



Family Pulse

Where exceptional families thrive.

Issue 128
December 2020

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What's Happening In This Issue

Happy Holidays!

Everyone at WRFN would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a happy holiday season! As we bring this very eventful year to a close, we hope that 2021 will bring peace and joy to each and every one of you. And, of course, a vaccine to COVID-19 which seems to be on the horizon.

You'll find more useful offerings from WRFN and all of the helpful organizations in Waterloo Region with links to a host of helpful webinars, activities, and programs. Be sure to act fast on those that interest you since many of them fill up fast!

Thank you for all of your support during a stressful year when many needed support. We're grateful to be part of such a dynamic community and are looking forward to the new year!



Waterloo Region Family Network - WRFN



@FamilyNetworkWR

Support WRFN Today

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

All Feelings Are OK

By Carmen Sutherland

Raise your hand if you know different people with many different feelings about COVID-19. Oh wait, YOU have many different feelings about it, too? And it depends on what hour of the day it is and what other issues you are dealing with? Me, too! And that definitely does not just apply to the virus, that applies to everything from the approaching winter to my meal choices for the day! Given that my feelings change so much, I thought you might need a reminder that THAT IS OK!

As I write this, I am realizing I have written before on the theme of “who you are is great” for this newsletter. I guess I choose that theme often because it is a central theme in my life, too. I wonder if it is a consistent thought for all individuals with exceptionalities and those who love them. At the root of it, we ask: Am I OK? Is my child OK?” I hope that going through COVID, and watching those you are connected to is teaching you that as long as there is no harm being caused, how you and/or your children feel and react to situations is perfectly OK. No experience is the same for everyone, and we can’t expect it to be. If you feel like your feelings about the virus or another situation are abnormal and you wonder what that means, please know that I feel that, too. I am with you. This applies to the holidays, too. This will be a unique holiday experience for everyone, so it is OK if you are chomping at the bit for the traditions you celebrate this time of year, or if you can barely think about not celebrating in the usual way.

However you feel is fine, and I promise there are other people who are feeling the same way. And WRFN is here to support you with everything we can. No matter what, have a safe and happy holiday season, and whatever happens remember that you, your feelings, and your family are OK.



Making Connections

Help us continue to make connections and donate today.

With your help, Exceptional Families can thrive.

This year has been a journey for us all. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted our lives in ways great and small. It has made us realize many things, such as the capacity for generosity in our community and how precious time is with family and friends.

Perhaps the biggest realization has been just how important it is to stay connected to each other and to our community. This is especially so for exceptional families who experience isolation every day. In a time when connecting has become more difficult, WRFN continues to come through for families.

The connections made through WRFN are many. For them to seamlessly continue, and reach even more families, **we need your support.** Your gift is especially important because WRFN does not receive direct government funding. Every dollar donated helps exceptional families in our community get connected to the people and resources they need.

“Feeling connected to others, sharing challenges & ideas, helps us climb back up when we are feeling down.” ~ WRFN Parent

Our network has already helped over 2500 families connect to vital resources as well as to each other. And this newsletter contains details about the many other ways that we connect families and help them to stay informed. There are so many more families who need connections, now, more than ever before. **Exceptional families need you. Let’s travel this journey together.**

Create truly meaningful connections with your gift, today.

Donating is easy and, for a time, your donation will be matched. You can donate online at: https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/waterloo-region-family-network/campaign/2020_annual_appeal/

or mail a cheque to

WRFN
65 Hanson Ave.
Kitchener, ON
N2C 2H6

“THANK YOU for all that you do. You have made a difference in our lives!” ~ WRFN Parent

Enjoy a safe holiday season and let’s stay connected!

Sue Simpson
Executive Director

SEAC Updates

Waterloo Region District School Board Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Update *Submitted by Carmen Sutherland*

For the first part of the meeting, we heard from Integrated Action for Inclusion (IAI). They have an interest in supporting Human Rights and pedagogy in all neighbourhood schools for all exceptionalities. They believe that required accommodations for some students are likely beneficial to all students. They also believe that it is important for students to have social capital and therefore is key for all students to be educated together. Additionally, there is evidence that students being educated with their peers is better. IAI believes that, at times, giving students labels is "othering," and that if students with differences are removed from classrooms, then all other students will be treated the same, which is detrimental.

18% of students in Ontario access supports: IEPs, IPRCs, Social Work, Child and Youth Workers. The SIP allowed for hiring one full-time EA. Our School Board also participated in a reading learning project for students with learning disabilities using software called Lexia. They had over 5000 licenses and someone to monitor the project. LD teachers also provide learning for people from the Learning Disabilities Association.

Regarding educational supports for students with autism, there is online training for school boards in Applied Behaviour Analysis. There was also after school programs for students in order to help them succeed in the classroom and with social and communication skills. Additionally, there was an Additional Qualifications Course Subsidy for teachers to take the Teaching Students with Communication Needs (ASD) AQ course.

Our Board is also getting \$500,000 for COVID relief.

There is now a committee whose job it is to focus on accessible education standards students in Grades K-12. Meeting minutes for this committee can be found here: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/standards-development-committee-meeting-minutes#section-0>

In terms of mental health supports, there are more mental health workers in secondary schools, and when different staff connect with students remotely, they use a medical grade platform to do so.

SEAC Updates

Waterloo Catholic District School Board Special Education Advisory Committee Update *Submitted by Sue Simpson*

WCDSB SEAC met virtually on November 4.

Chris Runstedler, Special Education Assistive Technology Resource Teacher, shared an interactive presentation on technology available to students and teachers. The presentation included information about Special Equipment Amount (SEA) claims, Read & Write applications, Boardmaker, device switches, and how talk is embedded for those who do not have a voice. Additionally, a demonstration of what virtual training looks like was shared with the committee. The summer program provided an opportunity to learn and to be well set up for distance/virtual learning for the fall.

Gerald Foran, Principal Section 23, Learning Services, Special Education talked about the program review for Community and Active Living programs. The board is looking at how to improve these programs. You are encouraged to participate in a thought exchange opportunity at <https://my.thoughtexchange.com/549610542> to share your thoughts in terms of the Community and Active Living programs at WCDSB. Your feedback is very important in helping to make sure that the needed supports for students, staff, parents and community members are provided.

