITIES - A Networking Event for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities

Mighty Hawks is hosting a networking event for individuals with developmental disabilities. Mighty Hawks is bringing together local employers, community organizations, participants of the Mighty Hawks program and individuals in the community of different abilities to connect and learn from one-another.

Wednesday, February 13 from 6-7:30pm at The Turret at
Wilfrid Laurier University (75 University Avenue West, Waterloo)

Register [here](#).

Upcoming Community Living Dances

Community Living dances are sponsored by KW Association for Community Living and City of Kitchener.

All dances take place at the Downtown Community Centre, 35 Weber St. W. Kitchener, from 7-9:45pm.

Upcoming Dance(s):

February 8; March 8; April 12; May 10; June 7

If you have questions please contact Lillian – 519-741-9422 OR Susan 519-654-7023

Upcoming Events at Sunbeam

Pool Saturday—Feb 9, March 23—Have fun swimming! Attend one session or all.

Spa Evening—Feb. 21, March 21— Relax, enjoy, unwind!

Cooking— Feb 28, March 28—Have fun learning how to cook three different meals. Attend one session or all.

Monthly Evening Dance—Join Sunbeam the fourth Friday of every month from 6:30-8:30pm in the Sunbeam Centre gym for a dance party. The cost is \$5 each, support person free.

Please contact Wendy at w.king@sunbeamcentre.com to register for any of the above events.

Upcoming Events

Special Sibs—Guelph Wellington

Being a sibling can be challenging at times but also very rewarding. During this fun-filled therapeutic program, siblings will meet others who can relate, share their experiences together – both positive and negative – and learn how to understand their brother or sister better. Facilitated by a KidsAbility Social Worker and a community partner, siblings will have fun, enjoy snacks and share in activities with other kids who understand what it's like growing up as a sibling!

Recreation programming is offered for children with special needs ages 6-13 at the same time as Special Sibs (must have a sibling attend that group to participate).

For Siblings ages 6-13. The cost is \$10/child or \$20/family.

All events take place at Bulldog Interactive Fitness, 259 Grange Road, Guelph.

Individual event dates:

Monday, April 15, 6pm-8pm

Monday, June 10, 6pm-8pm

The registration deadline is two weeks prior to each date. Call 1-888-372-3359 x6202 to register.

Upcoming Events with Autism Ontario

Family Movie Morning - Kitchener - Feb. 9 - Come enjoy the Lego Movie 2, The Second Part in 2D!

Register [here](#).

Family Swimming - Guelph - Feb. 23 - Families are invited to West End Community Centre for an enjoyable swim. Register [here](#).

Indoor Playground - Guelph - March 3 - Families are invited to come out and enjoy [Funmazing!](#) Register [here](#).

Ceramics - Guelph - March 4 - Children with ASD and their siblings are invited to paint pottery at Play with Clay. Register [here](#).

Pizza & Games Night - Cambridge - March 25 - Families are invited to Playfit Kids Club for games and pizza. Register [here](#).

Great Wolfe Lodge - May 5-11 - Families will have the opportunity to come and enjoy at Great Wolf Lodge at a special rate just for Autism Ontario! Registration begins Feb. 5. Register [here](#).

The Sibling Collaborative Meet-Up

[The Sibling Collaborative](#) unites people who have a sibling with an intellectual/developmental disability.

The next Kitchener/Waterloo meet-up is taking place on February 6, 2019 from 6-8p.m. at The Lions Brewery at The Huether Hotel.

In this Meet-Up, the topic being discussed is, "Preparing to Discuss the Future."

You can register for this event [here](#).

Upcoming Events

Sensory-Friendly Screenings

Cineplex Entertainment in partnership with Autism Speaks Canada is delighted to present Sensory Friendly Screenings. This program provides a sensory-friendly environment for individuals with autism spectrum disorder or anyone for whom the environment is suitable and their families to view new release films in theatres across the country.

Tickets are available the Tuesday before the screening. Find more information [here](#).

Upcoming film(s):

February 16 - [The Lego Movie 2: The Second Part](#)

March 2 - [How to Train Your Dragon: The Hidden World](#)

March 23 - [Captain Marvel](#)

PROGRAMS/RECREATION

iCan Bike

Hosted by KidsAbility, iCan Bike helps children and youth with special needs to achieve an important life milestone: learning to ride a two-wheeled bike!

Ages: 8 Years Old – School Exit (up to age 21)

Eligibility: Your child must meet eligibility requirements and register with KidsAbility for this event. For more information and details including full eligibility criteria visit

kidsability.ca/icanbike.

To Register: Call 519.886.8886 or 1.888.372.2259 ext. 1373 or email specialized@kidsability.ca.

