

Where exceptional families thrive

171
July 2024

Table of Contents

SEAC Updates	2
What's Happening at WRFN	5
Announcing Changes to School Navigation	6
Taking You Inside Coffee Club's "Inside Out 2" Movie Night	7
EarlyON Resource Page	8
Kaleidoscope Kids	9
Spectrum on the Spectrum	10
ANC June Recap	11
ANC	12
Community Info, Resources and Opportunities	13

What's In This Issue?

As July unfolds, the warmth of summer highlights the strength in unity and the beauty in diversity. This month, millions celebrate Disability Pride Month, honoring the incredible contributions of individuals with disabilities. At WRFN, our commitment to inclusivity and support extends far beyond this month.

The Waterloo Region Family Network is a constant source of support, connecting families of children with disabilities and individuals of all ages with each other, and with essential resources, programs, and support groups. Disability Pride Month reinforces our belief that every family and individual deserves to be seen, heard, and valued. We see disability as not a limitation but an integral part of the human experience.

While we use the term "exceptionality" (explained in our blog), we support families and individuals who identify with "disability," respecting their unique challenges and celebrating their triumphs.

We hope this issue of Family Pulse provides valuable information on upcoming programs, events, webinars, and resources tailored to your needs. Let's embrace diversity, foster unity, and build a supportive community this July.

Please Note the "*" represents new items for July



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***

The meeting began with The Special Equipment Amount (SEA) Assistive Technology Team coming to present. They discussed how, in the past, there were two or three assistive technology devices in the school, and only limited training was available. Now, technology is available at school and home, and an entire team has been created for Assistive Technology (AT), including three AT Itinerant Teachers, a consultant, and a Speech and Language AT Pathologist. The Team described many tools that are available to students, including Assistive and Alternative Communication, BoardMaker 7 (software that has symbols that allow students to communicate), Google Read and Write Equation (a math tool), and Orbit Note (a tool that allows communication and editing of PDFs). The Team has tutorials for all of these and virtual sessions for parents and caregivers.

There was a transportation update. Voyage, the transportation update the Board uses, will call families in the morning if there is to be a delay of more than 50 minutes. The schools will call in the afternoon if there are continued delays.

There were updates regarding the Special Education Plan. This discussion included the literacy update that was reviewed previously, an Individualized Education Plan guide for families, which has also been discussed in previous meetings, and better communication in general.

As for the budget update, the Board balanced the budget for the next school year, and most special education staffing levels have remained the same. One thing that has allowed this is that the Ministry has decided that if Boards do not spend the money allotted for the Special Equipment Amount (funding to be used by students with disabilities for non-computerized equipment), they can use it for other purposes.

It has also been decided that going forward, the board chair will sign letters sent to the Ministry by SEAC to support issues.

The next SEAC meeting will take place in September of 2024.

SEAC Updates

Waterloo Catholic District School Board - Special Education Advisory Committee Update *Submitted by Erin Sutherland & Karen Applebee*

May Update

The Board's collaborative efforts are evident in the recent meeting with a Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board member to discuss Sacramental Kits. The SEAC committee's continued involvement in the program's roll-out and collaboration with WCDSB on this initiative ensures that all voices are heard. In other news, members successfully completed the Provincial Parent Associations Advisory Committee (PAAC) on the SEAC Quiz (Module 3).

Looking ahead, members are to complete a short survey to declare their interest areas for next year's topics. Chairs and Erin Lemak will meet to create the plan for the upcoming year based on the standing items and the committee's interests. Gerald Foran presented the Durham District School Board (DDSB) Letter to the Minister of Education during the Ministry Updates segment.

The SEAC Committee established a subcommittee (working group) for future grant use proposals. At this time, the board received no new policy advisories. Chair Sikora provided updates on April's events.

Laurier recently offered its first-ever session for prospective students, teaching them how to apply for their adaptive program. Both parents and students were invited to attend. The meeting included updates from various organizations, including the International Dyslexia Association (IDA) Ontario (<https://www.idaontario.com/>), the Centre for Attention Deficit Disorder Awareness Canada (CADDAC) on Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and Autism Ontario, which shared the 2024 Summer Support Worker Reimbursement Fund Flyer.