Please see the link below to the WCDSB website which contains information about the current programs:

<https://www.wcdsb.ca/programs-and-services/special-education/special-education-programs/>

The committee also discussed potential topics for the year.

Trustees, Tracey Weiler and Jeanne Gravelle, provided updates from the October board meeting. Click here to link to the October 2020 Board Meeting Bulletin

[WCDSB Board Meeting Bulletin -- October, 2020](#)

Association updates were also shared.

The next WCDSB SEAC meeting will be held virtually on December 2.

What's Happening at WRFN...

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

We will be listing online and virtual resources that we think will be helpful. Keep an eye on our Facebook Page and our Twitter account (@FamilyNetworkWR) for more!

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 currently available through phone, email or virtual connection 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

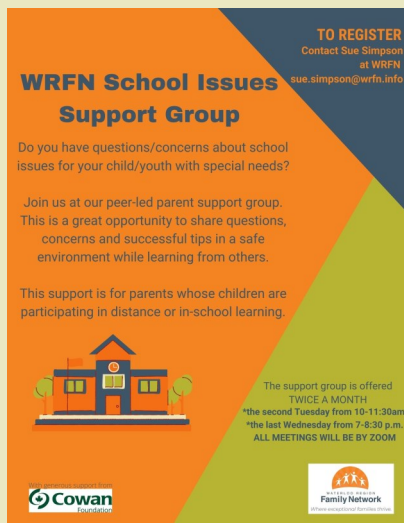
To request a booking please complete the request form found on our website at wrfn.info

WRFN's Family Resource Coach

During this current COVID-19 health crisis, personal support has become paramount for many families. Sue Furey, our Family Resource Coach, is available by phone or email 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 Sue at 519-886-9150 ext. 4 or email her at Sue.Furey@wrfn.info

We provide support in all life stages - NO diagnosis is needed.

What's Happening at WRFN...



WRFN School Issues Support Group

Do you have questions/concerns about school issues for your child/youth with special needs?

Join us at our peer-led parent support group. This is a great opportunity to share questions, concerns and successful tips in a safe environment while learning from others.

This support is for parents whose children are participating in distance or in-school learning.

TO REGISTER
Contact Sue Simpson at WRFN
sue.simpson@wrfn.info

The support group is offered **TWICE A MONTH**
*the second Tuesday from 10-11:30am
*the last Wednesday from 7-8:30 p.m.
ALL MEETINGS WILL BE BY ZOOM

Cowan Foundation
Family Network

School Issues 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. This group is currently meeting virtually. If you're interested in participating, please contact Sue Simpson at 519-886-9150 ext 1 or sue.simpson@wrfn.info

The group meets virtually on the last Wednesday of each month at 7pm. The next meeting will be on December 30. A monthly daytime meeting has also been added. This group will meet on the second Tuesday of each month at 10 am. That group will next meet on December 8.

Coffee Club

Greetings from Coffee Club! We have been meeting on Zoom since late March, 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.

A New Chapter

A New Chapter is a peer-led group for parents/caregivers interested in preparing for the future of their youth/adult family member. This group is currently meeting, virtually, on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm.

Upcoming dates and topics are:

December 1, 2020 Celebrate the Season Social Night

For more information please email

maryjpik@hotmail.com



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.

OCTOBER 6, 2020
Caregiver Fatigue & Burnout with guest: Catherine Legge

NOVEMBER 3, 2020
The Role of Siblings

DECEMBER 1, 2020
Celebrate the Season Social Night

All meetings start at 7:30pm

All meetings are virtual Zoom meetings

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

Family Network

Information, Resources, & Opportunities

Sunbeam Developmental Resource Centre will be hosting a speaker's panel on **Transitioning Your Youth Into Adulthood** on December 15. Please check out the flyer for details.



The **Children and Youth Planning Table (CYPT)** in partnership with the Canadian Index of Wellbeing (CIW) at the University of Waterloo, UNICEF Canada, and the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) partnered to develop the prototype of a new child and youth well-being survey. Aligned with the Canadian Index of Well-being (developed by UNICEF Canada), the “Youth Impact Survey” measures and monitors the well-being of children and youth.

The preliminary results of the survey will be released over the next several months and can be found on the [CYPT website](#).

“Not Another Webinar” has been created by the **Children & Youth Planning Table** with parents and educators in mind, to support finding tools and strategies to have a smooth and successful transition for not only the children, but for the parents and educators as well.

These short videos and compilation of valuable resources, created by our community partners and put together specifically to help you save time and get exactly what you need, right now. This is **not another webinar**, it's a collection of short and easy to implement lessons that will make your transition back to a classroom that much better!

The videos can be found here:

<https://childrenandyouthplanningtable.ca/not-another-webinar/>

A support group for **Black Caregivers** of people with exceptionalities began last month. For further dates and meeting information, contact Clovis or Sherron Grant at sherron.grant@rogers.com

The **Ontario government** has released the 2020-2021 budget including important new investments in services for people who have developmental disabilities. The full Ontario budget can be found online here: <https://budget.ontario.ca/2020/chapter-3.html>

Information, Resources, & Opportunities



Adults in Motion Cambridge has expanded their services to include a weekly LIFESKILLS RESPITE PROGRAM on Tuesdays and Thursday from 3:30-7:30pm.

Take a break and enroll for evenings of one-to-one learning in the kitchen, practicing life skills and relaxing while safely socializing with friends.

465 Avenue Road
Cambridge, ON
\$67/session. Dinner cost included.

For **more information about this program** and to learn about our **robust** COVID safety measures please call or visit AdultsinMotion.org, Southern Ontario Disability Programs and Services.

To view all events being offered at **Autism Ontario**, kindly visit: www.autismontario.com

Passport Community Developer Wellington/Dufferin is offering a webinar on Safety for Independent Living. December dates filled up fast, so dates in January have been added. See flyer below for information and how to register.

OPEN TO ALL REGIONS

SAFETY FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

A personal safety course where people learn life skills that empower them to make safe choices and caring & respectful decisions in their everyday lives both online and offline.