Registration deadline is Friday, June 21, 2019

Aldaview Services March break Respite Program

Aldaview Services is running a March Break Respite Program. This program is for individuals with a developmental disability in Grade 9 and up. Activities include arts and crafts, music, games, social time and much MORE! Fees are based on participants' needs and activity costs.

Dates: March 11 – 15, 2019 **Time:** 8:30 – 3:00

Location: Aldaview Services, 332 Hamilton Road, New Hamburg, (Accessible by GRT)
Contact Mary Hartman, 519-662-5172 or mhartman@tcmhomes.com

PEEPS Friday Night Social Program

Come on out, one Friday a month, meet new people, kick back and have some fun.

The program runs September to June, 6:30-8:30.

The cost is a \$5.00 donation to the Helping Hands Social Enterprise.

Visit the website to learn more at www.lighthouseprograms.com.

Upcoming Events

Upcoming Carizon Winter Programs and Groups

Building Better Boundaries—Provides education and support for women who have experienced any form of abuse and are working towards setting better boundaries in their lives.

Families in Separate Homes: FISH—FISH is a group for children aged 7-10, designed to help cope with separation and divorce, utilizing Play Therapy.

I'm More Than My Pain—This is a support group for people who have chronic pain.

Money Matters—Learn about the importance of budgeting and financial management through life's many transitions.

For more information about any of these programs visit www.carizon.ca or call 519-743-6333.

Sky Zone Sensory Jumps

Sky Zone will turn off the music and dial down the distractions for the comfort and pleasure of their exceptional guests, friends and families. Sensory Jumps are held every

Thursday from 4:00pm - 5:00pm

Sky Zone will do their best to make every effort to accommodate all jumpers.

Please call us at 519-804-4455 if you have any questions.

Cost: \$15 + tax each, chaperones are free.

Light House - Adult Day Program for Individuals 18+

Light House offers a personalized experience in a group setting by encouraging each individual to engage in a variety of meaningful activities in a manner most suitable to their specific needs. As participants are adults, they will enjoy a program that is AGE and DEVELOPMENTALLY appropriate. With the VOICES and HELPING HANDS initiatives, individuals will be provided with opportunities to learn with, and from, each other while connecting and giving back to our community.

To learn more about Light House please see their website: www.lighthouseprograms.com

Gym Drop-In for Youth

The Family Centre runs a drop-in gym program Monday evenings from 6-7:30 p.m. This program is for youth ages 10-17. This is a great opportunity to get active, have some fun and try out different sports.

For more information contact [Caitlyn Morton](#).

Upcoming Events

Our Place Family Resource and Early Years Centre

Our Place has shared their [February calendar](#).
Check out all the great programs they have running!

SUPPORT GROUPS

There are a number of support groups that run throughout the community on a variety of different topics. Visit the Events Calendar on our website to learn more about these opportunities:

<https://wrfn.info/events/>.

Groups include, but are not limited to:

- Parents for Children's Mental Health (PCMH) Support Groups (includes ADHD and general groups)
 - APSGO—for parents of acting-out youth
- Community Mental Health Support Groups for Family & Friends (includes general and addiction groups and mental health groups)
 - Tick Talk Tourette Group
 - Preemie Parents of Waterloo-Wellington Region (Preemie POWWR)
 - Fathers Group—for Fathers of a child with an intellectual disability and/or autism
- The A-Team Waterloo Region— run by individuals with Asperger's Syndrome, for individuals with Asperger's Syndrome
 - Support Groups for Adults with ASD (19+) and Parents/Caregivers of Adults with ASD (19+)

WORKSHOPS/TRAINING

Triple P Positive Parenting Group

Triple P is an evidence-based program that gives parents skills to manage challenging behaviours and prevent problems from happening in the first place. It does not tell people how to parent. Rather, it gives parents and caregivers simple and practical strategies they can adapt to suit their own values, beliefs and needs.

Who is it for? Parents of children, ages 3-11, with significant or multiple behavioural difficulties that are often displayed in more than one setting.

Dates: Wednesday nights March 6 to May 1 2019 (excluding March 13 2019)

Time: 6:00 to 8:00 pm

Location: University of Waterloo

Cost: \$200

Please contact cmhrtintake@uwaterloo.ca or (519) 888-4567 ext. 33842 if you would like to participate in the program and to discuss whether it is suitable for your family.

Upcoming Events

Autism Ontario Workshop: Explaining the Diagnosis

While many children and youth have heard the terms, ASD, Autism or Asperger Syndrome, a significant number struggle to understand what the term truly means and how it affects them as an individual.

