



Family Pulse

Where exceptional families thrive.

Issue 118
February 2020

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Happy February! I hope you are staying warm in the cold weather. In this issue, you will find the SEAC updates, the Coffee Club updates, and of course information about what is happening at WRFN and in the community. We will begin with our article this month: some words from Cristina about her experience and feelings about disclosing her disability.



[Support WRFN Today](#)

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

SEAC Updates

Special Education Advisory Update—

Waterloo Catholic District School Board & Waterloo Region District School Board

Submitted by Carmen Sutherland, Waterloo Region District School Board Representative and Sue Simpson, Waterloo Catholic District School Board Representative

At the January meeting, both Waterloo Region District School Board and Waterloo Catholic District School Board joined together to visit the Waterloo Regional Police Headquarters in Cambridge to learn about the provincial Special Olympics Ontario - Spring Games that will be taking place in May of this year. Cst. Melissa Quarrie WRPS shared information about Special Olympics and details about the Spring Games and the five ways you can get involved:

1. Consider drafting an athlete for only \$500 <https://give.specialolympicsontario.com/games/>
2. Register to volunteer your time
3. Help us spread the word to others that the Spring Games are coming to Waterloo Region
4. Come to the Games including opening and closing ceremonies and cheer on the athletes
5. Share your experience with the Spring Games by #GoBeyond

The athletes will be competing in power lifting, rhythmic gymnastics, bowling, swimming, and basketball at various venues around Kitchener-Waterloo from May 21 through May 23. If you are interested in volunteering, please visit 2020springgames.com/volunteer.

Autism in High School

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

What's Happening at WRFN

Summer Camp & Recreation Fair

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

Wednesday,
February 5, 2020
6-8pm

KidsAbility
-Waterloo site-
500 Hallmark Drive,
Waterloo

For more information contact
Erin Sutherland,
Waterloo Region Family Network
erin.sutherland@wrfn.info
519-886-9150 ext. 4

Sheryl Dedman,
KidsAbility
519-886-8886 ext 3260



Are you looking for the right camp or recreation program for your loved one?

The Camp & Recreation Fair is a great place to learn about the variety of options available in Waterloo Region and beyond.

Connect with camp and recreation providers to ask questions and find out which programs are the right fit for your family. This is a drop-in session, no registration necessary.

Everyone is Welcome!

Offered In Partnership By:



What's Happening at WRFN



A NEW CHAPTER

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

RSVP to Wendy Newbery at wrnewbery@gmail.com is appreciated but not required.

RSVP by Dec 30 is required for Jan 7 session

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

DECEMBER 3, 2019

A conversation about paid employment and volunteer work.
(Rm #2015 at The Family Centre)

JANUARY 7, 2020

Learn to drum with Kat Van Groove, no experience necessary! Fun, vibration, and joyful rhythm! Drums are provided. \$20 per person. Refreshments and social time will follow our drumming session. *If the cost is going to prevent you from attending, please contact Wendy Newbery for information about a bursary).
(Rm #2015 at The Family Centre)

FEBRUARY 4, 2020

A conversation about housing.
(Rm #1023 at The Family Centre)

Doors open at

6:30pm,

meetings run from

6:45 - 8:30PM at

The Family Centre

65 Hanson Ave., Kitchener

****Bring your own reusable water bottle or tea thermos****



What's Happening at WRFN



A NEW CHAPTER

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

RSVP to Wendy Newbery at wrnewbery@gmail.com is appreciated but not required.

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

MARCH 3, 2020

What does "self care" REALLY mean?
(Rm #1023 at The Family Centre)

APRIL 7, 2020

Building a network - for your child, for you!
(Rm #2011 at The Family Centre)

MAY 5, 2020

Microboards for future planning
(Rm #2015 at The Family Centre)

JUNE 2, 2020

Fun and social (more information coming!)
(Rm #1023 at The Family Centre)

Doors open at 6:30pm, meetings run from 6:45 - 8:30PM at The Family Centre

65 Hanson Ave., Kitchener

****Bring your own reusable water bottle or tea thermos****



What's Happening at WRFN

We have a broad number of resources to help you and your family thrive!

Please visit www.wrfn.info for a full list of our supports.

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. Meet 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. To request a booking please complete the [request form](#).

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

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

School-Issue Parent Support Group—Do you have questions/concerns about school issues for your child/youth with exceptionalities? Join us at our peer-led parent support group. This is a great opportunity to share questions, concerns and successful tips in a safe environment while learning from others. The support group is held the last Wednesday of every month (except June, July and December). Learn more [here](#).