COURSE CONTENT

- BASIC FIRST AID/FIRE SAFETY'S EMERGENCY vs. NON-EMERGENCY
- BEING ASSERTIVE & BULLYING
- PEOPLE GETTING HELP FROM TRICKY PEOPLE & SAFE STRANGERS
- ONLINE SAFETY/ROAD SAFETY & MORE

DATE/TIME:
December 8th - 11th 100 - 2:00 pm
December 15th - 18th 100 - 2:00 pm

LOCATION:
Virtually (Zoom)-link will be sent upon completion of registration

COST:
\$55.00 - Passport Funding -subsidizable

CONTACT TO REGISTER:
Korenda Carpenter
P.O. Wellington/Dufferin 20C34100
kcarpenter@cpwca

Facebook: @passportwllngoodufferin

course materials will be shipped off/mailed out to participants prior to the first date

Information, Resources, & Opportunities

Living with a Disability During COVID-19?

Learning Disabilities of Wellington County is hosting an evening of sharing, tips and ideas on coping with this busy season on December 14 at 7:00pm.

Come join our 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. Living, learning and/or working with a LD, or supporting a family member with LD, has its ups and downs.

Go to <https://ldawc.ca/events/ldawc-virtual-peer-support-network/> for more information and to register.

Bruce Weber is a local retiree who independently creates adaptive devices for persons with disabilities. He's assisted by other volunteers and is able to make specific projects for unique needs. More information on Bruce's offerings and contact information are found on the flyer below.

What is the cost?
Adaptive Devices Made For You has individuals who volunteer their time, so the only expense to the client is for materials used, plus a small percentage markup to cover consumables and delivery costs.



Therapist seat to support client on treadmill.



ADAPTIVE DEVICES MADE FOR YOU




Bruce Weber
519 577 8521
pulletpka@golden.net

Do you have a client whose life would be improved by having something made specifically for their needs?


ADAPTIVE DEVICES MADE FOR YOU
Bruce Weber
519 577 8521

WE CAN HELP

Adaptive Devices Made For You
Volunteers have cabinet building and a little mechanical background. Generally the device will be made out of wood with high quality workmanship. We are willing to work with the therapist on an individual basis and if possible can do some simple mechanical things as well.




Roller rollers




Adult Size Puzzle

We are not licensed carpenters and will not attach anything in the home such as grab bars, ramps, etc.



Stand up work station

These are only examples of recent projects. If you have a need, feel free to contact Bruce and we will see how we can help.



A PhD candidate at **Wilfrid Laurier University** is looking for participants to interview for her thesis on grief and intellectual disability. More details on the project and how to contact the student can be found in the letter below.

Laurier
Inspiring Lives.

Research Project Information Letter
Deep in the Shadows of Loss: An Exploration of Grief, Mourning, and Intellectual Disability.
Laurier REB approval code: 6428

The Study: This research project will explore the grief experiences of people with intellectual disabilities for the purpose of PhD dissertation research and to advance practice knowledge in order to better support grievers. I want to learn from people with intellectual disabilities about their grief experiences across multiple aspects of their lives (e.g. emotional, physical, social, spiritual, etc.) after someone important to them dies.

Who am I? My name is Cara Grosset and I have worked as a social worker for over 25 years, with a specialization in grief support. I am currently a PhD Candidate in the Faculty of Social Work at Wilfrid Laurier University, where I also teach part-time in the BSW and MSW programs. My interest in grief in the lives of people with intellectual disabilities was sparked back in 1998. I had a student placement at Oaklands Regional Centre and when a staff member died, I noticed that residents who knew the staff member were not sad of the death. Since that time, I have been acutely aware of the absence of people with intellectual differences in my community bereavement support programs.

What am I asking you? I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss the process for recruiting participants from your organization. Participants would be over 18 years of age and have experienced the death of someone important to them. I plan to interview 10-12 individuals, along with their support person/parent in order to gain an understanding of their grief experiences. I am asking that support persons (e.g. primary worker in a group home, independent living support worker, parent/guardian) identify potential participants and then contact me to discuss (with non-identifying information) the suitability of participation. I will also need to interview one person in a management position at your organization in order to gain a contextual understanding.

What will I ask in the interviews? I will be asking open-ended questions aimed at understanding the relationship with the person prior to the death, the participants' grief experiences, and their experience of support. Due to ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, I will be conducting interviews via a password protected Microsoft Teams platform, so participants will need to be able to engage in interviews via this technology (with or without technical support).

How long will the interview last? 60-90 minutes but this will depend on the participant and their needs. I am able to conduct the interview over several sessions if this is best for the participant.

What is in it for me? Bereaved participants will be given a \$20 gift card for Tim Hortons (regardless of whether they complete the interview). Participants, support person/parents, and the management interviewees will be provided with the findings of the study which will include practical support strategies based on the data analysis.

Please see the attached Informed Consent Form for further information about consent, confidentiality, and risks and benefits of participation.

I realize that your organization may have its own ethics review process in order for you to proceed with assisting in this study. I am happy to send any required information for this process as well as attend any meetings.

I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss this exciting research project with you and to determine if you have bereaved individuals who would be interested in being interviewed.

I can be reached at 519-717-0605 or cgrosset@wlu.ca

Thank you for your consideration,
Cara
Cara Grosset, MSW, PhD(c), RSW, CT

Information, Resources, & Opportunities

Family Alliance Ontario is hosting several webinars in December and in the new year. See below for details.

They are also asking for your participation in a survey intended to learn more about how students with disabilities are being serviced by public school boards at this time. This survey will give Integration Action for Inclusion an idea of whether COVID-19 is changing what placement options families would normally opt for as well as whether your placement options have been influenced by resource allocations or other decisions that school boards make. To participate in the survey, go to:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf4pJX14A8kWJUDLjc19yqBmW7PXmXeRk_7tBnOWz5MtcgItg/viewform

Tuesday, December 1, 7-9 pm: Siblings of Those Institutionalized for a Developmental Disability.
Click on the flyer below to register.

Was Your Sibling Institutionalized for a Developmental Disability?

