



Family Pulse

Where exceptional families thrive.

Issue 136
August 2021

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Welcome to August! In this issue, you'll find a variety of opportunities being offered throughout the month as well as some great resources.

Our two feature articles, written by Cristina and Steph, will inspire you to make your own decisions and ask for help when needed while fostering courage and determination.

Enjoy the read and have a great month!



Support WRFN Today

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

SEAC Updates

Waterloo Region District School Board Special Education Advisory Committee Update

Submitted by Carmen Sutherland, Waterloo Region District School Board Representative

The WRDSB SEAC does not meet over the summer. The next meeting will be held in September 2021.

Waterloo Catholic District School Board Special Education Advisory Committee Update

Submitted by Kovats, WRFN SEAC Representative

The WCDSB does not meet over the summer. The next meeting will be held in September 2021.

Same Storm, Different Boats

By Cristina Stanger, Self-Advocacy Liaison, WRFN

Along with pandemic catch-phrases like ‘pivot’ and ‘seven day rolling average’, we often hear the phrase “we are all in this together” - which I agree with, it is an important, community-minded sentiment. But I also felt that it never quite captured the whole picture. Yes, we are all navigating pandemic life, together, as a society, as a community, and many of these strange pandemic experiences are shared. But we navigate the pandemic as individuals as well, the lived experience of the pandemic, as a whole, will be quite different from person to person. Various factors will significantly impact our overall experience: introvert or extrovert; empty nesters, or family with young children; frontline worker, laid off, or working from home; living alone, living with others, or living in a congregate setting; family member with exceptional needs, or living with high risk health conditions. So many different aspects are at play, and throughout the pandemic you have had to make decisions about what you need, what you are comfortable with, and what makes the most sense for you and those you love, in the context of important public health guidelines.

This spring, I saw some messaging from the famed Ottawa Public Health social media outreach: “We may be in the same storm, but we are not all in the same boat. It’s okay not to be okay, help is available.” {Twitter, Mar 5, 2021} Same storm, different boats: for me, this finally encapsulated what I had been unable to explain before. Together, as a community, we weather this pandemic storm; each of us riding out the storm in our own unique boats. And, I find this especially helpful to remember as we edge our way back toward life as-it-once-was, because lately I find myself drawn toward comparison: So-and-so is doing this now, should I be doing that too? It is easy to get caught up in what others are doing, when we are unsure of what we want our own approach to be. But I am in my boat, and I have to make my own decisions about how to sail it.

So sail your boat as best you can, ask for help when needed, and we will see each other again on the other side of the storm.

What's Happening at WRFN



A NEW CHAPTER

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

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

JULY 6, 2021

*Connection Time:
Come and share what's on
your mind, challenges,
successes, questions*

AUGUST 3, 2021

*Transition to the Fall:
What does Fall 2021 look
like from here?*

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

RSVP to Mary at
maryjpike@hotmail.com if
you would like to join us.



What's Happening at WRFN

All WRFN programs will be offered in virtual format or through phone and email connections until further notice.

At WRFN, we're here to listen. Please reach out and let us know how we can help you and your family during these challenging times.

Ask A Self-Advocate

Do you need to look at a challenge you are facing with a new perspective? Would you like to bounce ideas off someone who's been there? Cristina was diagnosed with exceptionalities as an adult, and is passionate about sharing her lived experience. Speak with Cristina to discuss your own questions and concerns to gain new insights and ideas. This program is open to individuals with disabilities, families, or service providers.

For more information on Ask A Self-Advocate please contact Cristina Stanger at Cristina.Stanger@wrfn.info. To request a booking please complete the [request form](#).

Coffee Club

Greetings from Coffee Club! We currently meet on Zoom, usually on Thursdays from 3:00-4:00 PM.

Generally, we are just catching up and chatting, mixed with a little bit of watching YouTube.

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.

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.

If you would like to learn more please contact Sue Simpson at Sue.Simpson@wrfn.info.

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 will not meet in July. We will meet again on August 25. We will resume our regular meeting schedule - the second Tuesday (10 - 11:30 am) and the last Wednesday (7 - 8:30 pm) - in September. In the meantime, please reach out to Sue Simpson at sue.simpson@wrfn.info or 519-886-9150 ext 1 if you are looking for school support.

