

Where exceptional families thrive

174

October 2024

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What's In This Issue?

October has arrived, bringing a sense of community and togetherness. This month unites families in celebration of Thanksgiving and honours Community Support Month, highlighting the importance of connection and collaboration. As the leaves transform, we are reminded of the beauty of change—perhaps it's the perfect time to try a new program or forge a new connection.

We invite you to engage with local resources and events to uplift families, including workshops and gatherings that foster collaboration among parents and caregivers. Our Coffee Club is embracing the fall spirit with an upcoming trip to the pumpkin patch, and we're excited to host a workshop on communication between home and school on the 23—after all, this is Community Support Month!

At WRFN, our mission is to connect families of children with exceptionalities to the support and resources they need. We envision a community where every family feels valued and empowered.

In this edition of the Family Pulse, we hope these offerings and resources inspire you to embrace October's spirit and strengthen our community's bonds.

Please Note the "*" represents new items for October



Support WRFN

Waterloo Region Family Network
www.wrfn.info
info@wrfn.info
519.886.9150

SEAC Updates

Waterloo Region District School Board- Special Education Advisory Committee Update - Submitted by Carmen Sutherland, WRFN SEAC Representative

This meeting discussed many topics related to the new school year. One was the changes to the Special Equipment Allowance. Previously, these funds could only be used for equipment, but they could roll over to the following year. This money can be spent on other special education needs the following year. For example, the Board will use this money to store previously used student equipment until it is needed again.

There were also discussions of what some of the staff had been working on over the summer. Consultants were working on updated resources, psychologists and speech-language pathologists were conducting assessments, and speech-language pathologists were visiting local schools to do so.

The Professional Development Day on Tuesday, September 3, was discussed. Some topics covered that day were workplace safety with chemicals and safety with issues such as violence.

Another topic was transitions, both in terms of students coming to school and students changing schools. Itinerant staff—staff employed by the Board to support all students with certain needs—also help with more detailed transition needs. For example, certain teachers support students at all schools with learning disabilities.

Regarding a transportation update, work was done in the spring and summer to ensure that transportation was as smooth as possible. They have been providing updates and communicating with families about delayed buses. If there is an issue with transportation, the first point of contact is the classroom teacher.

The next SEAC meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, October 9**.

SEAC Updates

Waterloo Catholic Region District School Board- Special Education Advisory Committee Update - Submitted by Erin Sutherland & Karen Applebee WRFN SEAC Representatives

Superintendent Gerald Foran presented the Special Education Plan for 2024-2025, highlighting updates to last year's plan. Notable changes include the addition of Project Search, the removal of the Reengagement Social Worker role, and the elimination of the Student Aware Coordinator position due to funding issues. The Gifted Itinerant Teacher role has been reinstated as a Special Education Teacher, while the Special Education Liaison will now oversee gifted programming. A new Special Education Principal role has been added, and the title of Board Certified Behaviour Analyst has changed to Behaviour Analyst. Additionally, specialized equipment funding has increased per pupil but will only cover equipment costing \$5000 or more.

The PD Day Agenda for 2024/2025 includes topics such as safety training, cyber security, the impact of social media on mental health, new cell phone and vaping policies, AI guidelines, and digital literacy. Training will also focus on self-regulation and de-escalation strategies for JK/SK Teachers and Early Childhood Educators.

For PD specific to Special Education and Support Staff, topics will cover math intervention, coding, oral language and comprehension, diverse needs in math, and behaviour management systems for JK/SK. Staff will participate in health and safety training, faith day, assistive technology, mental health, and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) training. Homewood Health supports will be explored, and the SEAC presentation list will reflect survey responses from committee members.

In Ministry Updates, Superintendent Foran discussed a letter from the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board addressed to the Minister of Education regarding the need for increased funding for students with complex needs.

Regarding SEAC Committee Functions, Erin Lemak presented on sacramental preparation for students with special needs, and the committee agreed to allocate a meeting for planning this initiative.

During the Ministry Survey segment, Superintendent Foran shared potential curriculum topics focused on practical life skills and a survey from the Ministry for members to complete.

The committee also discussed recognizing important dates for the organizations represented by SEAC members. Members will share these dates, and the WCDSB team will promote them through social media and communications.

The next SEAC meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, October 2.**

What's Happening at WRFN

WRFN programs and services are available in person. Supports are also available through phone and email connections and through other virtual formats. Please reach out and let us know how we can help you and your family.

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's been there? Cristina was diagnosed with exceptionalities as an adult, and is passionate about sharing her lived experience. Speak with Cristina to discuss your own questions and concerns to gain new insights and ideas. This program is open to individuals with disabilities, families, or service providers.

For more information on Ask A Self-Advocate please contact Cristina Stanger at Cristina.Stanger@wrfn.info or call 226-753-9090.

Parent Mentor Program

Through our Parent Mentor Program, we provide a means for parents to connect with each other, as well as guide, support and help empower each other to work through the highs and lows that make up their journeys. Our Parent Mentors provide information and emotional support; share ideas and strategies; and connect their mentees with community resources. Learn more about our Parent Mentor Program [here](#).

School-Issue Parent Support Group

This peer-led group provides support, advice and a safe environment for parents who have questions or concerns about school issues affecting their children with special needs. The WRFN School Issues Support Group meets on the last Wednesday of each month during the school year. For more information, please contact Sue Simpson at Sue.simpson@wrfn.info.

Family Resource Coach

Our Family Resource Coaches are available to meet in person, by phone, email, or virtual call to lend a helping hand and personal guidance to families and to connect you to updated information, resources, and opportunities available in our community.

Call Erin Sutherland at 226-808-5460 or email Erin.Sutherland@wrfn.info.
Call Leah Bowman at 226-898-9301 or email Leah.Bowman@wrfn.info.

Coffee Club

Greetings from Coffee Club! We currently meet on Zoom, usually on Thursdays from 3 - 4 pm. Generally, we are just catching up and chatting, mixed with a little bit of watching YouTube. Coffee Club has also started meeting in-person two Mondays each month from 7 to 9 pm.

If you would like to join us, please send me an email at Carmen.sutherland@wrfn.info. I will make sure to keep you on the email list so that you receive a Zoom invite and I will also keep you aware if we ever change or add a meeting date.

What's Happening at WRFN



COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL

- **October 23, 6:30 - 8 pm**
- **The Family Centre (65 Hansen Ave, Kitchener)**
- **Understanding the different ways and styles of communicating with the school and creating a plan**

Email info@wrfn.info to register



Waterloo Region Family Network
Invites You to Our
Annual General Meeting

October 24, 2024 | 7 - 8 PM



RSVP by emailing
sue.simpson@wrfn.info

We hope you can join us!!

Thursday, October 24, 7-8 pm
500 Hallmark Drive, Waterloo



www.wrfn.info

Do you have a question about community resources or child development?

WRFN Drop-Ins at EarlyON

Meet with Erin, our Family Resource Coach

Erin will be hosting in-office drop-in meetings at various EarlyON locations. Meetings do not require an appointment, but are on a first-come, first-served basis.

DATE	LOCATION	TIME
Oct 8	EarlyON Roger St 161 Roger St, Waterloo	11-12 pm
Oct 9	EarlyON Oak Creek 80 Tartan Ave, Kitchener	10-11 am
Oct 15	EarlyON Water St 73 Water St N, Unit 105, Cambridge	10-11 am
Oct 16	EarlyON St. Boniface 225 Starlight Ave, Breslau	10-11 am
Oct 25	EarlyON Riverside* 250 William St, Elmira	10-11:30 am



Contact Erin -

erin.sutherland@wrfn.info
226-808-5460

More dates to come!



www.wrfn.info



**a timeslot must now be booked in advance for this location*



Tuesdays 3:00pm - 4:00pm
Please check www.KEyON.ca for planned closures

EarlyON | Roger Street

(161 Roger St, Waterloo)

As special needs families, life is constantly changing but together we can help each other see that it remains beautiful.

**Come play, connect, support and be supported
as we bring our differences together.**

Kaleidoscope Kids is a free drop-in program for children under 8 years of age and their parent or caring adult. You are encouraged to bring your children with special needs, siblings or come by yourself.

No registration required.

If you have any questions, please reach out to info@wrfn.info

A partnership program of:



EarlyON is mask-friendly environment. Masks are no longer mandatory in our facilities.

Important: While Kaleidoscope Kids is a drop-in program, families new to EarlyON will need to register with KEyON before arriving or when they arrive. Register for free at www.KEyON.ca.



SPECTRUM ON THE SPECTRUM

NEW DAY!
SUNDAY, OCT 6
6:30 - 8:30PM



A monthly drop-in group for queer and trans people in the Autistic community in Waterloo Region (Ages 18+)

info@wrfn.info | info@ourspectrum.com

Spectrum
Event Calendar



HOUSEMATE MIXER

Are you or someone you support looking for a Housemate? Join us as we strategize how to make connections while mingling with others who may be in a similar situation and looking for a housemate.

Your Housing Navigator will lead a discussion on how we can facilitate a process for meeting potential housemates.

TOPICS COVERED

- How to look for a housemate
- How DSO Housing navigators can play a role
- What are families looking for

Refreshments provided!
Join us:

October 10, 2024

HOSTED BY:

6:00 - 8:00 PM



Amber Noseworthy
(Sunbeam
Developmental
Resource Centre)

Christina Hall
(DSO Housing
Navigator)

Leah Bowman
(Waterloo Region
Family Network)



2749 Kingsway Dr
Kitchener ON

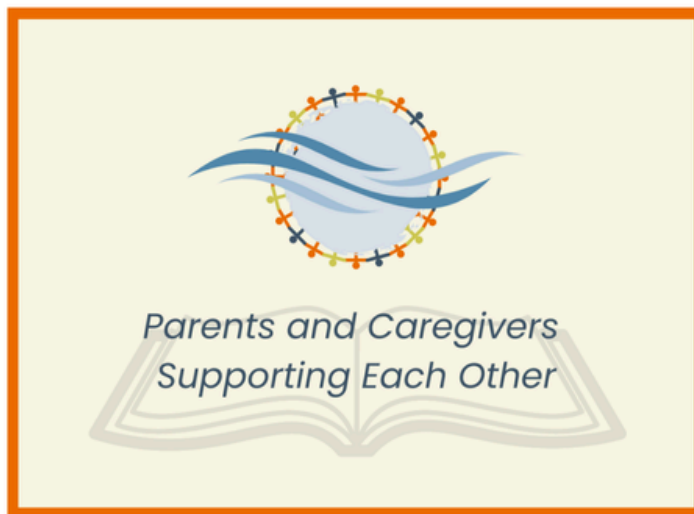
TO REGISTER PLEASE EMAIL:
Christina Hall at:
c.hall@sunbeamcommunity.ca



Developmental Services Ontario (DSO) helps adults with developmental disabilities find services and supports in their community.

CONNECT WITH US!

sunbeam.ca



A NEW CHAPTER

This group is for family members & caregivers interested in preparing for the future of their youth/adult family member with a lifelong disability.