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

Coffee Club Update

Hi Guys,

It is February, the month of love! Except not in Brazil and some other countries. Fun fact, their Valentine's Day is June 12!

Monday, February 10, 7 to 9 PM The Studio (109 Ottawa Street, South, Unit B): We will be watching a movie, I am still working out itch one and will keep you updated. I promise to bring something chocolate-y, and feel free to do that as well.

Monday, February 24, 7 to 9 PM East Side Mario's (450 King St. North): We will be having dinner together, and everyone will be paying for their own meal and beverage. **Please RSVP by Friday, February 21, at NOON** so I can know how many people to make a reservation for.

If you need to get in touch with me, do not hesitate to contact me at 519-500-7153 or carmen.sutherland@wrfn.info.

Explain What You Need—My philosophy on disclosing my exceptionality

Submitted by Cristina Stanger, Self-Advocacy Liaison WRFN

When meeting with clients in my role as Self-Advocacy Liaison, I generally disclose my own diagnoses of exceptionality within the first 15 minutes of an appointment.

With that in mind, it may surprise you to know that I am fairly guarded in sharing my diagnoses in my day-to-day life. With time and practise, I've developed a strategy to side-step full disclosure of a formal, medical diagnosis. Instead I describe what accommodations I require, or what exceptionalities I have in a practical sense, without getting too technical. I've heard this described as 'partial disclosure' by another self-advocate, but I find that term confusing; I prefer to think of my approach as "explaining what I need" on an as-needed basis.

Let me draw a parallel to personal finances. Generally speaking, one does not openly share personal financial information with people outside of one's inner circle of support (those who do are usually committing a social blunder). Just as I don't volunteer my personal financial details unless absolutely necessary, I also don't volunteer my personal medical details any more than necessary either. I consider a diagnostic term to be almost like medical currency - very valuable and very personal. And in my experience, using a diagnostic term isn't necessary or helpful in many situations.

The reasons why I think very carefully about full disclosure:

- I would be sharing very important information about myself, and that action cannot be undone.
- I can request accommodations without disclosure of a formal medical diagnosis, based on my understanding of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.
- I have no way of knowing how this information will be received; Do they have a preconceived notion about my condition? Were they prepared to receive such important and delicate information?
- I do not know for certain what will be done with my medical information (even if I have expectations about what should be done from a confidentiality standpoint).
- It allows space for someone to question my diagnosis based on their own understanding (or lack thereof) of a diagnostic term. As a result, I may not get the support I need if they make their own assumptions.
- Full disclosure makes me more vulnerable to discrimination. While this may seem pessimistic, I think it is a realistic consideration.

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The reasons why I find explaining what I need to be more effective:

- It doesn't expect too much of the person receiving the information. It took me years to understand my own diagnoses, including the medical terminology, so how can I expect someone else to do this quickly and accurately?
- It gives concrete information for others to work with. Most people want to be helpful - so explaining what I need allows them to help me more effectively and to remove the guesswork. Eg. "Sometimes I get overwhelmed in crowds, is there a quiet space I can use to unwind if I need it?"
- This approach subtly acknowledges that I do have some form of difference or exceptionality, so it doesn't leave people wondering why I might be doing things a little differently from the status quo.
- By explaining what I need to be successful, it shows that I am trying to work and contribute at my highest level of capability. It demonstrates a level of personal awareness and understanding, which is seen as a positive attribute by others.
- Explaining a need or difference without a diagnostic term makes me less vulnerable to misconceptions or misinformation. And, for some reason, it seems harder for others to question a subjective explanation of need versus an objectively stated medical label.
- It allows for relationship building to work toward a full disclosure down the road, if I deem it appropriate to do so. Eg. "Remember how I need a decluttered workspace, and I don't have a lot of stamina for highly social events? That's actually because I have xyz. I wanted you to know this because abc."

With this approach, I only tell others what they need to know, when they need to know it. I don't have personal experience disclosing on behalf of a child, but I still believe explaining how best to support your child will get you farther on a practical level than focusing on diagnostic terms.

There are times when full disclosure may be appropriate, but even then, it can still be paired with an explanation of need to be most effective. In the case of a medical practitioner, I will disclose my diagnosis and then follow it up with relevant information. For example, at a physiotherapy appointment I might say, "I have xyz, which means I have a high pain tolerance and I have difficulty localizing pain. So I may have trouble answering some of your questions." I try not to assume a medical professional will be adequately or accurately informed about my particular conditions; it is not humanly possible for them to be up to date on everything. Taking the initiative to explain the relevance of my medical diagnosis within a certain context becomes a form of self-advocacy.