WRFN's Family Resource Coach

During this current COVID-19 health crisis, personal support has become paramount for many families. Erin Sutherland and Sue Furey, our Family Resource Coaches, are available 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 virtual opportunities. We encourage you to reach out. Call Erin at 519-886-9150 ext 4 or 226-808-5460 or email Erin.Sutherland@wrfn.info. Call Sue at 226-898-9301 or email Sue.Furey@wrfn.info.

Steph's Corner

Stepping Out with Support

Since the pandemic started in March 2020, I have been living in Cambridge with my mom and step dad. They set up their downstairs to be my “apartment” with my own bedroom, family room, breakfast nook and bathroom. I like it here. I have my own space and I like being with them. They help me out with things. However, before COVID and my health concerns, I had an apartment with a roommate in a four-storey building in Kitchener. Even though my health has been stable for awhile, I didn't know if I would be able to live on my own again.

And then I had a surprise opportunity! In my old neighbourhood, and in the same house that my sister lives, there was a one-bedroom apartment on the ground floor coming available at the beginning of August. I know lots of people there and many of my Dream Team live close by. Could this be a new home for me?

I had five days to make a decision. Have you had a difficult decision to make in a short period of time? Here are some things that I had to think about:

- Did I have enough money to pay the rent and buy groceries?
- Would my support workers be able to come to Kitchener instead of Cambridge?
- Would I be well enough to live on my own?
- If it didn't work out, what would be my Plan B?
- Would I be able to break my lease if it didn't work out?

When I was thinking about this big decision, I talked to the people who knew me the best. Who do you talk to? Here are some people that I talked to:

- My mom and step dad
- My sister
- My facilitator

When it was time to make the decision, I decided that “I wouldn't know if it was going to work for me, if I didn't try.” I told my family that “I wanted to try.” I am going to move out at the beginning of August. I will live at the apartment from Monday to Friday and my support workers will help me out there. On the weekends, I will go to my mom and step dad's condo. I am excited and nervous. It will be fun to live in the same house as my sister, close to my friends and back in the “hood.” However, I know that I will have to be brave too.

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.

EVENTS

Youth Summer Fun Fiesta

Small group in-person events for youth ages 12+. Events include:

- Self-Defense/Fitness Bootcamp
- Outdoor Art Mural
- Movie Filming and Heritage Walk
- Grand River Float Day

For more information visit: <https://bit.ly/3gWuem8>

PROGRAMS/RECREATION

Opportunities from Bridges to Belonging

BE-Connected — A place to virtually hangout, meet new people and talk about what's happening in your world.

Wednesday from 7:00-8:00pm | Use the following Zoom link to join: <https://bit.ly/3iHFwdm>

BE-Friends Program — BE-Friends is a volunteer matching program that connects people with any disability 17 years or older (Friend) with a community volunteer "Buddy" (19 years or older). The pair gets together as often as they want, enjoy fun activities they choose and become part of each other's world. BE-Friends a bridge to meaningful reciprocal relationships and lifelong friendships.

To be matched with a Community Buddy register here: <https://bit.ly/3eWlrzh>

To Volunteer as Community Buddy register here: <https://bit.ly/3i1v69G>

BE-Creative With Clay — This summer, Bridges to Belonging and the Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery invite you to Be Creative with Clay with these two offerings:

Claytime at Home — Purchase a clay kit, for 20% off using the code 'bridgestobelonging' then bring it back to the gallery to be fired, and enjoy your creation. Learn more and purchase your kit here:

<https://bit.ly/2UPH1hY>

Garden Project — Join this FREE artist-led workshop to celebrate and beautify community spaces in the KW area. With the help of an artist, you will design and create your very own tile to be placed at

The Clay and Glass Gallery's community garden! You can make more than one tile, one to take home and one to leave in the community garden. Workshops will be offered online where an artist will help you create your tile. Register and learn more here: <https://bit.ly/2TBUXf6>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Adults in Motion

Life Skills Workshop — An intensive life skills focused day. Four week sessions, starting Aug. 9.

Programs — Adults in Motion offers a number of in-person programs and virtual activities throughout the day. Enjoy personal connections, making new friendships and participating in entertaining activities.

Summer Camp — Summer Camp Days are flexible and can be built around your summer schedule by choosing the specific days or weeks desired.

To learn more about Adults in Motion and what they are offering visit

<https://adultsinmotion.org/kitchener-waterloo/>.