We have a new feature to our meetings called "Ask Us Anything" from 9-9:30pm. This is a chance for those who attend the meeting to ask questions or clarify points when the main part of the meeting is over.

Join our Facebook group called A New Chapter – parent and caregiver connections.



October 1, 2024

ODSP Guest Speaker

Hello ANC friends,
On Monday we hosted the highly anticipated session about the Ontario Disabilities Support Program (ODSP). Members joined to learn about ODSP. Our speaker will be Bryn Martin from the ODSP Kitchener office. Bryn presented an overview of ODSP and answer questions from attendees. it was a great turn out!

All other meetings are virtual Zoom meetings from 7:30pm-9:00pm

If you would like to receive emails about our monthly meetings (always the first Tuesday of the month), please email Mary at maryjpike@hotmail.com and ask to be put on our email list.

EarlyON Resource Page

EarlyON September Programming*

You can now register for EarlyON programming. You and your family are invited to [drop in to an EarlyON location](#) throughout Waterloo Region and in the City of Stratford. Specialty and online programs that require pre-registration are also available. Check out the [KEyON calendars](#) for more information. To view the monthly program calendars by site, or to register for specialty programs, login to your [KEyON](#) account and select the EarlyON location of your choice.

Cambridge Family Early Years Centre

[Cambridge Family Early Years Centre](#) is offering “Young Parents Connect,” a free family program for pregnant and parenting youth, Tuesdays from 1-3 pm. Call the centre at 519-741-8585 for the next session start date. Each week the group cooks a meal to enjoy together and discuss a parenting topic/resource/service that is of interest to the group. At the end of each session, join EarlyON staff for a fun interactive circle time with the children. Cambridge Family Early Years Centre, Unit 105, 73 Water Street North, Cambridge, Ontario.

EarlyON Grandparents Connect

This program brings together a compassionate community ready to provide grandparents with the knowledge, resources, and emotional support needed if they are the legal guardians or primary caregivers for their grandchildren. Weekly meetings include childminding, snacks, and the opportunity to increase your circle of support. EarlyON | Oak Creek (80 Tartan Ave, Kitchener). Email capc@caminowellbeing.ca to register.

Rainbow Family Drop-In

Rainbow Families drop-in runs Thursdays at EarlyON | Roger St from 3:30 - 4:30 pm. Join other 2SLGBTQIA+ children (aged 0-6), caring adults and families in play and exploration together! EarlyON Educators and a SPECTRUM Registered Early Childhood Educator are available to provide support and information around early learning topics, community resources, programs, and referrals in a play-based environment.

EarlyON Onsite Services. EarlyON Centres partner with a variety of community agencies to provide onsite appointments for your child and family. [Learn more.](#)

Early Learning and Child Care Navigators

Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Navigators seek opportunities to assist families in accessing Child Care, EarlyON programming, and other services that support the healthy development of children aged 0 – 6. They focus on supporting families who experience barriers accessing these services.

- [Send an online request to meet with an Early Learning & Child Care Navigator Request](#)
 - [Email an Early Learning and Child Care Navigator](#)
 - For more info please visit [ELCC Navigators Landing page](#)
- Call 519-741-8585 ext. 3008 and ask to speak with an Early Learning and Child Care Navigator

EarlyON Mobile Sites

In addition to our Centres, EarlyON offers mobile drop-in at various sites in the Waterloo Region. Join other children, caring adults, and families in play and exploration together! EarlyON Educators are available to provide support and information around early learning topics, community resources, programs, and referrals in our play-based environment. To learn more about our mobile sites, call 519-741-8585 x3001 or visit the [Locations Page](#).

***All EarlyON locations are closed October 12 and 14. EarlyON Waterloo Region locations are closed October 28.**

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Here at WRFN, we are community oriented and committed to connecting families to local events and learning opportunities.

The information provided in this newsletter is not a recommendation, referral or endorsement of any resource, therapeutic method, or service provider. You are urged to use independent judgement when considering any resource.

Programs & Recreation

Community of Hearts Sunday Socials October Events*

Arboretum Adventure

The cold weather is coming, but a very special outdoor event is planned before it does. For \$30, join the University of Guelph's Arboretum (250 Arboretum Rd, Guelph) for a guided tour with an interpretative naturalist on Sunday, October 6, from 1 pm to 3 pm.

Bingo & Lattes

Who doesn't love bingo and hot drinks? The COH Lifelong Learning Centre (Inside Old Quebec St Mall 55 Wyndham St N, Guelph) will host bingo and drinks made in-house. There might even be prizes! This event is scheduled for Sunday, October 20, from 11 am to 1 pm and costs \$5.

COH Halloween Shindig

Boo! It's the spooky season! It is time to dress up in a costume and attend the annual COH Halloween Party at the Lifelong Learning Centre (Inside Old Quebec St Mall, 55 Wyndham St N, Guelph). Enjoy Halloween baking, treats, pumpkin painting, and screening a family-friendly Halloween movie. This event will be held on Sunday, October 27, from 1 pm to 3 pm for \$10.

All programs are Passport Funding Friendly. For more details and to register for these programs, email info@communityofhearts.ca or call 519-826-9056.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Karis Disability Services Waterloo and Guelph: Virtual Artshine Workshops*

This November, Karis Disability Services Waterloo and Guelph offer virtual Artshine Workshops, perfect for anyone exploring their creativity. The series includes four engaging art sessions on Wednesdays from 6 to 7 pm. Participants will work on various projects, including a coral aquarium, fiery sunset, poppy fields, snowflake abstract, and a bonus project. The workshops are designed to be accessible, and every participant will receive their art kit, complete with oil pastels, watercolour pucks, paint brushes, and other essential supplies. The cost is \$75 for all four sessions, plus HST and a \$15 shipping fee for the materials. If you're interested, make sure to register by October 11. For more information or to sign up, contact Katie Weir at 519-400-7875 or via email at kweir@karis.org. You can also visit Artshine.ca for more details.

Toyota STEM & Sport Program – Free for Kids*

In partnership with Wilfrid Laurier University, the Sun Life Centre for Healthy Communities is thrilled to present the Toyota STEM & Sport program at eight locations across Kitchener-Waterloo. This exciting program merges a love for sports with engaging STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) learning through various sport-related games and activities.

The program is designed for children aged 9 to 12 and will take place on the following days and times:

- Mondays:
 - 3:30 to 5 pm at Monsignor Haller C.S. (Oct 21 to Dec 2)
 - 6:30 to 8 pm at J.F. Carmichael P.S. (Oct 21 to Dec 2)
- Tuesdays:
 - 6:30 to 8 pm at Rockway P.S. (Oct 22 to Dec 3)
 - 6:30 to 8 pm at Cedarbrae P.S. (Oct 22 to Dec 3)
- Wednesdays:
 - 3:45 to 5:15 pm at St. Timothy C.S. (Oct 23 to Dec 4)
 - 6:30 to 8 pm at Queen Elizabeth P.S. (Oct 23 to Dec 4)
- Thursdays:
 - 3 to 4 pm at Hillside P.S. (Oct 24 to Dec 5)
 - 6 to 8 pm at Winston Churchill P.S. (Oct 24 to Dec 5)

New participants can register online using the following link: [Registration Form](#). Returning participants can log into their Scoreboard account to register at [Scoreboard Login](#).

If you have any questions, please email SunLifeCHC@wlu.ca. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity for fun and learning!

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Keep Your Head Up Foundation

Join Keep Your Head Up Foundation for its new Waterloo Region Youth Mindfulness and Movement program for all ages of individuals living with the effects of traumatic brain injury (there's also a national program available, too). These are free virtual classes to do activities like gentle yoga, meditation, beading, painting and more. Registration is now open! Visit www.KeepYourHeadUp.ca/mindful-moments.

Special Olympics

Visit the Special Olympics events calendar to get additional information, resources and registration links for events coming up in Kitchener-Waterloo. <https://www1.specialolympicsontario.com/events/calendar/>

Ready. Set. READ!...

Kitchener Public Library: Ready. Set. READ!...is a program for JK, SK and Grade 1 students. Through stories, literacy games and reading in small groups with volunteers the program aims to show kids reading can be fun! Sign up online at: <https://kpl.events.mylibrary.digital/event?id=55160> or by phone: 519-743-0271 x261.

YMCA Diabetes Fit*

Are you struggling to get started with healthy habits like exercise? Are you at risk of, or living with type 2 diabetes? Join free Diabetes Fit program to build life changing habits at home or at the YMCA. The program takes place at A.R. Kaufman Family YMCA (333 Carwood Ave, Kitchener,) and runs on Mondays and Thursdays from September 23 to November 16. To register, please [email Nidhi](mailto:Nidhi@ymca.ca) or phone 519-824-5150 x 234.

Empowered 4 Employment – A Program for Job Seekers*

Pathways to Growth is excited to announce the Empowered 4 Employment (E4E) program, designed to enhance the independence of individuals actively seeking employment who identify as differently abled. Starting October 4 and running until November 8, 2024, the program will happen on Fridays from 9 am to 12 pm at the St. Dunstan Learning Centre at 1525 Cuthbert Ave, Mississauga. Participants will gain valuable skills, including soft skills, communication, problem-solving, critical thinking, resume and cover letter basics, interview skills, and more. The program costs \$300; participants will receive a certificate upon completion. For more information, please contact Karina Vozniuk at (905) 793-5400 ext. 226 or email Kvozniuk@thelearningplace.ca.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

CNIB's Virtual Program Offerings

Whether it's children and youth groups, employment workshops, tech sessions or book clubs, CNIB's innovative programs are designed to educate, entertain and engage! CNIB's free programs are available to Canadians who are blind or partially sighted as well as their families, friends and caregivers.

Visit their website to learn more: <https://bit.ly/38cRE1o>

Sunbeam

Sunbeam's Recreation & Wellness Program enhances the quality of life of program participants. With a focus on recreation, socialization, inclusion, and community, including both physical and emotional wellness, the Recreation & Wellness team provides fun and engaging programming at various community locations.

- Offered as a fee-for-service option to individuals living with a developmental disability.
- Program participation is an eligible activity for the use of Passport Funds.
- For all activities and events, participants must be accompanied by their own support person or a family member.

For more information about this program, its calendar of upcoming events, and how to register please click to visit: www.sunbeamcommunity.ca/recreation-wellness-program.

Fun Fearless Females

Fun Fearless Females offers a variety of supportive services and social events and programs that create a welcoming environment for all women to have fun, try new things (be fearless) and connect with other women. Check out the events calendar to see all the festive and creative events happening this month!