WWDSS will continue to offer programming during the summer, and more information can be found on their events calendar (Waterloo Wellington Down Syndrome Society – events). WRPS announced several initiatives, including Special Olympics, the Kadet Program, and the workshop "Working with Neurodiverse Children and Youth: An Anti-Oppressive Approach" (Remote).

The next SEAC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 5, 2024, at 6 PM.

SEAC Updates

Waterloo Catholic District School Board - Special Education Advisory Committee Update *Submitted by Erin Sutherland & Karen Applebee*

June Update

The 2024-2025 Special Education budget was presented to SEAC members and subsequently approved. Key changes included adjustments to the Special Equipment Amount (SEA) and the allocation of additional funding to support a new role: the Special Education Needs Transition Navigator. Erin Lemak provided a comprehensive presentation of the Professional Development (PD) plan for the 2024-2025 school year, detailing the initiatives and training sessions planned to enhance the staff's skills and knowledge in supporting special education students.

During the SEAC Committee Functions segment, Diana Colbourne proposed recognizing October as ADHD Awareness Month. This motion aims to raise awareness and understanding of ADHD within the school community. There were no new policy advisories to the Board at this time.

Chair Sikora provided updates on SEAC activities and discussions from May. Members and interested parties can refer to the official record available through the Board of Trustees for a detailed account of the meeting minutes.

Each Member at Large shared updates on the various summer programs being offered. These programs are designed to provide continued support and engagement for students during the summer break. For more information on these programs, members are encouraged to visit the individual websites of the respective organizations.

The next SEAC meeting will be held in September 2024.

What's Happening at WRFN

Ask A Self-Advocate

Do you need to look at a challenge you are facing with a new perspective? Would you like to bounce ideas off someone who'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.

*This program is temporarily on hold. Please reach out to Sue Simpson at sue.simpson@wrfn.info for more information or with any related questions.

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.

Call Marla Pender at 226-338-7274 or email Marla.Pender@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

Announcing Changes to WRFN's School Navigation Support & August's Workshop

Every parent wants to see their children succeed in school. That's why WRFN has focused on helping families navigate the local education system for many years.

Exciting news! One of our Family Resource Coaches, Erin Sutherland, who has helped hundreds of families navigate our local school systems, will now support families through a series of workshops starting in late August. These workshops will address common questions, issues, and concerns experienced by families.

Given the increased interest in Erin's support and expertise, these workshop opportunities will allow WRFN to support more families with school navigation. They will also provide new opportunities for families to connect with and support each other. Common topics will include Back-to-School Preparation, Communication between Home and School, Modified Days, Tutoring Resources, and Year-to-Year Transitions, to name a few. Additional topics will be added based on interests expressed by families.

The first workshop in August will focus on Back-to-School Planning. This session will focus on helpful hints and considerations. It's also a chance for families to meet each other, share experiences, and see that they are not alone in their journey. These connections can provide invaluable support and insights as families navigate the school system together.

Families will be able to access important information and guidance through our new workshop series (starting in late August) and our virtual monthly support group (offered virtually on the last Wednesday of each month). Additionally, we will continue to offer annual workshops in partnership with WCDSB and WRDSB on IEPs and Transitions to High School and Post-Secondary.

Thank you for your support and understanding of this important change in service delivery, which will allow us to support more families with this growing need in our community.

For more information or if you have any related questions, please reach out to Sue Simpson at sue.simpson@wrfn.info.

Taking You Inside Coffee Club's "Inside Out 2" Movie Night

By: Carmen Sutherland, Coffee Club Coordinator

As I write this, our last Coffee Club outing was to see "Inside Out 2," the popular sequel to the Disney Pixar cartoon where emotions are personified, and how people experience them is visually illustrated. Coffee Club has only had a little bit of a chance to process this movie together, but I can tell you how I know how impactful this movie was:

- We had quite a few people come to see it with us, and many others went to see it outside of Coffee Club
- Even Lyn, a good friend of Coffee Club and a lover of mostly off-the-wall movies, liked it and was excited to see it!
- It made me think about emotions in a little bit of a different way.