Recreational Respite Virtual Services

Virtual services offer unique experiences in small group, 1:1 and 'Build It' workshop sessions that aim to provide independent skill mastery for children, youth and adults with disabilities. These person-centred programs and workshops will cultivate life skills, promote self-care, encourage engagement, inclusion and social connectivity.

Check out information about their virtual services at <https://bit.ly/2KHe2la>.

Extend-A-Family Waterloo Region: Virtual Open Space

Looking to connect to folks on a weekly basis?

Join one of the virtual Open Spaces on Monday evenings! Both begin at 6:30pm.

Email Kim Sproul for more details at kim.sproul@eafwr.on.ca

Summer You-Nite Series

Games, trivia, guest speakers, fitness, cartooning and more!

August 10, 6:00-7:30pm

August 28, 10:00-11:30am

For Zoom links or for more information email Sharon.hutchinson@burlington.ca

or Daniel.ridsdale@oakville.ca.

Summer Virtual Learning

Community of Hearts is offering Summer Virtual Learning. Topics include but are not limited to:

- Nature Studies
- Countries & Culture
- Arts for Wellness

Learn more by emailing info@communityofhearts.ca

Information, Opportunities & Resources

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://bit.ly/3906Lfl>

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):

- FASD Educational Group
- 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

Artshine Virtual Accessible Art For Kids, Teens & Adults

Social distancing need not rob you of the joy that comes from expanding your art skills! We've got live video lessons via Zoom for all ages, with art supplies mailed to you in advance! Maximum 20 participants for personalized attention.

Click [here](#) for more information!

Our Place KW - Family Resource and Early Years Centre

Our Place continues to offer a variety of programming opportunities.

Parenting in a New Society — This program is at Huron Natural Area to connect with other parents from different countries wanting to build relationships and learn about resources. This program takes place every Tuesday at 10am until August 17. Weekly registration is required.

Stork Secrets—Pregnancy and postpartum adjustment peer support. Learn more [here](#).

Head over to <https://www.ourplacekw.ca/programs> for registration and information.

Torchlight Service: Connect Virtual Adult Programming

Torchlight's Connect Program offers a variety of fun interactive activities for a small membership fee.

The Virtual Program team assists and supports participants in resolving technical issues, basic education on how to access online programs, program schedules and reminders via email.

Learn more about the Connect Membership at <https://bit.ly/3x0Sd9A>.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

EarlyON Waterloo Region

EarlyON provides a variety of developmentally appropriate, fun, and interactive learning opportunities for you and your child to explore together.

You can enjoy LIVE groups Monday-Saturday on their Facebook page [@EarlyONWR](#). No registration required.

You can also find a variety of programs that require registration.

Check their website [earlyyearsinfo.ca](#) for registered programs and new songs/activities every week.

WORKSHOPS/TRAINING

Groups from Muslim Social Services

Ladies Virtual Tea Time — Have a relaxing time together via Zoom. Thursday, 4:30-5:30pm.

Positive Parenting — A weekly program for parents to learn how to deal with parenting challenges during COVID-19 related isolation, homeschooling and changed family routines.

Monday, 5:00-6:00pm.

Resilient Girls — Building young girls' resilience, self-esteem, networking skills and know how about family dynamics during COVID-19 related uncertain times. Ages 13-18.

Seniors Zoom Group — Weekly program for seniors to stay connected and learn about community resources. Friday, 4:00-5:00pm.

To learn about any of these programs contact:

counsellor@muslimsocialserviceskw.org or call 519-772-4399 x 2707.

Safety for Independent Living

Passport Community Developers are hosting a number of virtual Safety for Independent Living sessions. This is a personal safety course where people learn lifeskills that empower them to make safe choices and caring and respectful decisions in their everyday lives both online and offline.

September 21-24, 6:00-8:00pm

October 18-22, 1:00-3:00pm

November 8-12, 3:00-5:00pm

December 6-10, 10:00-12:00pm

Location: Virtually (Zoom) Cost: \$55 — Passport funding admissible

Contact Amanda Paradis, Waterloo Passport Community Developer to register aparadis@cwsds.ca.

Oh! The Places You'll Go!!

Virtual Transition Planning Presentation for Waterloo Region

Intended for caregivers and/or students (aged 15-21). This presentation discusses the school transition plan, making the transition from school to adult life, how and when to connect to adult developmental services, Passport funding (community participation funding allocated to eligible individuals), Ontario Disability Support Program, and Service Coordination.