<https://www.funfearlessfemales.ca/events>

Cambridge Food Bank

Cook, stuff, plant, bake and play at the Cambridge Food Bank! To learn more about and register for programs offered at Cambridge Food Bank, please contact Vanessa Tonicic: vtoncic@cambridgefoodbank.org 519-622-6550 x109.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Siblings Canada: Savvy Siblings

Siblings Canada, in partnership with PLAN, is delighted to introduce [**Savvy Siblings: Strengthening the Financial Security of Your Sibling with a Disability**](#). Funded by the Government of Canada, this free online course is for adults who want to play a role in improving the financial security of their siblings with disabilities—whether today or in the future. [**Register for Savvy Siblings today!**](#)

LCOworks

LCOworks is a free online program that supports positive employment outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities, a traditionally underrepresented and at-risk population in the labour market. Any Ontario resident with a developmental disability is eligible to participate in LCOworks. Email to apply or learn more at [**support@lifecourseonline.com**](mailto:support@lifecourseonline.com).

SPECTRUM Youth Under the Rainbow

Join SPECTRUM across the Region as they read stories, explore art and have fun together in a safe and supported environment for 2SLGBTQIA+ youth, families and allies. Visit [**https://wrfn.info/CommunityNewsAndUpdates/Family-and-Youth-Under-the-Rainbow.htm**](https://wrfn.info/CommunityNewsAndUpdates/Family-and-Youth-Under-the-Rainbow.htm) to see a full list of upcoming events and where to register.

Karis & Humber College's Culinary Skills Development & Employment Program

Get hands-on kitchen training from professional chefs through in-person & virtual ETraining with Humber College's Culinary Skills Development & Employment Program. This program is open to adults 18+ with a developmental disability. Learn more and fill out an [**application here**](#), then email your application to Mary Lou Kelly, Program Coordinator: [**mkelly@karis.org**](mailto:mkelly@karis.org).

City of Kitchener

Are you an older adult looking to learn about tech? Join one of the [**Kitchener Tech Connect**](#) courses. Programs are being offered in person at the Downtown, Kingsdale, Chandler Mowat & Doon Pioneer Park Community Centres. These free tech courses are for older adults in our community looking to improve social connections, access to information and digital literacy. [**Click here**](#) to see upcoming courses and to register!

Information, Opportunities & Resources

MoveMeant For All

Inclusive fitness training for all individuals with special needs, mental health, trauma and more. Contact Courtney Hughes at 519-503-4489 or move.meantforall@gmail.com.

Join the Smart Waterloo Region Nurture Youth Group

This is a youth group for those who like to connect with plants, and who are curious about learning ecological design and food forest planning. Join the SWRIL Nurture Youth Group! We meet Wednesday evenings from 5-7 pm at Communitech and Steckle Heritage Farm. We will be meeting weekly to:

- do fun hands-on activities like seed sprouting, kombucha brewing, apple pressing, etc.
- explore regenerative design concepts.
- learn about nature, the land, and our relationships to our traditional and local foods.
- train our creative problem-solving skills through IDEATION and innovation sessions!
- enjoy movies and hear from inspiring food-systems folks, locally and abroad.

Email Nikola at nbarsoum@regionofwaterloo.ca or register at [Join the Nurture Youth Group! \(google.com\)](https://www.google.com).

Region-wide tutoring information

Camino Wellbeing + Mental Health provides tutoring and homework spaces that are accessible and free of cost to families and students. For more information, visit www.caminowellbeing.ca/tutoring.

Level Up

[Level Up](#) in partnership with the City of Waterloo and City of Kitchener are facilitating three eight-week play-based programs introducing kids aged 9-12 years to topics crucial to generating a social justice practice. Register now at [City of Waterloo ActiveNet](#) and at [City of Kitchener ActiveNet](#)!

Corte

Corte Kitchener is an exciting and unique racquet and social club! Our programs are designed to offer fun and competitive play for all types of players, from beginners to advanced! Questions? Please reach out to our Pickleball Director, Matthew Pitts: matthew@corte.ca.

<https://cortekw.ca/programs>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

CADDAC Online Support Group for Non-ADHD Partners

Beginning October 8th and running through November 12th, an online support group for non-ADHD partners will be available. This series of sessions provides a supportive environment in which to share experiences and connect with others while navigating similar relationship dynamics. Learn more and register here:

<https://www.lilianaturecki.com/supportgroup>.

Ontario Caregiver Organization Programs

Caregiver ID Programs

Available in healthcare settings, these programs formally identify caregivers, recognizing their role in patient care.

Partners in Care Pandemic Toolkit: Designed for hospitals, long-term care homes, and other care settings, this toolkit provides tools to facilitate caregiver engagement during COVID-19.

Caregiver as Partners e-Learning:

A two-module series for healthcare providers, offering practical tips and strategies for working with caregivers.

Time to Talk Toolkit:

For providers across care settings, this toolkit promotes meaningful conversations between staff and caregivers.

Health Privacy and Consent Resources: Resources to help caregivers understand privacy and consent rules to optimize care partnerships.

E-Learning Module for Caregivers:

A 1.5-hour learning module to help caregivers communicate effectively with care providers.

Ontario Caregiver Helpline:

A 24-hour helpline offering information and referrals to connect caregivers with support. Call 1-833-416-2273.

OCO Caregiver Programs & Services:

Programs supporting caregivers, including peer support groups and SCALE Program.

Resources to Support Meaningful Engagement and Co-Design with Caregivers:

Resources and tools for organizations and caregivers to engage in meaningful co-design efforts.

For more information, visit ontariocaregiver.ca or contact partners@ontariocaregiver.ca

Information, Opportunities & Resources

LEG Up Additional Program Offerings

Classic Pumpkin Scones:

On October 3, whip up flaky pumpkin scones topped with a delicious maple glaze. These scones are perfect for sipping with your favourite hot drink.

Pumpkin Cream Cheese Muffins:

Join us on October 10, 2024, to bake these flavour-packed muffins with a creamy cheesecake ripple.

Mini Pumpkin Tarts:

Wrap up the series on October 17 with these heavenly bites bursting with cozy fall flavours.

All these classes are \$37 each and take place at LEG Up! Classroom, 109 Ottawa Street South, Unit D. Fall

Craft Classes with Annita!

Modge Podge Pumpkins:

On October 15, 2024, dive into the messy fun and transform a plastic pumpkin with colourful napkins using Modge Podge.

Zentangle Fall Leaves:

Unleash creativity on October 22, 2024. Design unique fall leaves using markers and patterns in a relaxing Zentangle style.

All classes are \$37 and take place from 10 am to 12 pm at Grant's Café, 99 Ottawa Street, South 1st floor, KWH, except for the Zentangle class, which will be held in the OAA Class (Vibe) room.

Fun Activities at LEG Up!

Yahtzee:

Kick off the month on October 4. Dive into this classic dice game that challenges your math skills and mental focus.

Disney Trivia:

On October 18, put your Disney knowledge to the test while enjoying great company.

Charades:

Wrap up the month on October 25 with a lively game of Charades. Show off your acting skills and practice teamwork.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

To purchase Visit the KW Habilitation Shop here:

<https://shop.kwhab.ca/product-category/leg-up/>.

For questions, reach out to the LEG Up! Team at legup@kwhab.ca or call 519-208-2225.

LEG Up Winter Break Sessions*

Trip to the Movie Theatre!

on Tuesday, December 31 from 9 am - 4 pm come along to the movie theatre with YEP Social, as the group enjoy some popcorn and watch 'Mufasa: The Lion King' OR 'Sonic the Hedgehog 3'. Lunch and popcorn provided. The cost is \$120.

Swimming Day

on Thursday, January 2 from 9 am - 4 pm Join YEP Social for a fun afternoon of indoor swimming! Splash around with friends at the pool and cook mini pizzas for lunch! Lunch and snacks provided. The cost is \$110.

SkyZone Trampoline Park

On Friday, January 3 from 9 am - 4 pm YEP Social will be jumping around SkyZone trampoline park! Lunch and snack provided. The cost is \$140.

Register for these socials and more at the KW Habilitation shop:

<https://shop.kwhab.ca/product-category/youth-exploring-possibilities/yep-social/>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

KW Habilitation: Fall 2024 Virtual Programs*

Music with Katie (Zoom)

Join Music Therapist Katie every Thursday from October 3 to December 19, 2 to 2:30 pm, for a fun and interactive music therapy group. Use your voice and instruments to explore the joy of music in a supportive environment.

GLEE with Katie (Zoom)

Kick off your week with music! Every Monday from October 7 to December 23 (except October 14), join Katie from 9:30 to 10 am to come together, enjoy music, and blend your voice with others in this joyful group session.

Creative Music with Len (Zoom)

Get creative with Len in a music group on the first three Wednesdays of October, from 2 pm to 2:30 pm. Together, participants will sing and play their favourite songs while exploring music in a dynamic group setting.

Drumming with Sam (Zoom)

Jam with Sam every Thursday from October 3 to December 19, from 10:30 to 11 am. Develop your rhythm skills, follow the beats, and play in this lively drumming session as a group.

Feel Good Fridays (Zoom)

End your week positively with Feel Good Fridays from October 4 to December 20, 9 am to 10 am. Join the group for conversations, trivia, and discussions about Thanksgiving, Halloween, Remembrance Day, and more!

Monthly Bingo (Zoom)

Enjoy themed bingo on the last Friday of the month (except December) from 1:30 to 3 pm. Join in fun before Halloween on October 25, fire safety on November 29, and Christmas on December 20!

ZOOM Activities Bundle

Can't decide which program to join? Sign up for the ZOOM Activities Bundle and enjoy access to all these amazing sessions for just \$20! Participate in as many as you like, whenever it suits you.

To register for these virtual sessions, please [visit here](#).

Information, Opportunities & Resources

ConnectABILITY's Friendly Connections

Friendly Connections is focused on helping its community and individuals of all ages with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, overcome isolation. It aims to help improve the well-being of individuals through socializing and providing entertaining resources. Friendly Connections wants to connect with individuals across Canada through phone calls, video calls, emailing, messenger chats and good old fashioned mail. They mail letters, postcards, colouring sheets, activity sheets, stickers and other fun goodies!

<https://connectability.ca/friendly-connections/>

City of Cambridge

The City of Cambridge has two yoga programs for youth: Adaptive Yoga for teens with disabilities (13-21 years) on Wednesdays 6 – 6:50 pm and Girls Only Yoga (10-14 years) on Wednesdays 7-7:50 pm. For the Adaptive Yoga classes, participants can bring a program assistant when using a PAL card and there will also be a Leisure Buddy to support the class. For more info, connect with Jenn at blanchardj@cambridge.ca.

KidsAbility Behaviour Support Services

Find support for your family with Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) services offered at KidsAbility locations across Waterloo Region and Guelph-Wellington. The team works closely with you to address your family's needs by creating a personalized plan within carefully set up packages for you and your child with the tools to support and succeed. Explore fee-for-service options for your child by connecting with at GPS@kidsability.ca. For more information and a current list of service offerings, visit us www.kidsability.ca.