The thing that stuck out to me was: (slight spoiler): did the creators personify anxiety simply as an (excellent) conversation starter or because everyone experiences it to some degree? I have only recently begun to consider that I might have anxiety, and while this movie was not what kickstarted this thought for me, it did cause me to think more about it.

During Coffee Club Zoom, the movie was a springboard for asking some questions about what defines mental illness and discussing our different high school experiences. It was a safe space for us to share our thoughts and experiences, and continuing these open discussions is essential.

Whether you go see Inside Out 2 because you love cartoons, are intrigued by a movie about emotions, or for some other reason, Coffee Club's attraction to the movie and conversations we've had afterwards means that it is probably a worthwhile one for any family to see if and when you are able. I highly recommend it, and I'm sure you'll find it as thought-provoking as we did.

EarlyON Resource Page

EarlyON July 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 Navigator

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.](#)

Closure Notice Please note that our EarlyON locations in Waterloo Region and the City of Stratford will be closed from Saturday August 3rd - Monday, August 5th,



Tuesdays, July 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
2:00-3:00pm

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

A SOCIAL GROUP FOR QUEER AND TRANS FOLKS
IN THE AUTISTIC COMMUNITY

Waterloo Region Family Network and Spectrum present Spectrum on the Spectrum, a monthly drop-in group for queer and trans people in the autistic community who are 18+ in Waterloo Region. This is an opportunity to gather and enjoy activities including board games, crafts, colouring, and discussion in an accepting and welcoming space. Games and materials will be provided, but participants are welcome to bring in their own activity/art supplies if they would like.

Join us on the 4th Thursday of every month!



SPECTRUM
210-283 DUKE ST W.
KITCHENER, ON
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For more information,
please contact:

info@wrfn.info OR
info.ourspectrum.com



**OUR
EVENT
CALENDAR**



A NEW CHAPTER JUNE RECAP

A New Chapter was pleased to have Christine Kuepfer, Director, Implementation and Reporting Branch, Ministry of Children Community and Social Services (MCCSS) speak to the group at our June meeting. The previous week, Christine had offered a Partners for Planning (P4P) webinar update regarding Journey to Belonging: Choice and Inclusion, the Ministry's reorganization plan for Developmental Services. We invited her to talk with our group about Journey to Belonging and engage feedback and questions from families.

Christine immediately established her approachability with her warmth and humour. She and her team organized an interesting meeting using polling to get feedback from families on different aspects of Journey to Belonging.

She made it clear that she wants to engage more with families and hoped that the format used for this meeting with our group would be something that she might be able to use with other parent and caregiver groups in the province.

We were reminded about the timeline for Journey to Belonging. We are at the beginning of the Implementation and Transition Phase. The Provincial roll out is scheduled for 2027 - 2031. Families spoke in the meeting about needing increased Passport funding, interrelationships with agencies, information about and interest in Individualized Funding, the assessment process for Developmental Services Ontario (DSO), and other areas of interest. Christine encouraged families to engage with Developmental Services at MCCSS by using the following email address: DSCSengagements@ontario.ca to share their ideas and experiences.

Many of us valued the opportunity to get to know Christine better and to and share ideas with her. We had the sense that she was genuine in her interest to better understand what families with loved ones who have disabilities are experiencing.

To learn more about Journey to Belonging, check out the Ministry's website:

<https://files.ontario.ca/mccss-journey-belonging-choice-inclusion-developmental-services-reform-framework-en-2022-04-08.pdf>



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.



July 2, 2024

In-person get-together!

Our next meeting on July 2nd will be an in-person get-together at Huron Natural Area. The evening will include a walk and a chat together. Here are some things we'd like you to know about the evening: Note the time change to 7:00 PM, ending about 8:30 PM. Please bring a lawn chair, a beverage to sip, and sun and bug protection. You can find the location at [Huron Natural Area](#). We'll meet at the main entrance by the picnic shelter, at [Malt and Barley Public House](#).

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.

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 Heathcaring July Programming*

Eat Well, Spend Less

Discover budget-friendly recipes and smart shopping tips with "Eat Well, Spend Less." This peer-led cooking program meets on Mondays, July 8, 22, and 29, from 1:30 to 3:30 pm. Perfect for those wanting to enjoy healthy meals without breaking the bank.