Connect with other brothers and sisters who share this experience

In 2009, the last three Ontario institutions for people labelled with developmental disabilities – the Huronia, Rideau and Southwestern Regional Centres – closed. Soon after, survivors launched class action lawsuits alleging systemic abuse and neglect. The suits were eventually settled, and survivors received some compensation for harm done to them. But the far-reaching impacts of institutionalization are still being felt by survivors, their families, and our communities, and institutionalization continues in other forms and in other jurisdictions.



Through the class actions, siblings of those who were institutionalized started to connect and discover that we have much to share and learn from each other. While our sisters and brothers suffered the worst injustices and harms, our families suffered too, in numerous and often unrecognized ways. As siblings, we may not have had anyone to talk to about what was happening in our families at the time of institutionalization; we may know little about what happened to our siblings. Some of us may have not thought there was anything to talk about as our family or community saw institutionalization as the “best thing to do.” For these and other reasons, our stories may have remained untold for decades. Yet sharing our stories can be healing and can add another dimension to society’s understanding of the consequences of this flawed model of care. At the same time, we recognize there is a diversity of experience and there are positive stories to be told as well.

Join Victoria Freeman and Vici Clarke for an opportunity to meet other siblings, listen to their stories, and perhaps share your own. Victoria Freeman is the author of *A World without Martha: A Memoir of Sisters, Disability, and Difference* and Vici Clarke is the Litigation Guardian for the Rideau Regional Centre class action. Our siblings were both institutionalized at Rideau. We know it is often hard to share difficult stories, but we have found it empowering to connect with others who have similar life experience.

This virtual meeting is sponsored by the Uncovering the People’s History Project of Family Alliance Ontario, which is helping survivors and others share their stories of the impact of the institutions on the people who lived in them, their families, and their communities. We invite siblings of anyone who lived at any institution for people with developmental disabilities, in Ontario or beyond, to join this discussion. We will create an informal, safe, supportive, and respectful environment for discussion: a skilled person who has a deep understanding of the issues and experience in assisting survivors and their families will join us to provide support, as needed. We can also direct you to other resources that might be helpful in contextualizing sibling experiences. Come and join us ... to speak or just to listen. We look forward to connecting with you.

Tuesday December 1, 7– 9pm (online via Zoom)

Click Here to Register
After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Sponsored by:
 Family Alliance Ontario
 Uncovering the People's History Project

Family Alliance Ontario is also holding a Virtual Town Hall on December 5, 9am-12pm about reforms to Developmental Services. See flyer below for more details and for registration go to:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSftm3ld_1cL5UF9oqz7TnAt5TOMHbWb_kSzK_OUzwcBc_3c4w/viewform



Family Alliance Ontario Consultation



Virtual Town Hall to Hear from People and Families

The Ministry has done their consultation. Now let’s tell them how to truly reform Developmental Services.

Date: **Saturday December 5, 2020**

Time: **9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**

Register by **Thursday December 3rd**: [Click Here!](#)

Zoom Link will be forwarded to those who register on Friday December 4, 2020.

For further information, contact us at:
familyallianceont@gmail.com or 905-723-8111



Information, Resources, & Opportunities

Ontario Independent Facilitation Network is offering a Building Capacity in Independent Facilitation Shared Learning Series. See below for course topics and click on the flyer to register.

Building Capacity in Independent Facilitation
An OIFN Shared Learning Series

A Shared Learning Series for people living with disabilities, family members and/or loved ones, and aspiring and experienced independent facilitators

Courses will be held virtually using Zoom Video Conferencing.

Most courses include 1 full-day webinar and 1 two-hour webinar for a total of 7 hours.

The Deepening Mindful Practice course includes 2 full-day webinars for a total of 9 hours, plus 4 hours of required mentoring.

The Conscious Listening and Speaking and Fostering Conversations about What Matters courses also include optional opportunities for 4 hours of small group mentoring conversations.

Courses will be led by Judith McGill of LifePath Facilitation. Judith has had extensive experience over the past 27 years supporting individuals with developmental disabilities within the context of their families to take the next step, whatever that might be and to live the life they have imagined. She is the Executive Director of Families for a Secure Future and as such has had the privilege to mentor several Facilitators on an ongoing basis over the years.

Space is limited!

Register here: <https://tinyurl.com/OIFNseries20-21>

If you need assistance to register, please contact Bill Rolfo, OIFN Administrative Assistant
brolo@oifn.ca or 519-866-8094, Ext. 6

COURSE TOPICS

- The Power of Social Roles
- Developing Leisure Identities
- Conscious Listening and Speaking
- Deepening Mindful Practice
- Fostering Conversations about What Matters

Registration Fees
\$390 for whole series including mentoring sessions
Courses 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 \$95 per course
Course 4 (with required mentoring conversations) \$100
Optional Mentoring Conversations (for courses 1 & 2) \$50 per mentoring conversation

Bereaved Families of Ontario and Woolwich Counselling Centre is offering Anything But Merry, an education session for those who are grieving over the holiday season. See below for more information.

Bereaved Families of Ontario
MIDWESTERN REGION

Anything But Merry

When you're grieving, the holiday season can seem Anything But Merry. It can be a time of overwhelming emotions and new challenges.

JOIN US AT OUR VIRTUAL EDUCATION SESSION WHERE WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE DIFFICULTIES THE HOLIDAY SEASON CAN BRING AND SHARE COPING STRATEGIES TO HELP YOU THROUGH

DECEMBER 9, 2020 | 7:00PM

PRESENTED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

WOOLWICH COUNSELLING CENTRE

FOR MORE INFORMATION + TO REGISTER:
INFO@WOOLWICHCOUNSELLING.ORG | 519-669-8651

Information & Resources

Holland Bloorview is excited to offer *Autism Insights: Research Innovations, Strategies and the Lived Experience*, a **FREE** five-day online Summit designed for parents, caregivers, health care professionals and other service providers interested in autism. The Summit takes place

December 1-5 and registration details can be found here:



<https://autismsummit.hollandbloorview.ca/>

Bulldog Fitness in Guelph has spots available in its Kindergarten Readiness Preschool Program which is an emergent/activity based program ran by qualified RECE that will assist with social development and school preparation. Using your child's interests and their own curiosity, we will use creative play and activities to develop many skills including: Numeracy/ Literacy, Science, Cognitive Thinking and more!