As always, this is my personal philosophy. Every person and situation is different, and as such, may require a different approach to disclosure. Whatever you choose to do when it comes to disclosure of exceptionality, whether for yourself or a family member, please use your best judgement and make that choice thoughtfully.

If you or your family members would like to discuss this, or another topic, please reach out to Cristina through the Ask A Self-Advocate program (AASA) via our [Online Booking Request Form](#). As with all WRFN programming, the AASA program is provided at no charge.

Upcoming Events

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.

EVENTS

9th International Research Conference on Adolescents and Adults with FASD Review Respond and Relate: Integrating Research, Policy and Practice Around the World

April 22-25, 2020, The Hyatt Regency Vancouver

During the 2020 Conference, participants can expect to:

- Connect the identified needs of community workers, healthcare providers, and families with the research community
- Recognize emerging research findings and how they might better assist ethical policy and decision making and the development of integrated and collaborative approaches across systems
- Examine practice-based evidence, projects and programs to understand the potential connections to research and potential longitudinal studies
 - Engage in knowledge exchange and dialogue through sessions, networking and the direct experience of individuals with FASD and families

For more information, please click [here](#).

Autism Ontario Events

There are many events happening with Autism Ontario all over the region. For more information, please click [here](#).

Community of Hearts

There are many activities going on this month at Community of Hearts. For more information, please go to their website [here](#).

Dr. Stephen Shore, Live!

February 4, 2020, 9-AM-4 PM

Morning Session: A's of Autism: Awareness to Acceptance to Appreciation
Transition to an abilities based model!

Recommended for: Educators, Caregivers, Social Workers and Individuals on Spectrum

Afternoon Session: Social Inclusion of People with Autism in Education

Recommended for: Educators (EA)

Location: Sonderly, 112 Merton St. Toronto, Ontario, M4S 2Z8

Learn more [here](#).

Upcoming Events

PROGRAMS/RECREATION

Sky Zone Sensory Jumps

Sky Zone will turn off the music and dial down the distractions for the comfort and pleasure of their exceptional guests, friends and families. Sensory Jumps are held every Thursday from 4:00pm - 5:00pm

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

Cost: \$15 + tax each, chaperones are free Contact: 519-804-4455 if you have any questions.

PossibiliOT Sensory-Friendly Playtime

PossibiliOT and Recharge & Play Wellness Cafe are co-hosting a sensory-friendly playtime event monthly at our play space. The next event is on **February 4** from 5-7 P. M.

These events will take place monthly, and are meant for children who need a quieter playground, less people and generally a less overwhelming experience. It has been designed by an OT and a early childhood educator. The OT will be there to talk to families and play with the children.

It is regular admission prices, with a cap of 15 kids total per event to keep stimulation down.

Ages 3+ – \$9.95 | 6 month-3 years of age \$5.95 | 0-6months of age – FREE

Sibling rate (with one regularly priced admission):

Under 3 – \$3.50 | Ages 3+ – \$7.50

For more information, please see the Facebook event [here](#).

Skating

The Cambridge Sports Park is offering weekly skating for persons with physical and developmental disabilities. This is a great opportunity to practice your skating skills or develop a new skill while socializing with peers.

Support and accommodation needs must be arranged by the individual attending. Support persons and caregivers will not be charged the skating fee.

For more information contact Brian Hood, 519-622-4494 or Brian@cambridgesportspark.com.

Cambridge Youth Soccer ACES Program

Hosted by: Grassroots Head Coach Jon Morgan and Development Staff Coaches

Venue: ComDev Indoor Soccer Park **Cost:** FREE

Who: 5 – 15 Years old (15 spots available) | 16 – 24 years old (10 spots available)

When: Wednesday 6 – 7pm starting February 20 (8 weeks)

For more information please contact:

Jon Morgan grassroots@cambridgesoccer.ca

CYS Clubhouse +1 (519) 653-8800 or clubhouse@cambridgesoccer.ca.

Upcoming Events

Community of Hearts

There is a lot going on at Community of Hearts. These include:

Sunday Social Club—Every Sunday from 2-4 PM. Different activities take place on different days including art, bingo, board games, and karaoke. \$25 for an all year membership.

Safety for Independent Living Workshop—Saturdays Feb 1, 8, and 15 1-3 P. M.

Through games, digital media, video, lessons and visual aids, we will empower participants with the tools they need to make confident choices and live a safe life.

\$200 for all three sessions. (Passport friendly.)