Movie Matinee

Relax and unwind at the "Movie Matinee." Drop in for a movie and snacks each Friday afternoon. Sessions are on Fridays, July 5, 12, and 19, from 1:30 to 3:30 pm. Bring along your suggestions for future movie selections.

Intro to Fitness

Kickstart your fitness journey with "Intro to Fitness," a supportive exercise class focusing on moderate cardio, strength, balance, and flexibility. Ideal for those 55+ but welcoming all ages. Classes are held on Wednesdays, July 3, 10, 17, and 24, from 10:30 am to 11:30 am.

More Than a Sweet Tooth

Explore the relationship between diabetes and oral health with "More Than a Sweet Tooth." Get tips on maintaining a healthy mouth during the Tuesday, July 16 session, from 2:30 pm to 3:30 pm.

Breakfast Club

Connect with others over coffee, breakfast, and games at the "Breakfast Club." This casual drop-in group meets on Thursdays, July 4, 11, 18, and 25, from 10:00 am to 11:30 am. Everyone in the community is welcome.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Tasting Tuesday

Enjoy a taste of something new with "Tasting Tuesday." Each session is an opportunity to explore different snacks with others. Sessions are on Tuesday, July 9 and 23, from 1:30 to 2:30 pm. Everyone is welcome to join and savour new flavours.

Cemetery Walking Tour

Discover the history of Mount Hope Cemetery on a guided walking tour. The tour takes place on Tuesday, July 9, from 10:00 am to 11:00 am. The meeting spot is at the Cemetery entrance across from 128 Moore Ave, Kitchener.

Green Thumb

Learn about maintaining a healthy garden with the "Green Thumb" group. This program focuses on companion planting, biodiversity practices, and vegetable production. Sessions are on Mondays, July 8, 15, and 29, from 10:00 am to 11:30 am.

Taking Care of Me

Integrate self-care practices into your daily life with the "Taking Care of Me" groups. Celebrate International Self-Care Day on July 24 by joining sessions on Wednesdays, July 10 and 31, from 1:30 to 3:00 pm. These sessions will focus on practical self-care techniques.

Armchair Adventure

Explore diverse cultures, places, and people from the comfort of your seat with "Armchair Adventure." Enjoy engaging virtual travel sessions with snacks included. This program meets on Friday, July 26, from 1:30 to 3:00 pm.

Creative Expression

Express yourself through different art styles and develop new painting skills in the "Creative Expression" program. Sessions are on Fridays, July 5 and 19, from 10:00 am to 11:30 am. Create a masterpiece.

Crafting Group

Turn your creative ideas into art with the "Crafting Group." Develop new skills or revisit old hobbies in sessions on Thursdays, July 3 and 18, from 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm. This group welcomes everyone.

For more information or to sign up for these free programs, please contact Community Healthcaring at 519-745-4404 or healthwellness@healthcaringkw.org. You can also visit them at 4 Francis Street, South Kitchener. No registration is required.

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 new 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 Tonic: 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.

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**](mailto:chantal@africancommunitywellness.org). Register at [**https://africancommunitywellness.org/mental-health-wellness/**](https://africancommunitywellness.org/mental-health-wellness/).

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).

Information, Opportunities & Resources

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!

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.keeptourheadup.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 our free Diabetes Fit program to build life changing habits at home or at the YMCA. Join at the Chaplin Family YMCA (250 Hespler Road, Cambridge) on Mondays from 2:30 – 4 pm, until 24. Virtual classes take place on Thursdays from 6:30 to 8 pm, April 4 until 20. [Learn more here](#) or contact Marsha at marsha.phillips@ytr.ymca.ca.

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.

Skills Corner Adult Day Centre

A new program for young adults, located in Kitchener-Waterloo at Forest Hill United Church (121 Westmount Rd E). Have fun, learn new skills, socialize and grow. Register by calling 519-589-4022. Team includes Dinorah Romas, PSW and Registered EA and Child Youth Worker. Dinorah has 10+ years of experience working with special needs adults and kids on the spectrum. Georgina Radu has 20+ years of experience in the field, both professionally and personally. She is a registered EA.

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.