This is intended to be an interactive workshop. A variety of modalities will be used to help explain the ASD diagnosis which includes books, videos and discussions.

Saturday, March 2 from 1-4p.m. at RIM Park, 2001 University Ave E. Waterloo

Register [here](#).

CADDAC Webinar: Psychoeducational Reports

This workshop will outline problems that occur when we solely rely on psycho-educational reports to develop learning profiles and individual education plans for students with ADHD.

February 13 from 7-8p.m.

Register [here](#).

PassportONE Information Sessions

PassportONE was created by the Ontario government and Passport agencies to improve the Passport Service experience by making invoice processing and reimbursements faster and more efficient.

Attend a Passport Information Session to learn:

- what PassportONE is
- how to fill out and submit invoice forms
- which services and supports are reimbursable
- who to contact with questions

Information sessions are held every Friday except the last Friday of the month. You must RSVP to attend the session. Sessions will be cancelled if there are no registrants.

To RSVP or for more information, please contact Amanda, the Passport Community Developer at: (519) 741-1121 ext. 2227 or a.paradis@dscwr.com.

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Training Series for Caregivers

This is a four-night Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder (FASD) training series for Caregivers hosted by Developmental Services Resource Centre.

- Learn how prenatal exposure affects the brain
- Learn how FASD impacts behaviour with a focus on executive and adaptive functioning
- Identify what is needed to support individuals living with FASD
- Learn about local resources and supports available to families

The training takes place February 6, 13, 20, 27 from 9:30am until noon.

Register with Karen Huber, FASD Coordinator at k.huber@dscwr.com or at 519-741-1121 ext. 2246.

Space is limited so register early.

Upcoming Events

Upcoming Workshops at Carizon

What's Up Wilmont: Raising your LGBTQ+ Child/Teen - Feb. 5 - In this workshop parents will learn tools and strategies to combat stress and foster resilience in their children across various age groups (preschool, school age and teenagers).

Let's Talk About Trauma - March 26 - In this psychoeducational workshop you will explore the different types of trauma, some of the neurological, biological and emotional aspects of trauma and the trauma effects on relationships.

Supporting Someone with Chronic Pain - April 15 - This workshop will provide strategies for how to support someone with chronic pain, as well as offering participants a chance to talk about their experiences. Self-care strategies for the caregiver will also be explored.

For more information about any of these programs visit

www.carizon.ca or call 519-743-6333.

Upcoming Workshops at Extend-A-Family

Exploring Interests in Community—Exploring Interests in Community is a workshop for people who provide support and the person they are supporting to attend together. You will work together on identifying interests and connections you have in the community, explore positive possibilities and plan your goals in manageable steps.

Inclusion Workshop—You will learn about community inclusion and how to be with each other in a way that includes everyone. Explore 5 ingredients for quality support, hear stories from qualified facilitators who have lived experienced, and draw on the experience of everyone in the room.

Talking About Sexuality—This workshop that will help to inform the way we support people in understanding healthy sexuality and relationships. This workshop will address how to respond to questions about sex, masturbation, dating and other related topics.

Understanding Conflict & Communication— This is a two-part workshop for personal and professional development. These 2-hour workshops are designed for people who provide support and are open to all community members.

To learn more about these workshops please visit <https://www.eafwr.on.ca/events/category/training/>.

KidsAbility Specialty Workshops

KidsAbility is offering the following upcoming workshops:

February 7, 14, 21 & 28, 6-7:30—Feeding (4 part series)

March 4 & 18, 6-7:30—Toileting (session and follow-up)

April 11, 6-7:30—What is ABA

May 9, 6-7:30—Antecedent Strategies

June 6, 6-7:30—Early Communication

To register for any of our upcoming events please visit

<http://kidsability-centre-for-child-development-autism.eventbrite.com>

Upcoming Events

KidsAbility—Building and Learning Together

This six-week workshop series with a one-month follow up will provide you with weekly workshops, supported with hands-on coaching. Using the Behaviour Skills Training Model of instruction, modeling, behavioral rehearsal, and feedback, we will support you and your family in learning strategies to apply with your child on a daily basis.

Building and Learning Together will be offered throughout the year rotating through our KidsAbility locations. Please register for the series that best supports your family's commitments.

For dates and registration information visit

<http://kidsability-centre-for-child-development-autism.eventbrite.com>

Developmental Services Resource Centre Waterloo Region Workshops

DSRC has a variety of upcoming workshops. You do not need to be associated with DSRC to attend.

February 20—Tips for Parents of Children with Autism

May 28—Anxiety and Autism Spectrum (ASD)

April 16/23—Parenting Individuals with Autism

April 24—Discussing Puberty and Sexuality with Your Child

May 6—Communication Skill Development and Autism

To learn more about these workshops or to register go to <https://bit.ly/2y2JEhi>.