Tech 4 Success – Digital Literacy Program*

Pathways to Growth offers a Digital Literacy Program for individuals with mild or moderate developmental disabilities. The program runs from October 7 to November 11, 2024, every Monday from 9 am to 1 pm at the St. Dunstan Learning Centre at 1525 Cuthbert Ave, Mississauga. Participants will learn key concepts such as computer basics, internet basics, email services, Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and internet and email safety. The program costs \$300, and a certificate will be awarded upon completion. For more information, contact Karina Vozniuk at (905) 793-5400 ext. 226 or email Kvozniuk@thelearningplace.ca.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Recreational Respite

Virtual group programs have been developed in partnership with participants to address a variety of interests, skill practices, goals and outcomes that promote inclusion, encourage community participation, and nurture social connectivity. Visit the website for the May virtual group program calendar for Children and Youth and Young Adults! <https://www.recrespite.com/virtual-services/>

Sensory Workout

Sensory Workout is a program that combines what we know about exercise and sensory processing to make physical activity more accessible and enjoyable for all! Aptus' Clinical Services team created the Sensory Workout training and demo videos, with generous funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation and the Ministry of Children, Community, and Social Services.

[Check out Sensory Workout on YouTube!](#)

March of Dimes Connect & Share

Wouldn't it be wonderful to visit with someone regularly who shares your interests? March of Dimes virtual Connect & Share program was designed to make that happen. You will be matched with a volunteer who shares your interests and your buddy will visit with you (as often as you like) – just for the fun of it. You can have phone visits or you can have a video call using a platform like Zoom. <https://www.marchofdimes.ca/en-ca/programs/rec/connect>

Spectrum BRIQ House

BRIQ House is Spectrum's monthly group for Black, Indigenous, and other Racialized Queer folks in Waterloo Region! Come meet for discussions and community building. We connect both in person at Spectrum and virtually on Zoom.

Cambridge Food Bank

Cook, stuff, plant, bake and play at the [Cambridge Food Bank](#)! To learn more about and register for programs offered at Cambridge Food Bank, please contact Vanessa Tonicic: vtoncic@cambridgefoodbank.org 519-622-6550 x109.

Resilience Project

The Resilience Project from FACS Waterloo has some new programming for children, youth, and caregivers this summer. Learn more and register for programs <https://resiliencecollective.ca/programs-offered>.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Black Youth Mental Wellness Circle

The African Community Wellness Initiative staff are trained for Afrocentric Clinical Therapeutic Practice with individuals, families, groups and youth. They now offer a Black Youth Mental Wellness Circle, a space for Black youth (ages 13 – 18) to engage, connect and grow, on Tuesdays from 6 – 7:30 pm. For more information, please contact chantal@africancommunitywellness.org. Register at <https://africancommunitywellness.org/mental-health-wellness/>.

Sports for Special Athletes Programming

A volunteer-run organization that provides subsidized recreation and sports for teens and adults with exceptionalities in the Waterloo Region. We focus on fitness and fun and sometimes forget all about the score. We are inclusive and never leave anyone on the bench. Pay a \$20 annual administration fee (from Sept-Sept) no matter how many sports you participate in. Plus, a \$5 sports fee for each sport you sign up for. Some sports may have additional program costs; for example, Basketball for beginners will be on Fridays from 6:30 pm to 8:00 starting October 11, 2024; the cost is \$165, including a \$50 sports fee. Or Adapted Swimming will be on Thursdays, starting October 10, 2024, at 253 Fisherville Rd. The cost is \$100. Contact Don Clarke (519) 744-4881. [Visit here for contact info](#) and to register

Student Links Program: Application and FAQ

Funded by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, Student Links is an opportunity for students (ages 14 to 21) who identify as having an intellectual disability to explore ideas for their future after high school. It matches students and mentors who share a common passion or interest. The goal is to enhance their capacity to make informed decisions about their future before leaving school and support the natural development of relationships and connections to their community. Student Links is tailored to meet the needs of each individual student and may include hands-on experiences, exploration of new interests, and an introduction to work, volunteer or community-based roles. Opportunities are created for students to meet with people currently engaged in or with substantial knowledge of the identified interest.

The possibilities are endless! After completing the application found at the bottom the first step is for the student to meet with the Student Links coordinator and together identify ideas, interests, passions and roles they are interested in. [Fill out an application form here](#) and see some frequently asked questions by visiting <https://studentlinks.es/faqs/>.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

March of Dimes

Paving the Path: Beginning my Journey to the World of Work

Has a disability or other barrier prevented you from imagining yourself in the workforce? Have you ever wondered what it would be like to have a job? Do you want to learn about the types of jobs that best suit your personality? Would you like to know how working would affect the benefits you currently receive? If you answered yes to any of the questions above, Paving the Path for Work can help. This 6-week program offered by March of Dimes Canada is for people who have had limited exposure to employment but want to learn more. Offered virtually and in person. For more information or to register for an upcoming session, please contact: Steven Hendry at 519-501-9868 or email shendry@marchofdimes.ca.

Muslim Social Services Programs

Muslim Social Services KW provides a professional, confidential, and affordable counselling service at The Family Centre Hub. Counselling services extend to individuals, children, couples, and families, including group therapy sessions conducted in various languages. We are dedicated to offering culturally sensitive counselling tailored to victims of gender-based and domestic violence.

Al-Nour Project

The Al-Nour Project is an exclusive program for young women aged 13-25, to uplift, inspire, and empower. They participate in both fun group activities and focus on building relationships. The program will be facilitated by the counsellor Fatima Haneef, once a month on Thursdays from 6 to 8 PM. To register and for more info, visit our website at www.muslimsocialserviceskw.org, email info@muslimsocialserviceskw.org, or call (519) 772-4399 ext. 2707.

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Every Friday evening, from 5 to 7 pm at the Chandler Mowat Community Centre, join the "Neighbors Helping Neighbors" program. This initiative, facilitated by Community Connector Sally Alkarmi, reaches out to all women to create a healthy and supportive environment. The program aims to reduce the risk of isolation and promote diversity within the KW area.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

ThriveTogether Youth Program

Join the exclusive ThriveTogether Youth Program every Friday from 5 PM to 7 PM at The Family Centre, 65 Hanson Ave, Kitchener. This program is designed for young men aged 14-20 and combines sports and social activities to promote mental well-being. Participants can earn volunteer hours, enjoy snacks, and receive bus tickets.

For More information visit <https://www.muslimsocialserviceskw.org/>.

Adults in Motion: Summer and Winter Camps

Adults in Motion offers engaging Summer and Winter Camps for adults (18+) with diverse needs. These camps provide enriching experiences tailored to individual interests and abilities. With a supportive 5:1 camper-to-staff ratio and personalized skills and needs assessments, every camper gets the attention they deserve.

PD Days Camp

Adults in Motion offers PD Days Camp for adults (18+) with diverse needs. These single-day camps are ideal for those looking for an enriching and flexible way to spend their day off. With activities tailored to individual skills and interests, participants will enjoy a fulfilling experience.

School Transition Programs

Transitioning from high school can be a significant step, and Adults in Motion provides specialized School Transition Programs to support adults (18+) with diverse needs. These programs facilitate a smooth transition by focusing on skills development and personal growth.

Virtual Camp (Lubdub)

Adults in Motion offers Virtual Camp Days through [Lubdub] (<https://www.lovelubdub.com>) for those who prefer online activities or cannot attend in person. These sessions provide a variety of engaging and fun online activities tailored to adults (18+) with diverse needs. Join from anywhere and enjoy the inclusive and supportive environment of Virtual Camp.

Free Program Trials

Are you not sure if these programs are the right fit? Adults in Motion offers the opportunity to try out any of their programs for free! This allows participants to experience the camps and activities without any commitment.

For more details and to register visit <https://www.adultsinmotion.org>.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Locations and Contact Information:

Adults in Motion operates in multiple locations to serve the community better. Reach out to the nearest centre for more details and to sign up:

Oakville: 141 Bronte Rd | 289-400-3723 | [oakville@adultsinmotion.org]

<mailto:oakville@adultsinmotion.org>

Cambridge: 653 King St E (Preston) | 519-277-3723 |

[cambridge@adultsinmotion.org] <mailto:cambri0dge@adultsinmotion.org>

Hamilton: 627 Main St E | 905-541-3723 | [hamilton@adultsinmotion.org]

<mailto:hamilton@adultsinmotion.org>

Kitchener: 317 Franklin St N | 519-577-3723 | [kitchener@adultsinmotion.org]

<mailto:kitchener@adultsinmotion.org>

The Behaviour Consultants of SDRC: A Series of Clinics for Parents and Caregivers*

The Behaviour Consultants of SDRC are presenting a series of clinics for parents and caregivers of individuals with a developmental disability and autism spectrum disorder. All clinics will be 1 hour via Zoom, limited to a maximum of 10 participants and will include an opportunity for questions and discussion. If you are eligible for SDRC services and would like to attend any of these clinics, please call Rehana Khanam at 519 741 1121 ext. 2201 to register. October clinics include Sleep Hygiene on October 17 at 1 pm, Emotional Regulation on October 24 at 5 pm, and on October 28, Hygiene at 10 am, Executive Functioning at 1 pm and School Refusal at 6 pm.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Community of Hearts Evening Fall Programming

Dancing with Friends at Community of Hearts

Get ready to dance and have fun with friends at "Dancing with Friends," a program hosted by Community of Hearts! The session will occur on Wednesday, October 9, from 3:30 to 5 pm. Participants will engage in group dance games, learn new dance moves, and even pick their favourite songs to dance along to. It's a great way to stay active, enjoy light exercise, and connect. Snacks will be provided to keep you energized while you dance.

Singing with Friends

Join the fun at Community of Hearts for "Singing with Friends" The session will occur on Wednesday, October 9, from 5:30 to 7 pm. This passport-friendly program is designed to bring people together through the joy of singing. Participants will sing warm-up games, explore different types of music, and enjoy karaoke to their favourite songs. Get together and enjoy Wednesday evenings in a fun, supportive environment. Snacks will be provided.

Inclusive Fitness (Fall Session)

Join this four-week program to help participants build gym confidence, set fitness goals, and improve overall health. It is perfect for beginners or those with experience in fitness.

Community of Hearts Youth Programs*

Lifelong Learning Centre

The Youth Series at Community of Hearts consists of weekly workshops for youth aged 13-18 with developmental disabilities. These workshops focus on developing life skills, building confidence, and fostering independence while providing opportunities to connect with peers and the community. The goal is to create a safe and supportive environment that empowers youth to pursue personal growth and achieve individual goals.

Understanding Emotions

"Understanding Emotions" offers participants the chance to learn about different emotions and how to manage them in a healthy way. This workshop will explore coping strategies and self-care techniques that enhance relationships with oneself and others while also discussing how to create a support system of trusted individuals to navigate challenging emotions. This workshop is available in person from 2 to 3 pm for a cost of \$20, and virtually from 11 am to 12:30 pm, also for \$20.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Cooking Skills - Knife Skills & Fruit Salad Making

In "Cooking Skills—Knife Skills & Fruit Salad Making," participants will practice kitchen safety skills while sharing their favourite foods. This workshop covers knife safety and the different knives used for various kitchen tasks. Participants will learn a recipe and make a delicious fruit salad to enjoy together. The session takes place from 2 to 3:30 pm and costs \$20.