For more information and registration, go to:

<https://www.guelphbulldog.com/preschool-program>

Spots Available in our Kindergarten Readiness Preschool Program!

An emergent/activity based program ran by qualified RECE that will assist with social development and school preparation. Using your child's interests and their own curiosity, we will use creative play and activities to develop many skills including: Numeracy/ Literacy, Science, Cognitive Thinking and more!





Days Available: Monday-Friday
Time: 9:30am-12:00pm
Cost: \$18/per day

Call or email us to book your toddler's spot today!

Guelph Bulldog | 259 Grange Rd, Guelph, ON N1E 6R5
519-836-3838 | [WEBSITE](#) | [EMAIL](#)





Information & Resources

In collaboration with the **Canadian Mental Health Association, Waterloo-Wellington**, the **ACEs Coalition of Guelph & Wellington** is pleased to announce a lunch and learn session on building resilience through relationships. In this webinar, [Dr. Jean Clinton](#) will explore the concept of resilience, the importance of relationships in building resilience, and what you can do to promote personal and community resilience. Following Dr. Clinton's keynote, we will hear from a local physician, school principal and two outreach workers about how they use their understanding of ACEs and resilience to inform their work with children and families.

For more information and registration go to:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_2SVe27I7RBmA_ZJYyz7R5w

[Kitchener Public Library](#) welcomes all children & families to join them for a very special sensory friendly concert! This concert was designed for children with Autism or other sensory differences though all are welcome! Info & registration:


<http://kplca.evanced.info/signup/EventDetails?EventId=45331&backTo=Calendar&startDate=2020/12/01>

Kenneth C. Pope, LLB, TEP will be holding a webinar on disability resources and estate planning.

For more information and to register, go to:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_qd631kwsSoSBRmT9pWDXZw

KENNETH C POPE, LLB, TEP
Barrister & Solicitor
Special Needs and
Disability Estate Planning



Annual Updates & Changes
Webinar Invitation

Learn About:

- Wills and Henson Trusts
- Recent tax changes affecting trusts and estates and how to navigate through them
- ODSP and how it can affect estate planning
- How families with children with special needs can benefit from the caregiver tax credit since it changed in 2017
- The Disability Tax Credit
- RDSPs: how they can grow to \$400,000, and how to start making withdrawals
- Lifetime Benefit Trusts
- Guardianships & substitute decision making

During the webinar, Ken often takes questions from participants and offers specific advice. If you would like your family's situation addressed or have a particular question, we may be able to answer it at the webinar.

Time: Wednesday, December 9th 7:00pm-8:00pm EST

Why ADHD Is Different for Women: Gender-Specific Symptoms & Treatments is a webinar being offered on December 15 at 1pm by **ADDitude**.

For more information and to register, go to:

<https://www.additudemag.com/webinar/adhd-in-women-symptoms-treatment-support/>

Information & Resources

Living with a Disability During COVID-19?

The Abilities Centre is administering a COVID-19 Disability Survey is a special initiative to record the experiences, concerns and needs of people with disabilities during the COVID-19 outbreak and recovery period. The survey's findings will provide important information to help communities ensure that COVID-19 response strategies meet the needs of people of all abilities.

Go to <https://abilitiescentre.org/disabilitysurvey> for more information and to participate in this important survey.

Interesting app/technology that's SSAH/Passport funding eligible. See below or go here: <http://futuresfound.ca/brain-in-hand.html> for more information!



ELIGIBLE EXPENSE
 SSAH / Passport Funding

Brain in Hand

Develops + supports independent living, employment + study skills.

Brain in Hand combines solutions-focused **planning** with a digital software **system** and people-connected **support**. It aims to help you work out the goals you want to achieve in life, and then get you going with practical strategies that play to your strengths. Support can be accessed any time from your smartphone or tablet, so you can carry all the help you need wherever you go.



TRY APP DEMO




All ears to learn more?

Contact your Brain in Hand Specialist:

Maralyn Ellis, Registered Psychotherapist (Qualifying)
 5106 Ridgewell Road, Burlington, ON L7L 6N9
 905.407.1494 | www.futuresfound.ca | contact@futuresfound.ca
 Book a **free consult** or appointment @ <https://bit.ly/32XAPGh>

braininhand
 personal technology for independent living

by **D**istinctability

FuturesFound 


head in the right direction

Information & Resources

Cambridge Memorial Hospital is offering a **FREE** virtual breastfeeding workshop on December 1.

Parents can ask questions, learn tips to latch, how birth impacts breastfeeding, resources and lots of encouragement and support.

See below for more information & how to sign up!


Free breastfeeding workshop

Virtual Learn to Breastfeed 101

Cambridge Memorial Hospital

What you will learn with an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant:


- Breastfeeding basics
- Benefits of breastfeeding
- Learning to breastfeed
- Learning to latch
- Tips and tools
- Ask breastfeeding questions
- Breastfeeding techniques

When:
Tuesday November 3, 2020 or
Tuesday December 1, 2020
6:30-8pm

This workshop is virtual. Good wifi, working phone/ computer camera and mic are required.

Image courtesy: wdpublichealth.ca

Instructions on how to login will be provided upon registration.
Registration is first come, first serve. Space is limited.
Email: theinemann@cmh.org
For patients of CMH 34 weeks + gestation



Register with Tania Heinemann IBCLC: THeinemann@cmh.org

Developmental Services Ontario (DSO) has launched Passport eCLAIM, which is an electronic way to submit your passport invoices. For more information and to submit your invoices go to:

<https://www.dsontario.ca/passport-program/learn-about-passport-eclaim>

Information & Resources

YMCA is offering free Move for Health classes for December. See below for topics and classes and register at

<https://form.jotform.com/202816203993254>



**MOVE FOR HEALTH
FREE WORKSHOPS**
All workshops will be hosted on ZOOM.

Registration is required. Register today:
http://bit.ly/YMCAWORKSHOPS_NOVDEC2020

MINDFULNESS MINISERIES
Tuesday November 17, November 24, December 1 & December 8, 2020
12:00PM – 12:45PM
Speaker: Meagan Meade R.Kin.