All workshops will be held in the Training Room of Developmental Services Resource Centre at: 205 – 1120 Victoria St. N., Kitchener, ON N2B 3T2

Woolwich Counselling Centre Presents...

Woolwich Counselling Centre has a variety of upcoming groups/workshops for parents and children.

Glad to be Me (ages 4-7) - This fun-filled children's program promotes self-esteem and self-worth.

No Need to Fret (ages 8-11) - Successful strategies are provided to help anxious children cope with fears and worries.

Protecting the Girl in Me (ages 10-12)- This group develops leadership skills and confidence to enable girls to protect themselves, develop healthy coping mechanisms and positive social connections.

Conquering Teen Anxiety (ages 12-14) - This group will assist teens to learn effective ways to cope with teenage pressures and stress. They will learn strategies to feel more in control of their daily lives.

Helping Our Teens Conquer Anxiety - This workshop examines the causes and symptoms of adolescent anxiety. Strategies to support and cope with anxiety are provided for teens, their parents and others.

To learn more about these groups contact Woolwich Counselling at 519-669-8651.

Upcoming Events

RESOURCES

FREE Monthly Developmental Screening Clinic offered by Monarch House

This monthly clinic is a free of charge service for parents to address questions and/or concerns regarding their child's development. The screenings include information on a child's speech and language skills, motor skills, problem solving skills and personal/social skills.

For children ages birth to 5.5 years old.

No referrals needed. Drop ins are also welcomed.

Upcoming Date(s):

February 28, 2019

March 28, 2019

April 25, 2019

May 30, 2019

June 27, 2019

All screenings are at Monarch House (641 King St. W Kitchener)

For more information email waterloo@monarchhouse.ca or call 519-514-5770.

Check out FamilyCompassWR.ca!

Find and connect to local services for children, youth and families. The website offers three doors to help you find the resources you need.

1. Search for services: a self-search database for local health, social and recreational services for children and youth.
2. I Have a Concern: Do you have a concern about your child's development? Answer a few short, confidential questions to get connected to a local organization that can help.
3. Resources for Parents: connect to Parenting Now to learn, find support and connect with other parents.

KidsAbility Winter Resource Guide

The KidsAbility Program and Activity Guides for Fall is a great resource for local programming.

[Program & Activity Guide - Winter 2018-2019](#)

Guides can also be found on the KidsAbility website at www.kidsability.ca

Upcoming Events

ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

KidsAbility Program & Activity Guide Input

KidsAbility wants to make sure that the information they collect about inclusive and adapted recreation programs is easily accessible to everyone. Please take a few minutes to complete this short survey to share your thoughts on KidsAbility's Program and Activity Guide and how they can better share information about upcoming programs, services and accessible activities in our community. Click here to take the [survey](#).

Wilfrid Laurier University Research Participants Needed

Are you the mother of a child with a developmental disability?

Hello. My name is Laura MacGregor and I am a doctoral student at Wilfrid Laurier University. I am completing a study of mothers who have a child with a developmental disability where the child's disability interferes with typical communication. My study focuses on how mothers experience interconnection with their child and how they describe this interconnection to others, particularly health professionals. In other words, I am interested in how mothers learn to "read" their children. I am asking mothers of a child of any age who has a developmental disability as well as a communication challenge to consider participating in my study. If you are interested I would love to hear from you via macg4706@mylaurier.ca or (519) 885-3467. This study has been reviewed and approved by the university ethics committee (REB #5750).

Independent Facilitation

In 2015, the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) and the Ontario Independent Facilitation Network (OIFN) signed a two-year funding agreement for 1090 people with developmental disabilities to receive independent facilitation through a "Demonstration Project." As one of 7 Independent Facilitation Organizations involved in the project, Bridges to Belonging provided independent facilitation to 85 people in Waterloo Region. The project funding was extended for an additional 2 years to assess the value, benefits, cost and outcomes of independent facilitation as a viable solution for people with disabilities to live with greater independence in community. Recently, OIFN was advised that the funding ends on March 31, 2019 and that people/families will have to use their passport money to pay for independent facilitation. Several families have mobilized to let the government know that Independent Facilitation Matters and they want to see funding continue.

While, Bridges to Belonging will continue to provide independent facilitation for people purchasing the service using passport and/or personal funds, we are extremely disheartened by the reality that this is simply not an option for many people who receive the minimal passport entitlement. We are continuing to look for alternative funding sources and advocate with government officials for equal access to independent facilitation in both our region and Ontario.

To find out more and join the movement, please visit independentfacilitationmatters.com.