Brunch Club—Wednesdays April 8-June 3 3:30-5:30 P. M.

This group gives you the tools and freedom to create brunch meals independently for yourself or friends. With the support of a Life Skills Educator, visual cookbook and colour coded measuring tools, making brunch has never been easier! Learn to make brunch meals with the group, enjoy the meal with friends and gain kitchen confidence to cook for yourself!

\$200 for all sessions (Passport friendly.)

Friendship and Dating Program—Saturdays April 18-June 13. This program supports you to build on social skills to create and maintain friendships and relationships. This spring, we have put together a curriculum to support youth, adults and seniors with developmental exceptionalities to identify, develop and practice creating friendships and relationships.

\$249 for all sessions. (Passport friendly.)

Weekend Warriors- Upcoming Dates: Feb 21- 23, 2020; Mar 27 - 29, 2020

Experience a unique atmosphere to learn and challenge yourself in an outdoor environment. Hike along beautiful natural trails, try snowshoeing, archery, nature photography or tobogganing! All while enjoying time with friends. \$300 per weekend. Passport funding friendly.

Choir of Hearts—Fridays 3:30-4:30 P. M.

First Session January-March; Second Session March-June

Get ready to sing your heart out! Choir of Hearts is an inclusive singing group aimed at building self-confidence through using our voices. We will be working on musical skills such as matching pitches, clapping rhythms, reading music, learning the names of notes, and singing in rounds, unisons, and solos.

For more information on all of their programming, please call 519-826-9056 or

info@communityofhearts.ca

Our Place Family Resource and Early Years Centre

Our Place has shared their [February calendar](#).

Check out all the great programs they have running!

Upcoming Events

Bridges to Belonging Winter Potluck

Please join Bridges to Belonging on February 23 from 5-8 P.M. at Community of Christ Church (414 Fischer-Hallman Rd, Kitchener, ON N2M 4Y1) for a Winter Potluck. We will eat great food and spend some quality time together. Please RSVP to rowett.iv@sympatico.ca.

Waterloo Region Down Syndrome Society Programs and Recreation

NEW! Previously separated into two classes by age groups, the classes are now combined into one morning class.

WRDSS is pleased to partner with Lisa Leachman, certified Healthy Hands Cooking Instructor with Wholesome Measures, to teach cooking classes for children ages 6-13. Lisa will provide engaging and interactive cooking classes that teach your child important cooking skills and how to make healthy food choices. Cooking themes will change from class to class and will always start with a healthy snack and finish with eating what they have made.

The session will include 5 classes. One parent/caregiver is required to attend each class with your child to assist if/when required. There is a limit of 6 students per class.

DATES: Feb 1st - March 28th, Bi-weekly TIME: 10am – 11:30am

WHERE: St. James Anglican Church (520 Ellis Rd, Hespeler) COST: \$50

To register, click [here](#).

Cooking Classes for Ages 14+

NEW Location: Parkminster United Church (275 Erb Street East, Waterloo, ON N2J 1N6)

SESSION: Various dates January to June TIME: 6:00pm to 8:30pm COST: \$55

Cooking class will focus on:

Basic cooking skills | Knife skills | Safe food handling | Following Recipes

Measuring ingredients | Table setting | Clean up

Select Class Options Still Available:

3rd Tuesday of the month - Intermediate Skill Level - To register for this class, click [here](#).

3rd Thursday of the month - Beginner Skill Level—To register for this class, click [here](#).

February Teen Hang Out

For teens ages 13 to the end of high school, come out for fun night of bowling and hang out.

Support workers will be present and parents are not expected to stay.

Saturday, February 8, 2020, 7:00-9:00 PM, Victoria Bowl - 280 Victoria St S, Kitchener

\$15 for WRDSS Members. You must be a member to participate.

You must PRE-REGISTER by February 5th to secure your spot.

Buddy Choir

Sponsored by The Waterloo Regional Down Syndrome Society and Our Studio.

A choir for ANYBODY who loves to perform! We rehearse Mondays 6:30 until 8:00 at

141 Whitney Place Kitchener. For more information email myc50@gmail.com or 519-501-6747.

Upcoming Events

Gym Drop-In for Youth

The Family Centre runs a drop-in gym program Monday evenings from 7-8:30 p.m. This program is for youth ages 10-17. This is a great opportunity to get active, have some fun and try out different sports. Don't forget your running shoes!

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

Extend-A-Family Weekend Social Club

Extend-A-Family Waterloo Region is pleased to continue offering the Weekend Social Club (WSC) to Waterloo Region. Founded by the Kitchener Waterloo Association for Community Living and with support from WRDSS, this program's goal is to inspire active participation in the community.