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

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, lawn bowlers are charged part of the fee to join the Heritage Green Bowling Club for one year. Summer programs include Sunday 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm Blastball Tuesday 6:30 PM – 8:30 pm Lawn Bowling Wednesday 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm Mini – Golf Thursday 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm Floor Hockey Friday evening 6:30 pm 8:30 pm. Summer registration for these activities is now open. Visit [here 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 Center, 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.

March Break Camp

Are you looking for fun and supportive activities during March Break? Adults in Motion's March Break Camp is designed for adults (18+) with diverse needs. Participants can enjoy a week of engaging activities in a safe and inclusive environment. This program is perfect for individuals seeking enriching experiences during the school break.

PD Days Camp

Adults in Motion offers a 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.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

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.

Locations and Contact Information

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

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:cambridge@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>)

Information, Opportunities & Resources

July COH Sunday Socials*

Movie Night! GREASE

Join the Community of Hearts Lifelong Learning Centre to watch the summer classic, "Grease!" Enjoy movie snacks and the film with friends and family. The event is on Saturday, July 7th, from 1 pm to 3 pm at the Community of Hearts Lifelong Learning Centre. The cost is \$5.

Bowling

Join a fun-filled bowling extravaganza at Splitsville Guelph! Your ticket includes a round of bowling and delicious fries. Bring your competitive spirit and enjoy a fantastic time with friends and family on Sunday, July 14th, from 1 pm to 3 pm at Splitsville Guelph, 253 Woodlawn Rd W. The cost is \$55.

Ice Cream at the Boathouse

Meet at the Boathouse for a delightful summer evening! Enjoy delicious ice cream and a stroll along the scenic Speed River. Join for good company, great views, and memorable moments on Sunday, July 21st, from 1 pm to 2:30 pm at the Boathouse, 116 Gordon St. The cost is \$15.

Lunch at Wimpy's

Join for a mouthwatering lunch at Wimpy's! Indulge in their famous burgers and crispy fries, all included with your choice of drink. Enjoy a flavorful feast with friends and fellow foodies on Sunday, July 28th, from 1 pm to 2:30 pm at Wimpy's, 25 Wyndham St N. The cost is \$55.

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

Woolwich Counselling

Woolwich Counselling Centre has many great small group therapy sessions and workshops for children, youth, adults, and seniors. See the link below to learn what's new this month! To register, please call 519-669-8651 or visit <https://woolwichcounselling.org/> email info@woolwichcounselling.org.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Waterloo Public Library Summer Activities Program Guide*

Transition to Kindergarten

Starting in the summer, Waterloo Public Library offers the "Transition to Kindergarten" program for incoming students. This program is designed to help children prepare for their first school year and provide a smooth transition into kindergarten.

Storytimes for Toddlers and Families

Join the library for engaging Storytimes designed for toddlers and their families throughout the summer. These sessions offer a fun and interactive way for young children to develop a love for reading.

Outdoor Activities

Enjoy a variety of Outdoor Activities suitable for all ages. These events are perfect for families looking to spend quality time together while enjoying the beautiful summer weather.

STEAM Programs

Keep kids engaged and learning during the summer with the exciting STEAM Programs. These activities focus on science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics, providing hands-on learning experiences.

Uptown Night Markets

Explore the vibrant Uptown Night Markets, organized by the Uptown BIA. These events offer a unique opportunity to enjoy local vendors, food, and entertainment in a lively evening setting.

Program Access and Registration Access

All of these programs through the online events calendar and the digital In the Loop magazine at [Waterloo Public Library Events Calendar](#). You can also pick up a guide at local library locations. Remember, program registration opens at 7 PM about three weeks before the start date. Check the online calendar or the In the Loop guide for exact dates and times.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Community of Hearts Summer Evening Programming

Managing Your Time

The "Managing Your Time" program focuses on developing effective time management skills. Participants will explore techniques such as avoiding procrastination, setting priorities, and establishing routines. Sessions take place on Mondays, July 15, 22, 29, and August 12, from 4 pm to 6 pm at Community of Hearts. The cost is \$120.