Take part in this 4-week Mindfulness Miniseries to further explore the benefits of mindfulness and meditation and how they can play a role in your life. Throughout the miniseries you will gain practical knowledge and be introduced to different meditation types to help you find what works for you.

November 17: What it means to be mindful, and how a meditation practice can play a role.
November 24: How the physical body can help us in our mindfulness and meditation practice.
December 1: The role of mindfulness and meditation in stress management.
December 8: The role of mindfulness in emotional regulation, and how meditation fits in.

CORE STRENGTHENING
Tuesday December 8, 2020 | 6:30PM – 7:30PM
Speaker: Katelyn Corke R.Kin

Ready to expand your abdominal strengthen options beyond the sit up? Learn how to better protect your spine through effective, efficient and safe options that will help to stabilize your whole body. Gain confidence and strength in your day to day and recreational pursuits with a strong and stable core.

LOW BACK PAIN: ANATOMY, INTERVENTIONS, EXERCISE
Monday December 14, 2020 | 6:30PM – 8:00PM
Speaker: Dave Patterson R.Kin

Lower back pain is an extremely common and occasionally debilitating condition. Come learn the fundamentals, including evidence-based ways to self-manage this difficult issue.

KEEP ACTIVE IN COLD WEATHER
Tuesday December 15, 2020 | 12:00PM – 1:00PM
Speaker: Meagan Meade R.Kin.

Attend this 1-hour workshop to learn about different ways to continue to be active outdoors as we move into winter. During the workshop we will explore activity options, as well as safety considerations, and tips and tricks to make being outside more enjoyable.

Partners for Planning is excited to introduce a brand-new series called the Fundamentals of Future Planning, a six-part enhanced webcast. Over the course of three months, guest speakers will share their expertise on a variety of topics and highlight the steps families can take to plan for a secure future with their loved one.

For more information and registration for the remaining sessions, go to:
<https://www.planningnetwork.ca/en-ca/Events/28512/Fundamentals-of-Future-Planning>

Information & Resources

Kerry's Place Autism Services has a list of resources for families with exceptional children to help deal with the current COVID-19 crisis. They can be found here: <https://www.kerrysplace.org/covid-19-resources/>

Additionally, **Kerry's Place Portal** offers an array of resources, including webinars and printable resources made available to persons with ASD, their families, educators, and anyone interested in learning about Autism Spectrum Disorder, and supportive strategies, across the Province of Ontario. Kerry's Place aims to provide a comprehensive overview of various topics in 15-30 minutes segments, available to view, pause, and review at one's leisure, while the one-page resources are downloadable, and printable. Link is here: <https://www.kerrysplace.org/theportal/>

For more information on what is available in Waterloo Region go to their website: <https://www.kerrysplace.org/support-and-services/central-region/waterloo/>

Kerry's Place is also offering an Autism Spectrum Disorder Certificate Course scheduled to begin in January, 2021, via Zoom. There will be an evening, a morning, and a full-day option, providing choice to our communities. This course is available to community members as well as families with persons with ASD.

For more information and to register, go to:

<https://www.kerrysplace.org/autism-spectrum-disorder-certificate-course/>

Kerry's Place will also be offering many webinars as part of its Foundational Family Services available for persons with ASD and their families, under the age of 17, who are registered in the Ontario Autism Program (OAP). To view the offerings and for more information please go to:

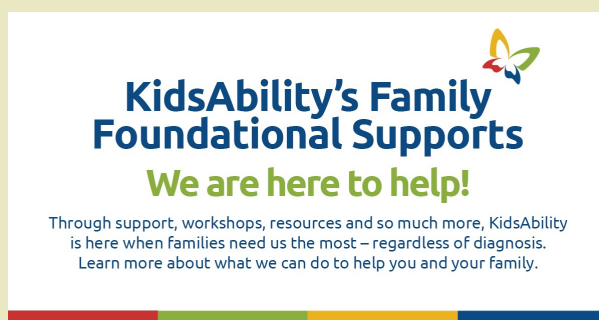
<https://www.kerrysplace.org/category/ffs/>

Kerry's Place groups for January-March 2021 have been posted on their website. There are a variety of groups available for different ages and needs. Prior to participating in a social skills group, interested participants are required to complete a group prescreening. The group prescreenings are valid for 6 months and families will be provided recommendations of groups based on their child and youth's strengths and needs.

For more information go to:

<https://www.kerrysplace.org/category/oapgroups/>

Information & Resources



Help is here when families need it the most. No diagnosis needed. When a family has questions about their child's development, **KidsAbility** is often the first call that they make. We are here to answer that call and the many questions you may have from where to start to what services might be available to support you and your child. KidsAbility provides Foundational Family Services to anyone in our community—no diagnosis needed.

Funded through the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, Foundational Family Services provided by KidsAbility through the Ontario Autism Program break down barriers so that anyone in our community with questions or who may be concerned that their child is facing challenges can access services and support when they need it the most. Our dedicated, professional staff will work with you to find workshops, resources, groups, support and more to help you be successful. We are here for you regardless of where you are on your journey or simply if you are supporting someone on their own journey. You do not need to be a KidsAbility family to access these services.

Help is here.

Learn more: 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? Would you like to find out about resources that are available to help you with your transition planning?

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. During Covid-19 isolation, all appointments will be occurring through Zoom. Once KidsAbility Centres have opened up again there will be the option to meet with the Transitions Lead either face to face or through Zoom.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, contact your KidsAbility therapist or call Intake at 1-888-372-2259, Ext 1214

Information & Resources

Given the changes to education, cancellation of student work experiences and limitations to inclusion opportunities, **Community Living Ontario's** Student Links might be a great option for students and could help with transition planning and practical skill development. Student Links program is a free initiative where they seek to partner high school students (14-21+) who have intellectual disabilities with mentors in the community who share a common interest. This is done in the hope of helping teach/mentor students to develop their passions, grow as an individual, gain experience and explore potential ideas/roles for life after school. Each of our students has unique interests, passions, and needs and we try to partner our students with the best match we can.