WSC offers recreational opportunities for adults ages 18+ with a developmental disability where a variety of community events and interests are explored. Events and activities range from attending sporting events, going nature hikes, visiting historical places and so much more.

The winter/spring session runs from January - June, 2020 and the registration fee for this session is \$35 (plus any additional costs for special events or trips). If required, a direct support person must be provided.

For more information or to register, please contact Ben Sauder, Support Coordinator/Community Group Supervisor at 519-741-0190 x290 or ben.sauder@eafwr.on.ca.

WORKSHOPS/TRAINING

Workshops and Groups from Woolwich Counselling Centre

Glad to Be Me for Children 4-7

This fun-filled children's program promotes self-esteem and self-worth.

Upcoming Sessions: March 2, April 6, all 5-6 P.M. All \$20/session

No Need to Fret Ages 8-11

Successful strategies are provided to help anxious children cope with fears and worries.

Upcoming Sessions: Tuesdays March 3, 10, 24, 31 and April 7, 6-7 P.M. Fee \$100

Mindfulness Adult Workshop

This six week course will help you discover a healthier, more relaxed and focused you. February 6, 13, 20, 27 and March 5, 2020, 6-8:30 P. M. Fee: \$100. Pre-interview required.

Stand Tall for Children 7-9

This group promotes confidence and assertiveness enabling children to express and protect themselves.

February 24, March 2, 9, 23 and 30, 2020, 6:30-7:30 P. M. Fee: \$100

For any of these groups please call 519-869-8651 for more information.

Upcoming Events

Workshops from Centre for ADHD Awareness Canada (CADDAC)

ADHD and Anxiety: Differentiating Between the Two Dr. Julie Desjardins February 24, 2020

Differentiating between diagnoses of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and anxiety can be challenging given the many symptoms shared between these conditions (e.g., restlessness/psychomotor agitation, concentration difficulties, decreased attention, increased distractibility, mood swings, and anger outbursts) (Grogan et al., 2017). To further complicate matters, studies have revealed that approximately one third of adults with ADHD have current comorbid anxiety or mood disorders (“Managing ADHD”, 2007). Within children specifically, those with ADHD and anxiety have a comorbidity rate of 25% of the general population, and between 30% and 40% of children who have been clinically referred also share that comorbidity (Jarrett et al., 2016). Therefore, it may be difficult to tell if an individual has an anxiety disorder, ADHD or both. This presentation will help attendees to better understand presenting symptoms by explaining how to: 1) understand the overlap of symptoms and identify key components to help differentiate; 2) develop an approach to the differential diagnosis of these conditions; and 3) determine when a dual diagnosis is appropriate.

This webinar will be recorded and available to registrants following the original airing.

For more information and to register for this event, click [here](#).

Understanding ADHD in Adults and Adolescents What Adolescents, Adults, and Parents Need to Know

When: Saturday, March 7, 2020 | 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM

Where: North York Civic Centre, 5100 Yonge Street; Toronto, Ontario; M2N 5V7

Ticket Price: \$30 for 1 OR \$50 for 2

For Adults:

Executive Functioning in Adults with ADHD: Setting ourselves up for success

Understanding ADHD in the Workplace

Self-Regulation 101: Phew – that was intense!

Understanding ADHD’s Impact on Adult Relationships

For Adolescents:

Transitioning from Childhood ADHD into Adolescent ADHD and Beyond

Executive Functioning in Adolescents with ADHD: Setting them up for success

Getting Ready for the Transition into Post-Secondary

Self-Regulation in Adolescence: Navigating the perfect storm

For more information and to register, click [here](#).

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder Training for Caregivers from DSRC and FASD Waterloo

Two Day Training April 2 & 3, 9-3 P. M.

Learn how prenatal exposure affects the brain. Learn how FASD impacts behaviour with a focus on executive and adaptive functioning. Identify what is needed to support individuals living with FASD.

Learn about local resources and supports available to families.

Located at Developmental Services Resource Centre

Upcoming Events

Programs Offered at DSRC Your Tax Questions Answered

Presenter(s): Speakers from Canada Revenue Agency and H&R Block

Dates: Thursday, February 6, 2020, Time: 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m

Learn more about completing taxes when you have dependents with a disability and/or mental health diagnoses.

Discussing Puberty and Sexuality With Your Child

April 7, 2020, 6-8:00 P. M.