Music: Learn and Jam

"Music: Learn and Jam" offers a creative outlet through music, covering basics such as instrumentals, songwriting, and playing different instruments. This program is ideal for those who love music and enjoy collaborating with others. Sessions are scheduled on Tuesdays, July 23, 30, and August 6, 13, from 4 pm to 6 pm at Community of Hearts, with a fee of \$120. For more information or to join, email info@communityofhearts.ca or call 519-826-9056.

Taking the Bus

"Taking the Bus" teaches essential skills for using public transportation independently, including bus routes, etiquette, and safety. The program includes practical outings to reinforce learning. It takes place on Wednesdays, July 24, 31, and August 7, 14, from 4 pm to 6 pm at Community of Hearts. The cost is \$120 with a personal bus pass or \$140 without. To sign up, contact info@communityofhearts.ca or 519-826-9056.

Grocery Shopping

The "Grocery Shopping" program helps participants master the skills needed for independent shopping, such as choosing items, budgeting, and store navigation. Sessions are held on Thursdays, July 25, August 1, 8, and 15, from 4 pm to 6 pm at Community of Hearts and the Grocery Store location. The fee is \$120 or \$170 with a \$50 grocery card.

Social Skills

The "Social Skills" program focuses on enhancing interpersonal skills through discussions on social cues, respect, personal boundaries, and conversational skills. It is an excellent opportunity for building social confidence. Sessions are on Fridays, July 26, August 2, 9, and 16, from 4 pm to 6 pm at Community of Hearts, costing \$120.

For further information or to register for any of these programs, please contact Community of Hearts at info@communityofhearts.ca or call 519-826-9056. Visit them at 4 Francis Street, South, Kitchener.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Workshops, Training & Events

Me Breastfeed Workshop*

Join the "Me Breastfeed Workshop" to learn about the importance of human milk and what to expect in the first week after birth. This prenatal lactation workshop is offered both in-person and virtually on Thursday, July 13, at 6:00 pm.

For more information or to sign up for these free programs, please contact Community Healthcaring at 519-745-4404 or healthwellness@healthcaringkw.org. You can also visit them at 4 Francis Street, South Kitchener. No registration is required.

Community of Hearts Summer Programming Events

Managing the Day-to-Day: Social-Emotional Skills

On Thursday, July 11th, from Noon to 1:00 PM, learn how to navigate the day-to-day challenges of parenting while nurturing your child's emotional well-being. This workshop will provide practical strategies for children's social and emotional development.

Raising Youth in an Anxious World

On Tuesday, July 16th, from Noon to 1:00 PM, this workshop provides insights and practical strategies for navigating the challenges of raising youth experiencing anxiety. Learn how to support your children through their anxieties and build resilience.

Let's Talk About Screen Time

On Thursday, August 1st, from Noon to 1:00 PM, explore how to help kids maintain a balance with screen time. This workshop will discuss the pros, cons, and concerns associated with screen usage and guide on establishing a healthy relationship with screens for children.

Moving from Praise to Encouragement

On Wednesday, August 14th, from 7:00 PM to 8:00 PM, discover how too much praise can sometimes work against our best intentions. This workshop will help you understand the difference and offer new strategies for encouraging your children, fostering a growth mindset, and intrinsically motivating them.

Phone 519-743-6333 x 3250 or email groups@caminowellbeing.ca to register.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

DSO Webinar Learn About Taxes & Benefits with Canada Revenue Agency*

On Monday, July 8, 2024, from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM EST, join DSO Housing Navigators for a free virtual presentation with representatives from the Canada Revenue Agency. This webinar will cover important topics such as the Disability Tax Credit (DTC), various benefits, credits, deductions, programs dependent on a valid DTC certificate, the Canada Caregiver Credit, the Ontario Trillium Benefit, and more. Hosted by Alexandra Shannan, Housing Navigator for DSO in Toronto, Olivia Thomas, Housing Navigator for the DSO East Region, and Martha Beach, Housing Navigator for DSO South-East Region, this event is open to people with developmental disabilities, their family members, support networks, and professionals in Ontario. Note that this event will not be recorded.

For questions, contact Martha Beach at mbeach@dsoer.com, Alexandra Shannan at dstor.hn@surreyplace.ca, or Olivia Thomas at othomas@dsoer.ca. To register and for more details, [visit here](#).