Sunday Matinee - Inside Out 2! (In-Person)

The "Sunday Matinee—Inside Out 2!" invites participants to enjoy an afternoon movie featuring Inside Out 2! This film explores how teenage Riley faces new emotional challenges as she enters a new phase in her life. Snacks and beverages will be provided during the session, which runs from 2 to 4 pm and costs \$20.

All programs occur in Guelph at 55 Wyndham St N, Suite T28 (Inside Old Quebec Street Mall). To register, email info@communityofhearts.ca or call 519-826-9056.

Family Centre Fall Programs*

The Family Centre Creative Space offers a safe environment for children to develop their artistic skills individually and in groups. The program encourages children to discover their unique styles while building resilience throughout the creative process. A vital element of the program is connecting with peers, volunteers, and facilitators to collaboratively find solutions and progress in their creative journeys. The Family Centre is expanding to include youth and adults interested in exploring their creativity. Admission is free, but registration is required.

For Fall 2024, programming includes:

Creative Space on Mondays

From 6 to 7:30 pm (Facilitator: pamrojasp@gmail.com),

Music Academy on Tuesdays

From 6 to 8 pm (Facilitator: kev.saltarelli@gmail.com)

Creative Space on Wednesdays

From 6 to 7 pm (Facilitator: pamrojasp@gmail.com)

Mini Act Theatre on Wednesdays

from 6 to 8 pm (Facilitator: yazan.maarouf@gmail.com).

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Workshops, Training & Events

Hospice Waterloo Region: Dying to Know*

Back by popular demand, Join the all-day event Dying to Know on Saturday, October 19. This event is sponsored by Hospice Waterloo Region and hosted by St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 54 Queen St N, Kitchener. It features guest speakers Yvonne Heath, a passionate author of "Love your Life to Death," and Dr. Kathryn Mannix, a retired UK palliative care doctor & author of the best-selling books "With the End in Mind" and "Listen." Registration is \$40 per person and \$10 for students. To learn more and register, visit <https://www.dyingtoknow.ca/>. The event contacts are Sheli O'Connor, who you can email at sheli@hospicewaterloo.ca, and Barb Molengraaf, who is available at molengraafb@gmail.com.

DSO Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) Webinar*

Developmental Services Ontario (DSO) invites individuals with developmental disabilities, their families, and support networks to a free virtual presentation titled "Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) – Things to Know & Answers to Common Questions." Hosted by Housing Navigators Martha Beach and Alexandra Shannan, this webinar will cover essential topics, including ODSP benefits, asset limits, employment, and how to dispute ODSP decisions. The session will occur on Wednesday, October 2, 2024, from 6:30 to 8 pm. For registration, [visit here](#). For questions, contact Alexandra Shannan at dsotr.hn@surreyplace.ca or Martha Beach at mbeach@dsoser.com.

CADDAC's Centre for ADHD Awareness, Canada (CADDAC) 16th Annual ADHD Conference

Save the dates for November 2 and 3, 2024, in Oakville, Sheridan Conference Centre, 1400 Trafalgar Rd, Oakville, ON L6H 6W4. This is an essential learning opportunity for individuals with ADHD, their families, educators, and healthcare professionals. Keynote presentations by Ari Tuckman will address important topics such as "How to Actually Get Things Done" and "Better Relationships with ADHD." Additional discussions will cover ADHD in older adults, marginalized communities, puberty, long-term memory, and more. You can register for both days for \$255 or a single day for \$135 plus HST [here](#).

Information, Opportunities & Resources

ADHD Virtual Summit

On October 8 and 9, join world-class researchers and clinicians as they discuss the latest research in ADHD. Discover how to improve the assessment and treatment of ADHD as we explore trending topics, including ADHD and the youth mental health crisis, ADHD in girls and women, ADHD in adults 50+, and racial and ethnic disparities in ADHD care. This is an event you won't want to miss! All sessions will be recorded and available for registrants to view for 30 days post-event.

[Register here.](#)

GSL Coding (Unplugged) – A Fun, Free Online Program*

Project Read invites families with children aged 2-6 years to join the GSL Coding program, starting Tuesday, October 15, 2024, from 4:30 to 6 pm. This engaging online program requires no prior coding experience and features unplugged coding activities, storytime with coding-themed books, hands-on learning, and dedicated parent time. It's a fantastic opportunity for families to explore the world of coding together in a fun and interactive way. To sign up, email info@projectread.ca, call (519) 570-3054, or register online at www.bit.ly/GSLsign-up. The Ontario Trillium Foundation provides funding.

LDAWC Family Conference

The Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County (LDAWC) is hosting a Family Conference on Saturday, October 19th, 2024, from 9:00 am to 4:30 pm. Taylor Reid will be the keynote speaker. Sponsored by SickKids, this conference is designed to provide valuable information and support to families dealing with learning disabilities. For more information and to register, please visit [here](#).

Beechwood Brainerly Foundation & Ashley Biddiscombe Present: Parent Resource Series - Developmental and Community Resources*

Are you seeking information on resources available in the Waterloo Region for parents and guardians of children with disabilities? Join us for an enlightening evening that delves into the developmental and community resources offered by the region's largest hubs. This event will provide a unique opportunity to ask questions about intake processes, therapies, autism supports, support groups, respite, mental health resources, behavior resources, and workshops directly to the organizations themselves. The event will take place on October 18, 2024, from 7 to 9 pm at The Beechwood Brainerly, located at 572 Weber St N Unit 7, Waterloo, ON. Don't miss this chance to connect with valuable resources

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Resources

Aging and Elder Care: Time for Transformation

This book includes essays on caregiving, the importance of relationships as we age, ways to enhance home care, and many ideas for healthy aging. It can be ordered [online here](#) or purchased at Wordsworth Books in Waterloo, located on 96 King St S, Waterloo, ON.

SNR Collaborative

The SNR Collaborative offers support to Licensed Child Care Programs in Waterloo Region for children up to 12 years old. KidsAbility and KW Habilitation make up the SNR Collaborative, which aims to streamline services and ensure all children can thrive in early learning environments regardless of their abilities. Early Childhood Educators, parents, and caregivers can contact the SNR Collaborative with questions about a child's needs. The Collaborative operates within a tiered services model to provide tailored assistance. Visit their website for more information on programs, tips, strategies, and referrals. To contact KidsAbility, please email spotservices@kidsability.ca. For inquiries related to KW Habilitation, you can reach them at earlylearning@kwhab.ca. If you have any questions, you can call SNAP at 519-514-7627 or email snap@kwhab.ca. For inquiries regarding the SNR Collaborative, please email [Kristy](#) or [Carlyn](#).

CAMH Blog Post & Video

Yona Lunsky's latest blog post discusses the inspiring "brother. do. you love. me." event at CAMH. The post delves into the heartfelt discussions and unique sibling perspectives that made the evening unforgettable. Read the blog [here](#). You can also watch the video of the event in its entirety via [YouTube here](#).

Ask a Nurse at the Welcome Spaces

Public Health Family Nursing services are available at three Welcome Space locations, offering one-to-one, drop-in support from Public Health Nurses. This service is provided from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM on the following days:

- Waterloo: Mondays at 99 Regina St S
- Kitchener: Tuesdays at 20 Weber St E
- Cambridge: Thursdays at 150 Main St

Nurses can assist with questions on pregnancy, growth and development, feeding, child health, and local health services. For more information, e-mail Lrintche@regionofwaterloo.ca

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Aide Canada

Many of Aide Canada's resources relate to autism, but there are also plenty that apply to all disabilities. There is a parent series of "Ask a Question" where families & self-advocates can respond with their experience. There is also a resource page where you can borrow books and items and is available Canada wide. Check it out at www.aidecanada.ca.

Breastfeeding Dashboard

Canada's "[Breastfeeding Dashboard](#)" is now available on Public Health Agency of Canada's Public Health Infobase platform. Along with this data tool, the first edition of Canada's Breastfeeding Progress Report is available. The data provides an overview of breastfeeding rates in Canada, including information on breastfeeding initiation, duration and exclusivity, examined by various geographic and sociodemographic factors. Reasons for not breastfeeding and reasons for stopping breastfeeding before six months are also presented, as are rates of vitamin D supplementation of breastfed infants. Questions related to the new materials can be directed to: dca_public_inquiries@phac-aspc.gc.ca

Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work

CCRW Employment Services help job seekers with disabilities get connected with local businesses. They provide industry-specific training, workplace accommodation and adjustment planning, employer matching, and access to a hidden job market.

For more information or to register, call: Jennie Di Girolamo – Employment Facilitator (519) 571 6788 ext. 7661 or email [jdigirolamo@ccrw.org](mailto:jdigiolamo@ccrw.org)

<https://www.ccrw.org/>

March of Dimes Hi, Tech!

If you have a disability and are 18 years or older, you are eligible to be matched with a tech support coach. Your coach will answer your technology questions and help get you set up. To learn more visit <https://www.marchofdimes.ca/en-ca/programs/atech/hitech>.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Plexus

Plexus is a network of FASD support and services in Waterloo Region. The services of the Plexus team are available to children, youth, and families living with (potential) FASD up until the age of 18 or 21 and still attending school. You must reside in the Waterloo Region. A referral can be made by the individual or their legal guardian. Plexus will also accept referrals from extended family members, family physician, or any agency acting on the individual's/family's behalf if permission to do so has been provided by the individual or their guardian. Referrals can be made here: [Plexus Referral](#).

Positive Behaviour Supports Corporation (PBS Corp.)

PBS provides high-quality Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) therapy to children and adults diagnosed with autism or other qualifying diagnoses. Services are provided in the home, school, and community settings. ABA is implemented in real-world situations with the parents being an integral part of ABA therapy. PBS also offers respite services for your family.

<https://www.teampbs.com/>.

Family Support Network for Employment

FSNE is a family-led coalition advocating for employment opportunities and jobs in the open labour market for individuals with developmental disabilities who face higher employment barriers.

[Click here to find out their mission and explore resources.](#)

Rainbow Community Calendar

[The Rainbow Community Calendar](#) from SPECTRUM collects 2SLGBTQIA+ events from organizations across Waterloo Region (and sometimes in Guelph-Wellington). SPECTRUM's events will include the name in the title. Please read the details of each event carefully.

Imagine Canada

Imagine Canada has a ton of great resources and information on non-profit and charity sector-related policy in their newsletter, The Early Alert.