Presenters: Louise Rodgers, R, BScN Jessica Gambacort, B.A., BCaBA

This workshop will address body and behavioural changes that occur during puberty. We will give you resources and strategies to help you guide your child through this next step in their development and give them the knowledge and skills to keep them safe.

Tips for Parents of Individuals with Autism

April 20, 2020, 6-8:30 P. M., Presenter: Stuart Lamont, B.SD., RSSW

This workshop is designed to provide parenting strategies for parents/ guardians of individuals with autism. This workshop will review parenting styles, discuss challenging behaviours and the possible causes behind these behaviours. Additionally, the instructor will provide strategies to address these challenging behaviours.

Communication Skill Development and Autism

April 29, 2020, 6-8:30 P. M.

This workshop will provide an overview of practical strategies to support communication development for individuals with ASD. For more information, please click [here](#).

Helping Individuals with Autism Navigate the Social World (2 Part Workshop)

May 12, 2020 AND May 19, 2020, 9:30 AM-1:30 P. M.

Individuals with autism typically do not learn many social skills by simply observing others in a social context. Parents and caregivers need to understand this. This workshop provides strategies, resources and educational materials to help parents and caregivers understand the difficulties in teaching someone with autism social skills.

This is a 2-part course. You must take Part One to understand Part Two.

Sibling Support Group—Time for Brothers and Sisters

It is a 6 week group, for siblings of youth with autism. Youth, ages 11-14 will meet others who have similar experiences and challenges, in a supportive, fun environment that will encourage sharing. This group is free but a referral and registration are required. To make a referral call: 519-741-1121.

Speech-Language Pathology Clinics at DSRC

For DSRC clients, living in Waterloo Region,

with an Intellectual Disability and/or Autism Spectrum Disorder, over the age of 6 years.

Please call the Information Resource Assistant at DSRC (519 741 1121) to make an appointment:

One and half an (1.5) hour appointment times are available on the following dates:

Wednesday, Feb. 26, 2020 | Tuesday, March 24, 2020

For more information about what is happening at DSRC find their newsletter [here](#).

Upcoming Events

Workshop from Learning Disabilities of Wellington County

Are you or your child in grades 7-9 with an LD or ADHD? Are you looking prepare for the changes of high school?

SOAR (Some Assembly Required) Transition Planning Program

Monday @ 7P. M. – 8:30 P. M.

5 Sessions: Feb 3-March 9, 2020 *NEW START DATE*

(No sessions Jan 27-highschool exams, and Feb 17-Family Day)

Location: Guelph Collegiate Vocational Institute, 155 Paisley Street, Guelph, N1H 2P3

Cost: \$200 (\$180 for LDAWC members)

L & D's understanding your learning disability, your learning style and a model for problem solving
Tools for success 3 key areas – daily work, studying and tests, projects and assignments, and ways to approach successfully

Making Choices for the Future – Making Choices for the Future-changes and choices in high school, strategies to stay on top of homework and organizational issues, IEP and accommodations
Group based Learning - Each participant will get their own workbooks. Concepts taught will be re-inforced with games and hands-on activities!

Who: Students grades 7 to 9 with a learning disability or ADHD diagnosis What: Small group Focus: Increase self advocacy and awareness of student's disability

Program Details: 1.5 hours, once a week for 6 weeks, starting Monday January 20, 2020 Find out more: contact Monica at 519-837-2050 or email execdir@ldawc.ca.

FASD CoP - Exploring Your Role in Prevention

With Mary Mueller, R.N., B.Sc.N. and Lead of FASD ONE Prevention Working Group

March 26, 2020 2-4pm,

Waterloo Region Public Health- 99 Regina Street, Waterloo Room 508

Learn about an FASD Informed Approach; Explore the Four Levels of Prevention;

Hear about local supports and services.

All health and social service providers welcome. Register [here](#).

Workshop from FASD INC London—Reframing FASD Behaviour, Building Skills for Success with Eileen Devine

February 14, 2020 8:30 AM-4 PM | BMO Centre London, 295 Rectory Street

This neurobehavioral model workshop is for those wanting to learn more about the impact of prenatal alcohol exposure on the brain and how best to support individuals living with differences in cognitive abilities. This training will help participants build a set of tools rooted in the latest neuroscience, which will allow them to be more successful in their support of individuals with a history of trauma, FASD or other neurobehavioral conditions.

For more information about the event, please email fasdinclondon@gmail.com.

To register, please click [here](#).

Upcoming Events

ARCH Disability Law Centre Workshop and FINDING A BALANCE: Supporting Self-Regulation, Mental Health and Executive Functioning for individuals with FASD

The Halton & Hamilton FASD Collaboratives have partnered and are excited to announce a great learning opportunity with Dr. Jacqueline Pei, Reinier deSmit & Cindy Male.