Student Links will continue to focus on 1-on-1 learning opportunities for students (14-21+). At this time, we will be doing our best to connect students with mentors and people in the community via online/virtual meetings, telephone calls and/or emails based on shared interests. We will continue to prioritize individual connections and, if possible, we will consider other ways to connect students and mentors with our larger community.

For more information, please contact Natalie Bianco at 416-859-8581 or email Natalie at nbianco@communitylivingontario.ca

Woolwich Counselling is pleased to announce our up-coming groups and workshops for the 2020-2021 season. Our groups are being introduced at no cost to attend these virtual sessions.

Pre-registration is required, keeping in mind that space is limited.

See below for groups and go to woolwichcounselling.org for registration and more information.


 WOOLWICH COUNSELLING CENTRE 2020-2021 Programs 65 Memorial Ave, Elmira ON N3B 2R9 ~ 519 669 8651 - info@woolwichcounselling.org www.woolwichcounselling.org	
 Glad to be ME - Ages 4-7 Self-Esteem Program Oct 28, Nov 25, 2020, Jan 27, Feb 23, Mar 31, Apr 28, & May 26, 2021 ~ 4:00-5:00pm	 Understanding Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) Oct 20, 2020 ~ 7:00-8:00pm
 No Need to Fret - Ages 8-11 Childhood Anxiety Group ~ 5:00-6:00pm Group 1: Oct 27, Nov 3, 10, 17 & 24, 2020 Group 2: Mar 30, Apr 6, 13, 20 & 27, 2021	 Coping with Loneliness Oct 27, 2020 ~ 7:00-8:00pm
 Conquering Teen Anxiety - Ages 12-14 Teen Anxiety Group Oct 28, Nov 4, 11, 18 & 25, 2020 ~ 5:00-6:00pm Mar 30, Apr 6, 13, 20 & 27, 2021 ~ 7:00-8:00pm	 The Importance of Self-Care Nov 3, 2020 ~ 7:00-8:00pm
 LGBTQ+ Awareness & Support Awareness: Nov 10, 2020 & Feb 2, 2021 ~ 7:00-8:00pm Support: Feb 10, 24, Mar 10, 24, Apr 7 & 21, 2021 ~ 4:00-5:00pm	 Mindfulness Nov 5, 12, 19, 26, Dec 3 & 10, 2020 ~ 7:00-8:00pm Mar 25, Apr 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29, 2021 ~ 7:00-8:00pm
 Protecting the Girl in Me - Ages 10-12 Self-Awareness Group for Girls Jan 20, 27, Feb 3, 10 & 17, 2021 ~ 5:00-6:00pm	 CBT Skills Group Nov 10, 17, 24, Dec 1, 8 & 15, 2020 ~ 6:30-7:30pm
 Stand Tall - Ages 7-9 Assertiveness Building May 5, 12, 19, 26 & Jun 2, 2021 ~ 5:00-6:00pm	 Coping with the Winter Blues Jan 26, 2021 ~ 7:00-8:00pm
	 CBT for Insomnia Feb 2, 9, 16, 23, Mar 2 & 9, 2021 ~ 6:30-7:30pm
Visit www.woolwichcounselling.org for more program details. Call 519-669-8651 or email info@woolwichcounselling.org to register.	




Information & Resources

Recreational Respite continues to promote inclusion, encourage community participation and nurture social connectivity. We understand how imperative it is to stay connected. They bring you unique, interactive opportunities, that provide innovative and experiential outcomes in 1:1, mini or small group **virtual** settings. That's right, these programs are now available online! Recreational Respite is also providing 1:1 tutoring support from a qualified EA/Recreation Therapist. This can be done in person or virtually as well at the rate of \$29.50/hour+tax

They can be found on their website here: www.recrespite.com/virtual-services/

National Service Updates



	<p>1:1 Respite Support (in home/community) Our recreation therapists work 1:1 with children, youth and adults with disabilities in their homes, direct community or virtual space. Our service is for those who typically face barriers to inclusive participation or struggle with social relationships, self-regulation and coping strategies. Respite services can be short or long term and are goal directed with each individual's needs, abilities, strengths and interests as our primary focus. These supports can also be available specifically focused on personalized classroom and homework support. We'll develop strategies for diverse learners that consider each student's unique learning needs and supports.</p> <p>Hourly \$29.50</p>
	<p>Build It Workshops These unique workshops are for those ages 12-17 and 18+. They aim to provide independent skill mastery for children, youth and adults who want to acquire new skills with productive outcomes. These person centred workshops will cultivate life skills and promote self-care.</p> <p>1.5 hour workshop \$24.50 2 hour workshop \$39.50</p>
	<p>Virtual Group Programs Virtual sessions offer unique small group experiences that promote engagement, inclusion and social connectivity and are attached to experiential outcomes. The sessions are developed by our recreation therapists. Spaces are limited.</p> <p>Cost: \$15.00 per program</p>

For more information 1-877-855-7070
info@recrespite.com and recrespite.com/services/

Information & Resources

Better Nights, Better Days for Children with Neurodevelopmental Disorders (BNBD-NDD)

An Online Behavioural Treatment for Pediatric Sleep Issues in Children with Neurodevelopmental Disorders

Better Nights, Better Days
for Children with Neurodevelopmental Disorders

~90% of children with Neurodevelopmental Disorders experience Insomnia

Insomnia is categorized by:

- Resisting bedtime
- Trouble falling asleep
- Night awakenings
- Waking too early in the morning

Sound familiar? Consider participating in our study!

Even a little sleep loss can lead to big problems. It can make it harder for your child to:

- control their behaviour
- control their emotions
- play safely
- be physically active
- make healthy eating choices
- learn

Better Nights, Better Days
for Children with Neurodevelopmental Disorders

An online program that provides accessible, evidence-based treatment tailored for children ages 4-12 years old with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Cerebral Palsy (CP), and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)

Distance Treatment Program
The online program is fully accessible from computers, laptops, tablets, or smartphones

Save Time and Money
All information and materials are provided online - no need to travel to appointments!