Watch the presentation at: https://youtu.be/arOW_HE9IZE.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

CADDAC Parenting Program: Supporting Your Child's Executive Functioning

This group program will provide parents and caregivers with important information about executive functioning and how it impacts children and teens with ADHD. Group members will learn tools and strategies to help them support their children with the areas of executive functioning that are challenging for them, and practice applying them in their homes.

Starts: September 20, 2021 for 10 weeks Time: 6:30pm – 8pm EST

Cost: \$100 (1 parent) and \$150 (2 parents) + HST

Instructor: Dr. Megan Smith, Ph.D., C. Psych

Learn more: <https://bit.ly/3x3pYGt>

Halton Sexual Confidence Workshop

This workshop provides opportunities to discuss sexuality in an open, light hearted way using visual, tactile and interactive learning strategies. It will foster communication about sexuality and relationships between adults with a developmental disability and the people who support them, all while providing tangible skills and materials to promote healthy sexuality.

Upcoming Dates:

Wednesday's: September 8 to October 20, 2021; 11:00am — 12:00pm

Thursday's: November 4 to December 9, 2021; 6:30 — 7:30pm

Tuesday's: January 11 to February 15, 2022; 2:30 — 3:30pm

To register or for more information contact Kelsey at 905-510-3852 or kgillian@cwsds.ca

Summer Virtual Health & Wellness Workshops

Introduction to Yoga, August 9 — Learn yoga basics, including common yoga terms and postures. Breathing techniques and warm-up yoga movements will also be discussed.

Osteoarthritis & Exercise, August 16 — Discuss osteoarthritis and the role of exercise in arthritis management. Includes tips on what to do, and how to get started with exercise at home.

Register: <https://bit.ly/3y3Mn7W>

Keeping Yourself Safe Online

Who: Anyone 18 and over with an intellectual disability and/or autism

When: October 7, 2021 – October 28, 2021 *time to be determined

What: An online group to learn more about staying safe online

Cost: \$295.00

To register contact Lauren Harris at 519-894-6156 x 2904 or email Brightside@sunbeamcommunity.ca.

Learn to Breastfeed 101

Led by an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant you will learn:
Breastfeeding basics | Getting started | Benefits of breastfeeding | Learning to breastfeed | Learning to latch | Tips and tools | Ask breastfeeding questions | Breastfeeding techniques

Tuesday, August 17 from 6:30-8pm

To register email Tania Heinemann IBCLC: Theinemann@cmh.org

Registration is first come, first serve. Space is limited. For patients 34 weeks + gestation

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Super Dads Super Kids

This is an online group for dads with children ages 0-6. Join the group to talk about what you think it means to be a dad. Learn ways to connect with your child.

Participate in fun activities with your child(ren)

Starts: Sept. 21, 2021 When: Tuesdays, 7:30-8:30pm Where: Zoom

Contact Roberto at capc@carizon.ca to register or for more information.

How to Be a Good Roommate Workshops

Interactive virtual sessions with activities, discussions and videos.

Upcoming Workshops:

Basic Workshops (Free 1hr) - Morning Options 10-11am: Aug 24, Sept. 28, Oct. 26

Evening Option 7-8pm: Nov 30

Full Workshops (\$150: Four Sessions) 1st option: Sept. 8, 15, 22 & 29, 1-2:30pm

2nd option: Oct. 13, 20, 27 & Nov. 3, 1-2:30pm

For more information contact Liana Arnold, larnold@christian-horizons.org or 647-354-5034.

Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County (LDAWC)

Upcoming Events & Workshops

Typing Program — Keyboarding is one of the most important skills for students to learn. This program is an effective way to learn & improve on typing skills. This program starts Aug. 3.

Social Skills Program — This program assists in the development of social skills and social problem-solving strategies, while also promoting self-esteem and self-advocacy.

This program starts August 3.

LDA Parent Conference — A virtual conference held August 4.

SOAR (Some Assembly Required) Transition Planning Program — For children in grades 7-9 with a LD or ADHD looking to prepare for the changes of high school. This program starts August 4.

To learn more about any of these programs visit <https://ldawc.ca/events.html>.

Carizon's Newcomer Mental Health & Well-Being Program Parents Workshops

Parenting in Practice — Discuss issues that impact parenting in a new culture and learn about resources that can help support children as they grow in a new community.