Thursday, March 26, 2020, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Oakville Conference & Banquet Centre—2515 Wyecroft Road, Oakville, ON

\$100 for Professionals | \$75 for Parents/Caregivers

For more information and to register please click [here](#).

Arch Disability Law Centre Workshop and Legal Clinic

15th Floor, 55 University Ave, Thursday February 20 and Tuesday March 17

Workshop: 11:00am - 1:00pm (Reception at 10:30 am)

Legal Clinic: 1:00pm - 5:00pm (30 minute sessions)

ARCH Disability Law Centre (ARCH) and the Centre for Independent Living in Toronto (CILT) is offering three free repeat workshops for consumers of attendant services about their legal rights and self-advocacy strategies.

After each workshop, ARCH's lawyers will be available to give up to 30 minutes of legal advice and information to persons with disabilities on Attendant/PSW services issues. Please sign up for an appointment if you would like to take part in this free and confidential service.

Please choose only one date as seating for each workshop is limited to 25 people.

To register via Eventbrite, click [here](#). For more information, click [here](#).

The Unplugged Lunch and Learn

For Parents and Providers with Tori Denby, Family Wellbeing Coordinator

Nomophobia what is it? Digital Dependency Smart Phone Detox

Digital Footprint –Protecting Yourself

Wednesday February 5th 2020 11:30A. M.-1:00P.M

65 Hanson Ave Kitchener ON, N2C 2H6 Room 1032

Please Email victoriad@metisnation.org to register or call 519-502-1067 for more information.

Space is Limited Bring your lunch—snacks provided.

FINDING A BALANCE: Supporting Self-Regulation, Mental Health and Executive Functioning for individuals with FASD

The Halton & Hamilton FASD Collaboratives have partnered and are excited to announce a great learning opportunity with Dr. Jacqueline Pei, Reinier deSmit & Cindy Male.

Thursday, March 26, 2020 | 9 AM – 4 PM

Oakville Conference & Banquet Centre, 2515 Wyecroft Road, Oakville, ON

\$100 for Professionals | \$75 for Parents/Caregivers

For more information and to register please click [here](#).

Upcoming Events

RESOURCES

ADHD Speaks

Help Build ADHD Awareness Across Canada

If you or someone you love has ADHD, you know that most other people still do not understand the full impact this disorder can have.

To help change this, CADDAC has developed several awareness and educational tools. We have also added an ADHDSpeaks Kid's campaign!

For more information on all of this, go to this [website](#).

Office of Women's Health Information Sheet: Nursing Care for People with Developmental disabilities

Please click [here](#) to access this important information sheet.

Please click [here](#) to access the other information sheets.

KidsAbility Winter Resource Guide!

The KidsAbility Program and Activity Guide is a great resource for local fall programming.

[Program and Activity Guide - Winter 2019/2020](#)

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

FREE Monthly Developmental Screening Clinic offered by Monarch House

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

For children age 1 to 5.5 years old.

No referrals needed. Drop ins are also welcome.

Upcoming Date(s):

Thursday February 27, 2020

Thursday March 26, 2020

Thursday April 30, 2020

Thursday May 28, 2020

Thursday June 25, 2020

All screenings are at Monarch House, 630 Weber St. N Suite 204, Waterloo.

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

Upcoming Events

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Resources

A tool from CAN FASD that integrates research and intervention best practices. A highly recommended read for all those supporting individuals with FASD. Some resources from our very own www.fasdwaterlooregion.ca are highlighted.

<https://canfasd.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Final-Towards-Healthy-Outcomes-Document-with-links.pdf>

[FASD and the Role of Early Childhood Educators in the Prevention of FASD](#)

Clinics at KidsAbility

Starting in October, we will be offering new clinics for KidsAbility families with children ages 4-5 (born in 2014 or 2015). These clinics will include:

School Years Sensory Clinic: Occupational Therapists will provide parents/caregivers with strategies so that they can support their child, who has sensory processing difficulties, participate in their daily activities at home and in the community. If your child has significant behaviours or emotional responses to sensory input by becoming overwhelmed, distressed, or difficult to engage in daily activities, this may be the right service for you. Clinics will be offered in November at our Waterloo, Kitchener, Cambridge and Guelph sites.