<https://bit.ly/3IH2kQg>

Ontario Caregiver Association

- *SCALE Program: Caregiver Needs and Well-being*: [SCALE \(Supporting Caregiver Awareness, Learning and Empowerment\)](#) focuses on topics relevant to new or experienced caregivers, including caregiver stress, managing feelings of anxiety or guilt, and self-care for the caregiver.
- *Caregiver 101*: Learn about caregiving roles, conflicts in caregiving, caregiver burnout, what to expect, developing resilience, and what supports are available. Access the online course [here](#).
- *Young Caregivers Connect*: Young Caregivers Connect is a website to help young caregivers aged 15-25. The website was designed in collaboration with, and for, young caregivers and offers information and resources and a way to connect that address their unique needs. Visit the website [here](#).
- *Time to Talk Podcast*: Join Host Michelle Jobin along with experts and caregivers, to discuss things that matter most to caregivers. Access the podcast [here](#).
- *Caregiving Communities* : a new portal that provides an easy way for people to search for organizations in their community that can help with: Grocery pick up and delivery, delivery of prepared meals, medication pick-up, social support – friendly phone calls, accessing communication devices like a tablet, mental health support, spiritual support, providing things to do like books, games and crosswords. www.ontariocaregiver.ca/caregivingcommunities

Fostering Information from Family & Children Services

Are you interested in learning more about fostering? For general information about fostering, please visit <https://www.facswaterloo.org/foster>.

CanFASD Mental Health Resource and Practice Guide

The CanFASD Research Network released a new resource that all mental health professionals need in their toolbox. This resource is grounded in the belief that people with FASD are capable of significant change and personal growth. It is therefore imperative that, as mental health professionals, we continue to explore how we can adapt our supports so that individuals with FASD can benefit from practices suited to their unique strengths, challenges, and neurodevelopmental needs. [Towards Healthy Outcomes for Individuals with FASD](#)

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Partners for Planning

Every high school graduate deserves a bright future. The Beyond Graduation Toolkit can help families think creatively, collaborate with school teams, and explore pathways that can lead to a full and meaningful life for their son or daughter once they reach the end of their high school career. Designed for parents with a child transitioning out of high school in the next few years, this new toolkit provides critical concepts and resources that can help parents prepare for this transition. It includes:

[Partners for Planning - Planning for a Good Life Beyond Graduation Toolkit - Overview \(planningnetwork.ca\)](#)

The Royal Mental Health Care & Research

The Royal Mental Health Care & Research is one of Canada's foremost mental health care, teaching and research hospitals, located in Ottawa. The Institute of Mental Health Research, affiliated with the University of Ottawa, brings together leading mental health professionals, scientists, and technology to gain a deeper understanding of the brain, and investigate innovative approaches to preventing and treating mental illness. To learn about The Royal's programs, please visit:

<https://bit.ly/3dRvIo2>

The Vulnerable Persons Registry

The Vulnerable Persons Registry promotes communication between vulnerable persons, the people who support them and the police. This information will assist officers when responding to an emergency involving the vulnerable individual. The registry provides quick access to critical information about a registered person, such as who to call in an emergency, a detailed physical description, and any particular sensitivities that the person may experience.

www.vulnerablepersonsregistry.ca

Canadian Centre for Caregiving Excellence: National Caregiving Strategy Engagement

Read the full report, Caring in Canada, and learn about Canada's National Caregiving Strategy's development. The report is available here [Report: Caring in Canada – Canadian Centre for Caregiving Excellence \(canadiancaregiving.org\)](#)

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Access 2 Card

The Access 2 card is designed for individuals with permanent disabilities who need attendant support at participating venues. The card allows the attendant to enter for free while the cardholder pays regular admission. Eligibility extends to people of all ages and disability types. It's accepted at numerous venues across Canada, including many movie theatres and recreational sites. To obtain the card, the person with the disability fills out an application form on the Access 2 website, which requires confirmation of need from a healthcare provider. The card costs \$20 for three years or \$30 for five years, and once the application is submitted, cards are typically issued within 4 weeks. Visit here to apply [Access2 - Easter Seals Canada Access 2 Entertainment Program \(access2card.ca\)](https://access2card.ca).

CAMH Azrieli Adult Neurodevelopmental Centre brother New Blog Post

In a new blog post, Dr. Yona Lunsky shares her aging and brain health journey within the developmental disability community. This exploration has led to the Brain Health-IDD Project, which aims to understand and address brain health in this community. [Read the Blog](#).

Kerry's Place Brave Space

Brave Space, a collection of resources, services and supports from 2SLGBTQ+ Youth and their families, is a step to honour, empower, and support everyone who lives at the intersection of autism and the 2SLGBTQ+ spectrums with information and evidence-informed resources and services. Kerry's Place aims to support those in our community who are navigating, or supporting a loved one who is navigating, their journey of discovering their identity within the spectrums of gender and sexuality. They are collaborating with subject matter experts to help ensure that the supports developed are evidence-informed and in line with current best practices for the 2SLGBTQ+ community.

<https://www.kerrysplace.org/brave-space-at-kerrys-place/>

CAMH New Report Innovative Practices in Supporting ALC Patients with a Dual Diagnosis

A [new report](#) highlights innovative practices used by hospitals and community organizations across Ontario to support successful hospital-to-community transitions for alternate levels of care (ALC) patients. Organized around the 10 core transition components of the Practice Guidance report, it aims to promote knowledge exchange and facilitate implementation, primarily for health and developmental service providers. Visit the [project website](#) for more information and resources.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Guelph Wellington Family Network

A group of family members and unpaid caregivers supporting an adult with a developmental disability. The Network is peer-based and led by families. The Guelph Wellington Family Network helps build connections and friendships, supports members through networking, education, and socializing and connects members to opportunities, supports, and information.

familynetworkGW@gmail.com

Indwell

Indwell is a Christian charity creating affordable housing communities to support people seeking health, wellness & belonging. They are one of the fastest-growing developers of new supportive affordable housing in Ontario. Looking for housing? Visit <https://indwell.ca>.

Qualia Counselling Services

Qualia Counselling Services is accepting new clients at all six locations with no waitlist. Qualia Counselling Services offers counselling sessions, in person and by telehealth, with skilled clinicians. They offer services for children (5+), adults, families and couples. Qualia Counselling Services provides the most evidence-based interventions to help individuals of all ages become their best self. In addition to therapeutic services, Qualia offers a robust selection of professional development courses, workshops, lunch & learns, bootcamps and CBT supervision to professionals. Follow the link provided for further details.

<https://qualiacounselling.com/training/>

Pearson Airport

Pearson Airport has partnered with Autism Ontario and Magnusmode (creator of the Magnus Cards app) to create an activity book to help prepare for travel. The airport also has sunflower lanyards that can be requested to signify the presence of an invisible disability. There are 20 different Magnus Card decks (on phone app) to help navigate aspects of travel. For more Pearson Airport neurodiversity support options, please visit: [Travel tools for autism and other diverse needs | Pearson Airport \(torontopearson.com\)](#).

Information, Opportunities & Resources

HCARDD Updated Website

Explore the newly revamped H-CARDD website to learn how the team has been working together with scientists, clinicians, service providers, policymakers, and people with developmental disabilities to improve the health and health care of adults with developmental disabilities. Here is what you will find on our website:

- [Projects](#) - Get an overview of H-CARDD's projects, including our latest report, [Supporting Alternate Level of Care Patients with a Dual Diagnosis to Transition from Hospital to Home: Practice Guidance](#)
- [Health Care Resources](#) - Access a wealth of resources tailored for health care professionals, family caregivers, and adults with developmental disabilities
- [Knowledge Exchange](#) - Explore easy-to-read summaries, snapshots, reports, newsletters, podcasts, and videos.
- [H-CARDD Blog Posts](#) - Dive into our archive of blog posts spanning from 2014 to the present.

Practice Guidance for ALC Patients

Adults with developmental disabilities who also have a psychiatric condition, often referred to as a dual diagnosis, face a significantly higher risk of becoming Alternate Level of Care (ALC) patients. These individuals no longer require hospital-level care but remain hospitalized due to a lack of suitable community settings. In this report, the H-CARDD team presents a comprehensive set of principles and core components designed to guide and support the successful transition of ALC patients with a dual diagnosis from hospitals to community settings in Ontario. Download our full report and summaries:

[Full Report](#) - [Summary](#) - [French Summary](#) - [Easy Read Version](#)

211

Life can be hard, but finding help is easy. Contact 211 day or night to find support for all of life's challenges. Call toll free at 1-877-330-3213. 211 is free and confidential and offers support in 150+ languages.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Accessibility Services Offered Through the KPL

Borrow a Chromebook

Kitchener Public Library partnered with the City of Kitchener to expand WIFI access in public spaces. Community members can now borrow Chromebooks from the collection to take home for a one-week loan period. The devices are available at all five library locations.

Daisy Reader with Download Content

Daisy readers are intended for customers who are blind, have low vision, or have another form of print disability. KPL recently purchased 15 new Daisy reader machines with enhanced navigation functions for easy use. They've added eight Victor Stratus machines to play Daisy audio discs and digital direct-to-player content through the Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA) digital library. They also have five Victor Stream readers, a smaller pocket-sized device that only plays digital direct-to-player content.

The library has been lending Daisy Readers and Daisy discs for a long time, but this is the first time lending Daisy devices with pre-loaded digital direct-to-player content. Staff can pre-load a mix of about 50 titles of different genres and interests on the Stratus and Stream readers, and the content rotates every few months. Customers can also complete a reading profile, and library staff will load additional digital content that suits their reading interests and preferences on a device for them.

New Yoto Mini Collection

The Yoto Mini is an excellent audio format for young kids. The small audio player plays audiobooks encoded on colourful plastic-coated cards. The Yoto players and accessories are nicely designed, attractive, and easy to use and manipulate. They are for children from birth to 12 years old. They are accessibility friendly for users with print, learning or developmental disabilities. The current collection includes 13 Yoto players, each with a set of audio cards on a different theme.

Visiting Library Service

Visiting Library is a free service that provides monthly delivery of library material to Kitchener residents who cannot visit the library in person.

Visiting Library customers can select their library material by placing holds through the catalogue or have a Visiting Library Selector (volunteer) gather library material based on their DiscoverRead form (reading profile).

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Employment Solution's Developmental Disabilities and Home Care

AO Employment Solution provides individuals living with Developmental Disability with professional personalized care including respite care, personal care, overnight care, and care management services. Learn more at <https://www.aoemploymentsolution.ca/>.