DSO Presentation Technology to Support Independence

On Tuesday, July 9, 2024, from 10:00 am to 11:15 am EST, DSO Housing Navigators will host a virtual presentation on how technology can enhance independence for individuals. This session will highlight various technological aids and their applications in supporting independent living. Dan Davies, the Founder and President of AbleLink Technologies, will be the guest speaker, providing insights into how these tools can reduce reliance on continuous human support. To participate in this informative session, you can register here. For further inquiries, contact Bambi Pepe at b.pepe@lccare.ca or Robin Knott at robinknott@dsoswr.ca. Additional information about supporting adults with developmental disabilities can be found at [Developmental Services Ontario](#).

Information, Opportunities & Resources

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 just 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/>

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.](#)

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 passed second reading and is waiting for the Justice Policy Committee to set dates to hear depositions to then pass it in the house. 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

University of Waterloo: Visuomotor Coordination Study*

The Visuomotor Coordination Study aims to understand how children develop hand-eye coordination and reading skills, and how vision affects this development. This research will help develop better tools to assess visuomotor deficits and disorders in children. Participants must be between 7-14 years old and experiencing difficulties with motor coordination. Each participant will receive a \$25 gift card. To participate, contact Ewa Niechwiej-Szwedo at eniechwi@uwaterloo.ca.

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.](#)

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.

University of Waterloo – Explore the World of Social Robots Playdates*

Evaluating a collaborative game through a robot-play mediator for children with disabilities is an opportunity for kids aged 6 - 17 with upper-limb challenges, along with one of their siblings, to explore the exciting world of social robots. As a thank you, each family will receive a \$20 gift card and children will take home a special 3D-printed toy. Plus, enjoy an exclusive SIRRL lab tour at the University of Waterloo to meet some amazing robots! Ready to dive into the future of play? Have questions or want to sign up? Email negin.azizi@uwaterloo.ca.

University of Waterloo – Deep phenotyping of typical and atypical development of eye-hand coordination in children with DCD*

The purpose of this study is to understand how children develop hand-eye coordination and reading skills and how vision affects this development. Results from the study will help develop better tools to assess visuomotor deficits and disorders in children. Participants must be between 7 - 14 years experiencing difficulties with motor coordination. They will receive a \$25 gift card for participation. Please contact Ewa Niechwiej-Szwedo at enichwi@uwaterloo.ca.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Infant & Child Studies Group at University of Waterloo

Infant and Child Studies Group is a group of researchers interested in better understanding child cognition: so how kids learn! All studies are designed as games for children to play while we observe how they respond to various toys, videos, or sounds. The activities are fun for the kids, and help us understand concepts like how children learn new words, when children can begin to understand math, or what learning strategies kids use to understand new concepts. We deliver studies in person, as well as online and in take-home formats. Learn more or sign up at: <http://uwaterloo.ca/infant-and-child-studies-group/>

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.](#)

Toronto Metropolitan University Decolonizing Childhood Disability Study*

The study "Decolonizing Childhood Disability: Exploring the Healthcare Experiences of Racialized Children with Disabilities" is looking for volunteers. Participants can be racialized youth aged 12-24 with a disability living in Canada, or a parent/guardian of a racialized child with a disability. Participants will share their experiences through an interview and a creative expression, such as a poem or visual art, about their experiences with the Canadian healthcare system. Each participant will receive a \$50 gift card. Eligibility criteria include self-identifying as having a disability and as racialized, Black, Indigenous, or POC, or being a parent/guardian of a racialized child with a disability. To participate, email the study organizer alyssa.neville@torontomu.ca.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Early Movement Guidelines Study*

The Early Movement Guidelines Study seeks caregivers' perspectives on the current 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for children aged 0-4, focusing on their applicability to children with disabilities and physical, cognitive, or social difficulties. This research will support the development of evidence-based guidelines, policies, and programs tailored to serve children with disabilities better. Participants must be 18 or older and be a parent or primary caregiver of a child with a disability or who experiences physical, cognitive, or social difficulties between 0 and 4 years old. Participants will receive a \$20 Amazon E-Giftcard for their contribution. If interested, complete the brief survey [here](#) using the access code PY8C4AHX8. Researchers will contact eligible participants with further instructions.



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info@wrfn.info



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