August 5, 2021 from 1:00pm - 2:30pm via Zoom

<https://bit.ly/374CgDZ>

Managing the Day-to-Day — Discuss how to build resilience and create healthy communication and more positive interactions within your families.

August 10, 2021 from 12:00– 1:30pm via Zoom

<https://bit.ly/3I5fTXd>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

RESOURCES

Shared Connections Inclusive and Accessible Tech Support

Shared Connections can help you get connected, finding & adapting technologies to meet your unique needs. Shared Connections is a non-profit committed to inclusion for people with multiple disabilities.

www.sharedconnections.ca

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

Summer Camp Information

The KidsAbility website shares important information about summer camps. If you are looking for information for camps for your child, KidsAbility offers a number of camps and works with community-based camp programming. You can find information about planning, fee assistance and supports at: <https://www.kidsability.ca/camp-info>.

You can also find a Summer Camp Directory on the KidsAbility website or the WRFN Blog.

The information is provided to assist families with identifying camps that offer specialized programming for children and youth with disabilities, or inclusive camps that are welcoming to all abilities and may provide additional supports to those with special needs. You can find this information at: <https://www.kidsability.ca/camp-directory-summer> OR <https://bit.ly/3rdSKRO>.

Family Compass Waterloo Region

Family Compass Waterloo Region is a central website to guide families to services for children, youth, and families in our community. The website offers the option to find information about general services for children and youth as well as specialized services that can help to address developmental concerns.

Family Compass has added a page specifically pertaining COVID-19 resources for children, youth, and families. It can be reached at <https://bit.ly/3t0lkar>.

The Ontario Caregiver Organization

Resources and Education Opportunities to Help Caregivers When They Need it Most.

Learn more here: <https://bit.ly/3lcLuGy>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Take5

Take5 is an online space for children and youth in foster care, in group homes, or living away from their parents in Ontario. On Take5 you can find information for your age on things like: coping with stress, stuff about your identity and culture, relationships, and who to ask for help. You can also find activities, podcasts, videos and online events. Take5 is for children 6 to 12 and youth 13 and above.

<http://www.ontarioyouthcan.org/>

KidsAbility Resources

Foundational Family Supports — KidsAbility provides Foundational Family Services to anyone in the community — no diagnosis needed. Staff will work with you to find workshops, resources, groups, support and more to help you be successful. You do not need to be a KidsAbility family to access these services. Learn more about this support at <https://kidsability.ca/foundational-services>.

Transition to Adulthood Clinic (for KidsAbility clients 15+) — Have you started to think about your life after high school? Do you have questions about services for adults with disabilities in the community? The Transition to Adulthood Clinic is an opportunity to meet with the Transitions Lead who will help to guide you in the right direction with planning for your future. Find information about

ConnectAbility.ca COVID-19 Resources

Supporting individuals, families and caregivers

Find answers to your COVID-19 questions, share experiences and discover events to stay active and connected. Visit <https://connectability.ca/covid-19/>

Health Care Access Research and Developmental Disabilities — How to Stay Safe, Well and Connected

There is lots of talk right now about COVID-19 or the Coronavirus. We may come across lots of information out there, but it is not always easy to understand and it can be confusing. This page has resources from around the world and information to support people with developmental disabilities and their families during this time. <https://bit.ly/3hWruX8>

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 get you set up.

To learn more visit shorturl.at/yEGK3.

CNIB Scholarships & Awards

Every year, CNIB's scholarship program awards multiple scholarships, bursaries and other awards to people who are blind or partially sighted in recognition of their educational aspirations and achievements.

Click here to learn more about these opportunities and to apply: <https://bit.ly/3wZ6jYN>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

SUPPORT GROUPS

Transgender Partners and Friends Peer Support Group

The Partners, Family and Friends of Transgender Folks Peer Support Group is a support group for non-transgender folks in the orbit of transgender folks where they can discuss their challenges and build community and solutions.

Participants are welcome to share or simply listen and learn from the experiences and perspectives of others.

The group meets on the second Wednesday of each month.

Please request access information by emailing trans@ourspectrum.com.

Ontario-Wide Virtual Support Group for Black parents and caregivers

Support, isolation, funding, resources, friends....These are the things that many families who care for someone with special needs think and worry about. For many of these families, their circle of support is quite small. This is often the case for racialized communities who have a child with special needs. The Black Parents of Children and Adults with a Disability Support Group (BPSG) 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.