Surrey Place and CAMH – New Online Mental Health Toolkit

The Developmental Disabilities Primary Care Program (DDPCP) at Surrey Place introduces a new toolkit designed to assist physicians in addressing the mental health needs of adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). These resources complement the Canadian guidelines on primary care for adults with IDD, filling essential gaps in specialized supports. [View the Mental Health Toolkit here.](#)

2023 Youth Impact Survey Data Briefs and Snapshots

This data brief overviews the 1,867 responses received, covering UNICEF's nine child and youth well-being domains. It offers insights into the post-pandemic well-being of young people in the Waterloo Region. [View the briefs.](#)

2023 Youth Impact Survey Geography Snapshot

This snapshot report separates data by four geographic regions—Cambridge, Kitchener, Waterloo, and the Townships—to give a more detailed picture of child and youth well-being across the Waterloo Region. [View snapshot.](#) [View Geography deep dive.](#)

2023 Youth Impact Survey Age Snapshot

This snapshot report presents data segmented by three age groups: ages 9 to 12, 13 to 15, and 16 to 18. [View snapshot.](#) [Request the deep dive.](#)

2023 Youth Impact Survey Immigrant Snapshot

This snapshot report compares the experiences of children and youth born in Canada with those not born in Canada, highlighting well-being trends between these groups. [View snapshot.](#) [Request the deep dive.](#)

2023 Youth Impact Survey Gender Identity Snapshot

This snapshot report breaks down data by gender identities—boy, girl, and gender diverse—to provide a detailed picture of child and youth well-being. [View Snapshot.](#) [Request the deep dive.](#)

2023 Youth Impact Survey Sexual Orientation Snapshot

This snapshot report compares the responses of children and youth from various sexual orientations to offer a clearer picture of their well-being. [View the snapshot.](#) [Request the deep dive.](#)

Information, Opportunities & Resources

2023 Youth Impact Survey Experiences of Homelessness

This snapshot compares the responses of children and youth who have experienced homelessness to those who have not. [View the snapshot](#). [Request the deep dive](#).

New 2023 Youth Impact Survey Long-term Physical or Mental Condition Impacts Experiences*

This snapshot explores the responses of children and youth who have experienced a mental or physical condition to those who have not and reflects in their experiences. [View the snapshot](#). [Request the deep dive](#).

Tiny Home Communities: Innovation or Segregation?

With the ongoing housing crisis, several Canadian provinces are developing tiny home communities for vulnerable populations, including people with disabilities. Senior Policy Analyst Rachel Mills explores how these well-intentioned solutions can sometimes lead to harmful outcomes. It's crucial to learn from history and build truly inclusive communities. [Read the full article](#).

Partial Day Attendance in Canadian Schools: an Inclusive Education Canada Roundtable

Inclusive Education Canada held a roundtable discussing the issue of partial day attendance, where students with intellectual disabilities are forced to attend school for only part of the day. This practice disrupts learning and can lead to isolation. The roundtable featured leading experts and Mr. Kelly Lamrock, K.C., the New Brunswick Child and Youth Advocate, who recently released a powerful report titled "A Policy of Giving Up". [Access the report](#) and [watch the roundtable](#).

Re:Action4Inclusion: Empowering Youth for Inclusive Communities

This project from [Community Living Ontario](#) aims to empower youth to take individual and collective action to make schools and communities more inclusive. The goal is to change the Canadian disability narrative and make a real difference. This initiative has empowered thousands of youth across Ontario to become community leaders in their schools and communities. Over 100 provincial events have been hosted to educate youth and continue to reframe their understanding of inclusion. Youth have been provided various platforms to share their lived experiences with community stakeholders. Are you interested in learning more and joining the Youth Advisory Committee? Please complete a Youth Advisory Committee Application 2024 <https://form.jotform.com/241634797390264>. For more details visit (reaction4inclusion.com).

Information, Opportunities & Resources

ConnectABILITY Roommate Matching Webpage

Are you looking for a roommate or want to post your own roommate ad? ConnectABILITY has got you covered! Their roommate matching webpage is a fantastic resource where you can find and post ads that accommodate your specific housing needs. Whether you need a space that's accessible, close to transit, or just a great fit for your lifestyle, ConnectAbility.ca makes it easy to connect with potential roommates in our community. Check it out today and find the perfect match for your housing needs. Visit:

<https://connectability.ca/connected-families/forum/housing/>.

Partners for planning: Update to the Special Services at Home Guidelines

The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) has updated the Special Services at Home (SSAH) guidelines to align with CanChild's F-Words in Child Development. Families can now use their SSAH funding flexibly to support their child's interests and development. [Visit the MCCSS website](#) for the new guidelines. P4P has created an [SSAH Overview video and resource page](#) to help families navigate SSAH applications.

Counselling Collaborative of Waterloo Region: Autism Mental Health Support*

Are you a parent of an autistic child or teen or an autistic adult seeking mental health support? The Counselling Collaborative of Waterloo Region is here to help. This collaborative includes five Community Mental Health Agencies in the region, with over 50 therapists offering professional autism-informed therapy. Locations throughout Waterloo Region include Kitchener, Cambridge, Waterloo, Elmira, and New Hamburg. Virtual and telephone appointments are also offered. The central intake can connect individuals with the CCWR agency of choice. Flexible payment options include a sliding scale based on income, insurance benefits, or OAP core funding. Eligibility for other funding may also be discussed during intake. To register for counselling, visit counsellingwr.ca or call 519-884-0000.

Support Groups

PFLAG Waterloo, Wellington & Perth Region (Parents & Friends of Lesbians & Gays)

The Waterloo Wellington Perth Chapter of PFLAG invites you to attend our support group focusing on topics of interest to parents, family and friends of LGBTQ individuals. PFLAG Canada is Canada's only national organization that helps all Canadians with issues of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression. More info at: <https://www.facebook.com/PFLAG.WWP/>

The Association of Parent Support Groups in Ontario

The Association of Parent Support Groups in Ontario (APSGO) is for parents struggling with the behavior of a child, youth or young adult. APSGO support groups help parents/guardians develop effective strategies, set limits and boundaries, and build better relationships with their children. The group currently meets via Zoom on Wednesday at 7:15 pm. Go to apsgo.ca for more information.

Province-Wide Monthly Virtual Groups for Adults with FASD

The Fetal Alcohol Resource Program at ABLE2 is happy to announce the first two Province-wide virtual groups for adults living with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). They include the FASD Educational Group and the FASD Social Group. Both groups will be held monthly. You can participate at your comfort level from the comfort of your home. For more info contact the Fetal Alcohol Resource Program at 613-761-9252 Ext. 234 or fasd@able2.org.

Qualia Counselling Services – New Moms Experiencing Postpartum Anxiety and Depression

Qualia Counselling Services is extremely excited to announce the launch of a brand-new support group for new moms! The support group has an 8-week program designed for New Moms Experiencing Postpartum Anxiety and Depression. This specialty group is for new moms looking for a welcoming space to learn, share, and practice skills and techniques to manage their emotions and thought patterns as they lead a balanced life through their postpartum. For more information, please contact our administration team at info@qualiacounselling.com or [visit our website](#).

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Sawubona Africentric Circle of Support

Sawubona Africentric Circle of Support was created to provide a safe space for families of African descent to come together to meet and connect, share resources, expertise and needs, inspire and support one another through our unique and often challenging and isolating journey of raising Black children or supporting a sibling, of any age, with a disability. This is a volunteer-run group that meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month from 7 – 8:30 pm via Zoom. There will be guest speakers, resource sharing, support and mentorship opportunities for attendees. Contact: For more details or to register, please contact bpsgroup2020@gmail.com.

South Asian Wellness Group

The South Asian Wellness Group is a drop-in group every Thursday from 6 to 7:30 pm on Zoom with occasional in-person meetings. With a South Asian Peer Facilitator fluent in Punjabi, Hindi and Urdu, this group will focus on coping, recovery, and fostering hope from a South Asian lens. ALL Self Help & Peer Support groups are open to adults living in Waterloo Wellington communities who identify as living with mental health or/and substance use issues. To join this group or if you have questions about it, please send us an email: selfhelpgroup@cmhaww.ca.

The A-Team of Waterloo Region

The A-Team of Waterloo Region is primarily run by individuals with Asperger's Syndrome, for individuals with Asperger's Syndrome, with some assistance from Bridges to Belonging. Their goal is to create a safe and welcoming environment to meet fellow adults (age 18+) with Asperger's Syndrome (ASD – level 1), discuss topics of interest, share experiences, and embrace their neurological diversity. Please go to <https://ateamwaterlooregion.wordpress.com/about/> for more information on how to register and attend the upcoming virtual meetings!

Virtual Peer Support for Newly-Diagnosed Autistic Women

Researchers are evaluating the impact of participating in a [virtual peer support program](#) on the well-being of newly-diagnosed autistic women. Who can participate? Adults 18 years or older who identify as a woman, have received a formal diagnosis of autism in the last 8 months, and live in Ontario. [See flyer for additional details](#). Questions? Contact Princess Owusu at AWPeerSupport@camh.ca.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

CIA - Connecting, Interests and Activities

CIA is a group in Waterloo Region for adults (18+) with Asperger's or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) level 1. The purpose of the group is to create a safe and supportive space for people to have fun, meet and connect with others, and take part in activities. Join if you're looking for a positive place of belonging! Meetings take place at the Downtown Community Centre (35 B Weber Street West), in the Multi-Purpose Room on the second Thursday of each month. This is a drop-in group, so folks are welcome to join anytime between 5 and 7 pm.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Kelly Groh at 519-731-3923 or grohtech@xplornet.com.

Virtual Support Group for Adolescents with FASD

The return of the Virtual Support Group for Teens with FASD. This group meets every Wednesday night at 7 – 8:30 pm. Contact Rob for more information at rmacdonald@lutherwood.ca.

Street Therapy

Street Therapy is a fee-for-service psychotherapy clinic located at 177 Victoria St. N in Kitchener. Street Therapy will be offering a monthly ADHD support group starting January of 2024. The group will take place virtually on the first Saturday of every month throughout the year. Their goal is to help provide the local ADHD community a safe space to connect with like-minded individuals and encourage access to a neuro-inclusive community. Please see the following link for details.

<https://www.streettherapy.ca/groups/>

Waterloo Wellington Down Syndrome Society Support Group

Mothers Connection is a group supporting Moms with young children with Down syndrome with childcare provided. Go to WWDSS.ca or email info@wwdss.ca for more information.

Centre for ADHD Awareness Canada (CADDAC) Past Webinar Presentations

Are you interested in accessing the recordings of CADDAC's seminars from the live presentations at the 15th Annual ADHD Conference? Please click the link below!

<https://caddac.ca/past-premium-conferences-workshops/>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

CADDAC Support Groups

ADHD Support Groups - Adult ADHD and Parent Support Groups

CADDAC is excited to announce that our ADHD Support groups for both Adults and Parents are now back in session! In addition, we are excited to introduce a new Western Time zone Parent Support Group. You do not need to join the group of the time zone you're in. You can join whichever regional meeting that fits in your schedule. [Learn more and register!](#)

ADHD and Substance Use Disorder Peer-led Support Group

Through these virtual group sessions, participants will receive emotional support and mentorship, critical education about ADHD, and strategies on how to manage some of the core symptoms that have led to substance use. These groups will be offered in different time zones across Canada and will be peer-led by trained Peer Support Facilitators.