School Years Check-In Clinic: An opportunity to “check-in” with an Occupational Therapist (OT), Physiotherapist (PT) or both regarding concerns you may have about your child’s physical functioning. This clinic is for clients who have met with an OT or PT at KidsAbility in the past regarding a physical concern. Clinics will be offered starting in October at our Waterloo, Kitchener, Cambridge and Guelph sites.

School Years Funding Clinic: An opportunity to meet with a Social Worker for a brief appointment for guidance on accessing funding and community supports related to your child's special needs.

School Years Picky Eaters Clinic: An opportunity to meet with an occupational Therapist (OT) to address food selectivity (picky eating) and problem eating. The goal is to provide individual consultation to families who are facing mealtime struggles related to their child’s narrow diet.

Families may receive:

Resources and information regarding how to promote feeding skills.

Community resources and other professionals/ services that may be helpful for your child, as applicable

Specific eligibility criteria apply for all of these clinics. To find out if your child is eligible:

If you are connected to a KidsAbility Therapist and receiving services, speak to your Therapist

If you are new to KidsAbility or not currently receiving services, call our intake line:

1-888-372-2259 ext 1214.

Upcoming Events

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

Eye See...Eye Learn

Children born in 2015 and starting JK in September qualify for a pair of complimentary glasses from July 1, 2019 through to June 30, 2020.

Find a participating optometrist near you at EyeSeeEyeLearn.ca.

Partners for Planning Action Guide - Thriving After High School

This Action Guide gives advice on topics such as how to prepare for life after high school at home and at school, life after graduations, and other important issues such as friendship.

Find the guide [here](#).

Check out FamilyCompassWR.ca!

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

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

FREE P4P Planning Network Webinar—Trustees: Roles and Responsibilities

with Brendan Pooran, Principal Lawyer, Pooran Law

February 4, 2020 at 7 P.M.

Who should attend?

Families who are selecting trustees and individuals who have been selected to fulfill the role of trustee

What's in it for You:

An understanding of the different types of trusts | Overview of the role of a trustee |

The responsibilities a trustee must meet once selected.

Please click [here](#) for more information and to register.

Upcoming Events

SUPPORT GROUPS

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

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

Groups include, but are not limited to:

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

Strategies for Adult ADHD/Asperger's Group

Learn some hands-on techniques for managing and harnessing your ADHD/Asperger's superpowers while getting to know people similar to yourself.

This group usually involves a discussion around a voted topic, a relevant technique or exercise, and setting a goal/intention for the week.

Cost is \$15/session, but the first session is FREE. Just Drop In!

No diagnosis or registration necessary.

Free Monthly ADHD and Asperger's Support Group

Come by on the first Thursday of every month to connect with others with ADHD and/or ASD/Asperger's Syndrome. We typically vote on topics that attendees are interested in that day and share real-life stories that make us all feel heard and seen.

This group is typically led by a practitioner with ADHD and/or ASD themselves (because we get it).

First Thursday of Every Month 6-7 PM

Both support groups take place at [The ADHD & Asperger's Centre](#), 55 Cork St. E, unit 305, Guelph

Upcoming Events

ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Secret Agent Society: Operation Regulation – Trasdiagnostic Trial

Do you have a child between 8-13 years of age with Neurodevelopmental Disorders? York University invites you to participate in a research study: Secret Agent Society: Operation Regulation – Trasdiagnostic Trial.

This study is about a new program aimed at helping youth with neurodevelopmental disorders cope with their emotions and handle the day-to-day stressors in their lives using a variety of activities and tools, like an emotion-focused computer game, cue cards, and parent and teacher handouts. Learn more about this opportunity [here](#). They are currently recruiting children and teens with ADHD, Cerebral Palsy, FASD and learning disabilities.

Better Nights Better Days

Development, implementation, and evaluation of an internet-based behavioural sleep intervention study for children, ages 4-10, with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Cerebral Palsy (CP), and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). Learn more about this opportunity [here](#).

Technokids: Exploring Daily Electronic Media Use of Children With and Without Autism

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY: The present study is being conducted to learn more about the patterns of daily media behaviours, different media devices used, types of content accessed, and types of media activities engaged in by children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder and children without any mental health diagnoses to understand how their electronic media use might be similar or different.

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact Eric Gilliland at technokidstudy@gmail.com or Dr. Babb at kbabb@uwindor.ca.

Study for children aged 6-12, with ADHD and ASD

The Centre for Pediatric Excellence is conducting a research study for children aged 6-12, with ADHD and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Your child may be eligible to participate in a research study using a drug already approved by Health Canada.

Your child may qualify if they have been diagnosed with high functioning autism and ADHD. Learn more about this opportunity [here](#).