Location/Meetings: This is a volunteer run group that meets on the 2nd & 4th Tuesday of each month from 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. via ZOOM. There will be guest speakers, resource sharing, support and mentorship opportunities for attendees. **PLEASE NOTE: The group is taking a break for August and will resume their twice monthly meetings in September.**

Contact: For more details or to register, please contact us at bpsgroup2020@gmail.com. You can also find them on Facebook @ BPSG: Black Parents of Children and Adults with a Disability Support Group.

Chronic Pain Monthly Support Group

This group is focused on discussing chronic pain coping strategies and how you can apply them in your life. Short mindfulness exercises will be included. Led by a facilitator who has experience with chronic pain. People can register anytime.

Contact intaketeam@carizon.ca for more information or to register.

Parents for Children's Mental Health Virtual Peer Support Group

Family/Caregiver Support Group — The fourth Tuesday of each month from 7-8:30pm

ADHD Caregiver Support Group — The third Wednesday of each month from 7-9pm

Group information is available by emailing waterloo@pcmh.ca.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

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!

Preemie Parents of Waterloo-Wellington

Preemie Parents of Waterloo-Wellington remains available online through a private Facebook group: <https://bit.ly/3iJL9rx>.

They look forward to returning to the Cambridge Family Early Years Centre and Our Place Family Resource and Early Years Centre as soon as it is deemed safe to do so. In the meantime, they suggest you review the Canadian Premature Babies Foundation's website to see the supports and resources available to you during this pandemic.

Visit: <https://www.cpbf-fbpc.org/covid19>

Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County Virtual Peer Support Network

Are your kids staying engaged with online learning? Are you looking for ideas to keep them (and yourself) motivated?

Join the Peer Support Network and meet other parents on a similar journey to yours. LDAWC peer support network's goal is to provide an informal setting to share experiences, challenges, successes and resources.

This group takes place the second Monday of the month from 7:00-8:30pm

Learn more at <https://ldawc.ca/events.html>.

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 7:15pm.

Contact Steve Keczem at 519-888-1053 or go to apsgo.ca for more information.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

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/>

ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Advocacy Kit for Increasing Special Services at Home

People for Personalized Funding (PFPF) has created an advocacy kit for increasing Special Services at Home.

[Bulletin from PFPF about Special Services at Home](#)

[How to Take Action](#)

Survey: Use of Services for 0-6 Children by Families During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Infant Mental Health Promotion (IMHP) at the Hospital for Sick Children, in collaboration with the Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health (The Centre), Kids Brain Health Network (KBHN) and Children First would like to hear your thoughts about how our child and youth mental health system can improve the quality of services for children under 6 throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Learn more at <https://bit.ly/39fKVFe>.

CAMH Virtual Healthcare Study for Patients with Developmental Disabilities

During COVID-19 there has been a huge increase in the delivery of virtual primary care. CAMH is conducting interviews (online or by phone) to learn what is working well and what needs to be improved to support high quality care for patients with developmental disabilities.

Interested or want to learn more?

Contact Avra Selick at avra.selick@camh.ca or 416-535-8501x30127

Information, Opportunities & Resources

The Sibling Collaborative Survey

The Sibling Collaborative is doing a survey of siblings to discover what kinds of information they would like to receive as to help their role in planning.

Take the survey at: <https://bit.ly/3dd4VtZ>.

Consultation: Initial recommendations for the development of proposed Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) Education Accessibility Standards

Submit your feedback on the recommendations for proposed standards to help make K-12 education more accessible for students with disabilities. Closing September 2, 2021.

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

Participate in Online Emotion Research

This online study is looking at the emotional life of adolescents 12-18 with ASD, ADHD, or neurotypical controls. Participants and their caregiver will complete a few questionnaires and will receive a \$20 and a \$10 Amazon gift card for their time.

If you are interested contact asd@queensu.ca.

Students with ADHD Need You!

An advisory committee, the K-12 Education Standards Development Committee was assigned to develop recommendations on what the Education Accessibility Standard should include. Currently ADHD is not recognized as a significant learning risk, which is one of the reasons why your feedback is critical! Learn more CADDAC website: <http://ow.ly/tfzc50FCR1r>.

Research Volunteers Needed: Young Black Women with Mental Health Concerns

Are you a Young Black Woman aged 18-25 years living in Toronto? Do you sometimes feel depressed, anxious, experience mood variance, or feel overwhelmed by daily life demands?

Learn more [here](#).