<https://caddac.ca/programs-and-events/#support-groups>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Engagement Opportunities

Vulnerable Persons Alert - Support Bill 74

There is a Bill in front of the Provincial legislature right now called Bill 74 Missing Persons Amendment Act. It proposes to amend the Amber Alert system to add vulnerable people - children and adults with disabilities, adults with dementia, other vulnerabilities. The bill was presented to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy on May 16 for a first reading. You can help push the government to pass this act! Show your support by emailing your MPP and ask them to pass Bill 74. Sign the petition here:

https://www.moniquetaylormpp.ca/vulnerable_persons_alert

Siblings Canada

For Families

Are you a sibling of a person with a disability? Watch the webcast, [Understanding the Experiences of Siblings of People with Disabilities](#). The session sheds light on some of the research Siblings Canada has done on siblings of individuals with neurodevelopmental disabilities, and the challenges, joys, and important roles that siblings play in the lives of their family members with disabilities. After watching the video, you will have the chance to [answer 3 questions to help with the work](#) they do.

For Service Providers

If you work for a community agency, service provider, or disability organization, Siblings Canada wants to learn more about how organizations are including siblings in their programs and services. [If you want to contribute to this research, please consider completing this 5-minute survey.](#)

P4P Planning and Facilitation Collaborative*

The Planning and Facilitation Collaborative (PFC) is live! This space allows professionals and aspiring professionals to share knowledge, experiences, and develop skills through online courses on planning and facilitation. We invite planners and facilitators to join the PFC and help spread the word. For more information, visit this [link](#).

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Community of Hearts

Community of Hearts is looking to add some new programs to its Day Program as well as some new group Evening Programs! They are currently discussing the subject options with participants during the Day Program and would also love caregivers, supports, and participants' who attend other programs feedback! The survey should only take you 2-3 minutes.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/3N725XM>

WRDSB

The WRDSB is building a public education system where every student can experience success - but, they can't do it alone! These three new engagement plans will allow them to better hear from the students, families and community members they serve: <https://wrdsb.social/468vSsf>

Azrieli Adult Neurodevelopmental Centre Research Study: Clinical trial of nabilone for severe behavioural problems (aggression) in adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities

The aim of the study is to improve the well-being of adults with developmental disabilities and distressing behaviours through the use of Nabilone medication. Open to adults with a developmental disability, difficulty managing anxiety or frustration, 25 years of age and older.

Phone: 416-535-8501 ext. 32817

Email: n-and@camh.ca or hsiang-yuan.lin@camh.ca.

OMSSA Recreation Providers Survey

This Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA) survey collects baseline information about recreational care availability across Ontario. Results will help identify gaps in provision, staffing and funding across the province.

[Take the OMSSA Recreation Providers Survey here.](#)

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) Lab at Queen's University

The ASD Lab at Queen's University is running an online study called the Tone of Voice study. We are trying to better understand how youth perceive emotions through tone of voice. We are seeking youth with and without autism between the ages of 13-18 to participate in our study. The study takes about 75 minutes to complete over Zoom with an experimenter, and youth will be compensated \$30 for their time. If you have question or would like to participate, please contact Daniel at tov.study@queensu.ca.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Queens University Study – Caregiver Stigma Experiences

This study aims to better understand the impact that stigma can have on caregivers of autistic children. This study involves five questionnaires which will take about 45-60 minutes for you to complete. Looking for primary caregivers of autistic children to participate. Must be fluent in English. Please email asd@queensu.ca to participate.

Karis Disability Services – Host Families Needed

We are looking for caring families and individuals: please consider sharing and welcoming a person with a disability into your home. In addition to personal rewards, as a Host Family you will receive ongoing training and support from professional staff and non-taxable financial remuneration. Part-time (respite) host families are always welcome to apply!

E-mail: gwfamilyhome@christian-horizons.org

<https://christianhorizons.org/host-family-services/>

Federal Survey Re: Registered Disability Savings Plans

The federal government is currently hosting a survey on Registered Disability Savings Plans. If you or a relative have an RDSP, we would encourage you to complete the survey, which can be found here: www.pra.ca/SurveyCDSP.

Shared Picture Book Study

Wilfrid Laurier University Department of Psychology invites parents/caregivers of children age 3-5 years to participate in a “shared picture book study.” During the one-hour sessions, parents will do a survey and children will engage in literacy games with the researcher. Parents will take home picture books to explore together with their child in between sessions. Commitment time: five (5) in-person sessions 3-4 weeks apart. If you have any questions, please email Katie Reid at reid4150@mylaurier.ca.

ADHD Community Needs Assessment Survey

CADDAC is looking to expand its programs and services in Canada, and would like to get a better understanding of how to support individuals living with ADHD and their families. Please take a few minutes to fill out this survey. Those who complete the survey will be entered into a draw to win 1 of 3 \$50 Amazon gift cards!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/JFHP55X>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Barriers for Participation in Physical Activity Study

You're invited to participate in an online survey to help a Wilfrid Laurier University PhD student gain valuable insights into the topic, barriers and facilitators of physical activity among adults with intellectual disabilities. Feedback will be used to identify resources, tools, or program needs to promote physical activity of this population in subsequent study.

If as a caregiver (parent, guardian, friend, and relative) you are an adult over the age of 18, free from intellectual disabilities, provide care, and are knowledgeable about the daily patterns of an adult aged 18-64 with an intellectual disability and are interested, you would complete an online survey (about 15-25 minutes) about demographics, physical activity levels of the person with intellectual disabilities, and the physical activity barriers and facilitators you perceive adults with intellectual disabilities experience. This study has been approved by Wilfrid Laurier University's Research Ethics Board (REB#8659).

https://wlu.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_d6m5iWuZ5QajCHc

Please feel free to contact the facilitator, Hashem, at faal8600@mylaurier.ca if you have any questions/concerns.

Disability Without Poverty: Canada Disability Benefit Update: Draft Regulations Open for Feedback

The new Canada Disability Benefit offers a maximum of \$200 per month, far below community recommendations. For more information, read the [Disability With Possibility Report](#). Stay tuned for the upcoming #BetterTheBenefit poster campaign.

Draft Regulations - Available online [here](#) for feedback until September 23.

Steps to Take:

1. Apply for the Disability Tax Credit (DTC) to be eligible for the CDB.
2. File your taxes, even with zero income.
3. Share your stories and advocate to MPs through emails, meetings, and community events.

Send a Letter to Your MP - Use this [link](#) to send a letter easily.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Community of Hearts Social Committee - Call for Members

Community of Hearts invites individuals to join their Social Committee this fall to help plan and host inclusive social events for adults with disabilities in Guelph. If you have a disability, support someone with a disability, or want to assist in creating engaging community activities, this is a beautiful opportunity to get involved. Members will receive a \$50 honorarium for attending all four meetings, which will take place on the first Tuesday of each month from 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM: September 3rd, October 1st, November 5th, and December 3rd. Meetings will be held at the Community of Hearts Lifelong Learning Centre, located inside Old Quebec St Mall, 55 Wyndham St N, T28, Guelph, ON. Refreshments will be provided. For more information or to join, contact info@communityofhearts.ca or call 519-826-9056

CAMH: Azrieli Neurodevelopment Centre Brain Health-IDD Study*

The Brain Health-IDD virtual education programs will be offered again this fall. These programs are open to the following individuals:

- [Adults with a developmental disability aged 40 years and older](#)
- [Family caregivers aged 60 years and older caring for an adult with IDD OR caregivers \(any age\) of an adult with IDD aged 40 years and older](#)
- [Health and social service providers support adults aged 40 years and older with IDD.](#)

For more information, email brainhealthIDD@camh.ca.

Volunteer Opportunities with LDAWC

If you're looking to make a meaningful difference in a child's life, the Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County (LDAWC) offers several rewarding volunteer positions. Volunteers will gain valuable experience working with children with suspected or diagnosed learning disabilities, earn volunteer hours, and receive graduate school reference letters. Training and supplies are provided.

Reading Rocks

A literacy support program that focuses on improving the reading skills of children with learning disabilities. Volunteers can work one-on-one with a child to help them progress on their literacy journey. For more details or to apply, contact ldwacrr@gmail.com or call 519-837-2050.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Executive Skills

A program that helps children develop essential executive functioning skills such as planning, organizing, and time management. Volunteers will work closely with children to enhance these skills in a fun, supportive environment. For more information, contact ldawcexecutiveskills@gmail.com or call 519-837-2050.

SOAR

A program is designed to support children in developing their social and organizational skills. Volunteers can help children build confidence and practical skills to navigate their academic and social environments. To apply, contact LDAWCSOAR@gmail.com or call 519-837-2050.

For more information about these volunteer opportunities, visit www.ldawc.ca

Spectrum Events Calendar and More*

Check out the [Rainbow Community Calendar](#) where you'll find details on SPECTRUM's groups and events. This is also your clearinghouse of 2SLGBTQIA+ events in Waterloo Region.

QRIB Hangouts

Come join the QRIB community hangouts, where Queer, Racialized, Indigenous, and Black individuals foster a home away from home! In collaboration with the Willow River Centre, Spectrum's BRIQ House hosts get-togethers with refreshments (ex., Karaoke, bonfires, etc). The events are free though capped at 30 people, so we recommend RSVPing! All allies are welcome and encouraged to donate (ex. \$5) to the Willow River Centre to support safer queer racialized spaces locally. [RSVP here](#).

Recruiting Board Members

Spectrum is looking for individuals with the following experience or skills: finance and accounting, IT, legal and liability, or governance. This is a great opportunity to network and build connections within the community.

They strive for their board to match their community as fully as possible. Therefore, they are especially interested in hearing from candidates who identify as non-binary and/or Black, Indigenous, or Racialized. If you are interested, visit [here](#).

Information, Opportunities & Resources

News

Inclusion Canada: Canada Disability Benefit - Hear From Those It Impacts

Inclusion Canada is disappointed by the federal budget's allocation of a maximum of only \$200 per month for the new Canada Disability Benefit (CDB). This amount falls significantly short of what the community recommended and is insufficient to meet the needs of people with disabilities living in poverty. A social media campaign featuring several board members expressing their concerns about the CDB has been launched. Explore their opinions through the video series and check out the updated policy brief for detailed insights. [Access the vision and design for the CDB](#) and the [French version here](#).

H-CARDD Holds First Annual Brain Health-IDD Summit

The Brain Health-IDD team recently held its first annual summit, gathering 52 participants from six provinces, including scientists, clinicians, people with disabilities, and family caregivers. Attendees learned about virtual education programs for self-advocates, families, and [service providers funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research \(CIHR\) in partnership with the Azrieli Foundation and its Canadian Centre for Caregiving Excellence](#). Program teachers shared valuable lessons on aging, caregivers' challenges, and those they care for.

The summit also introduced the second [Brain Health-IDD study](#), funded by the same brain health initiative and conducted in collaboration with nine community agencies across Canada. This study aims to enhance the spread and scale of an IDD dementia screening program.

Next year's summit is eagerly anticipated. Stay tuned for upcoming Communities of Practice sessions, where brain health and aging topics will be explored in-depth-

CARDD Team at IASSIDD 2024 World Congress

The H-CARDD team will present their work to the global intellectual disability research community at the IASSIDD 2024 World Congress in Chicago. To stay updated, follow the hashtag #iassidd2024 on social media.