The Latest Research
Using evidence-based research and best clinical practice, the program has been developed by a team of leading health experts across Canada

Support from Start to Finish
Built-in support and program tools will guide and motivate you as you complete the program

Empower Parents
The program is designed to empower you to improve your child's sleep on your own. You can rest assured that the information and support you require is at your fingertips

Transdiagnostic Approach
Specifically developed to meet the unique needs of children with ADHD, ASD, CP and FASD

bnbnd-ndd@dal.ca
www.ndd.betternightsbetterdays.ca

Contact Us

Logos for participating institutions: SickKids, Dalhousie, University of Toronto, University of Montreal, McGill, etc.

Up to 90% of Canadian children with neurodevelopmental disorders (NDD) experience insomnia symptoms including trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, and/or waking too early. Insomnia can have a significant impact on children's daytime functioning. Poor sleep can lead to increased challenges with learning, attention, and can contribute to increased symptom presentation in children with neurodevelopmental disorders.

Evidence supports the effectiveness of behavioural treatments for insomnia. However, these interventions are not often available to families of children with NDDs. Developed by Dr. Penny Corkum (Dalhousie University; IWK Health Centre), Dr. Shelly Weiss (University of Toronto; SickKids), and their colleagues at institutions across Canada, the online sleep intervention program, *Better Nights, Better Days for Children with Neurodevelopmental Disorders (BNBD-NDD)*, offers a potential solution to address this barrier to care. BNBD-NDD is an evidence-based, transdiagnostic online program for parents with children ages 4-12 years old with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Cerebral Palsy (CP), and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) that experience insomnia.

The *BNBD-NDD* program can help parents help their children to sleep better so that they can achieve the best academic outcomes.

Dr. Corkum, Dr. Weiss, and the *BNBD-NDD* research team are currently looking for 15 more families of children with ADHD, ASD, CP and/or FASD from across Canada to participate in this entirely online research study to evaluate the effectiveness of *BNBD-NDD*. Interested participants can get started at the following link: <http://ndd.betternightsbetterdays.ca/>

Information & Resources

Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work is an organization that assists individuals with disabilities in finding employment. See the flyer below for more information and how to connect.

CCRW Employment Services

Looking for work? We provide



- Industry Specific Training
- Workplace Accommodation & Adjustment Planning
- Employer Matching
- Access to Hidden Job Market

CCRW | CCRT

CCRW helps skilled job seekers with disabilities get connected with local businesses!

Are you?	Contact Info:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An individual who self-identifies as having a disability • Unemployed or under employed and ready to job search • Interested in gaining support to create a workplace accommodation plan? • Interested in connecting with employers who are actively hiring? <p style="font-size: small;"><i>To be eligible for funding you must not have been on EI currently or in past 3-5 years</i></p>	<p>Kathleen MacLeod Employment Facilitator (519) 571-6788 x 7661 kmacleod@ccrw.org www.ccrw.org</p>

Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work
127 Victoria St South, Suite 201, Kitchener ON N2G 2B4

Information & Resources

Sick Kids CCMH Live Webinars - September 2020 - February 2021

Topic - Certificate Program in Children's Grief and Bereavement

Module 1: Children at the Bedside.

Module 2: When Death Darkens the Door.

Module 3: When Grief Gets More Complicated.

Module 4: Using Mindfulness and Compassion to Support Grieving Children/Families.

Module 5: Dancing in the Darkness.



Premie Parents of Waterloo-Wellington remains available online through our private Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/premiepowwr>.

We 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, we 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>

Information & Resources

Carizon is local non-profit that helps families thrive in their communities by strengthening their mental health and wellbeing. They are offering many support groups and workshops in the coming weeks. See flyers below for details and registration information and go to <https://www.carizonforthecommunity.ca/> for more information about Carizon.

Carizon Family and Community Services

FINDING HOPE THROUGH THE DARKNESS VIRTUAL WORKSHOP SERIES

SELF-CARE December 2nd | 3 - 4 pm | [Register Online](#)

As the Pandemic and its restrictions drag on, and as the days get shorter and darker, many of us are feeling ground down in many ways – anxiety and frustration are only a couple of examples! Taking care of ourselves is not just a slogan – it’s a necessity! Let’s discuss some ideas on how to do this.

INNER PEACE December 9th | 11 am - 12 pm | [Register Online](#)

So much of life is rushed, hectic and complicated. Quieting the noise and connecting with our inner self provides a pathway to peace amidst the chaos. This workshop includes practical techniques to slow down, find an inner sense of calm, and cope when things feel overwhelming.

RESILIENCE December 16th | 3 - 4 pm | [Register Online](#)

Join us for a session that will focus on the three vital components required in creating and maintaining resiliency. Participants will learn how to build hope and confidence during stressful times as well as specific strategies to incorporate self-care into their daily lives.

HAPPINESS January 13th | 7 - 8 pm | [Register Online](#)

During difficult times, the idea of happiness sometimes feels beyond our reach. However, there are scientifically proven ways for improving happiness. In this workshop, we will explore positive psychology, the study of happiness and experiment with new and simple ways of boosting our happiness levels.


MINDFULNESS January 20th | 3 - 4 pm | [Register Online](#)


How can being more aware of my thoughts and emotions help me to cope better in my daily life? Join this experiential workshop and take away key mindfulness skills and teachings to help navigate your everyday challenges.

HOPE January 27th | 12 pm - 1 pm | [Register Online](#)

Remaining hopeful in times of uncertainty can be challenging. This workshop will review the science of hope and provide attendees with practical knowledge to encourage and sustain hope in their own lives, especially during times of uncertainty.

Call (519) 743-6333 or email workshops@carizon.ca for information or registration.





Winter Groups 2021

All groups are online using Zoom unless otherwise noted.
Register by calling intake at 519 743-6333 or emailing intaketeam@carizon.ca

Understanding Me Morning Group | Tuesdays 9:30am - 11:30am | Jan 12 - Mar 16
 *Evening Group | Tuesdays 6:30pm - 8:30pm | Jan 12 - Mar 16

Provides education & support for women who have experienced emotional or physical abuse within their intimate relationships. **Open group:** clients can register at any time. Morning group Online.
 *Evening group Onsite at 400 Queen St. S. *Fully funded.*

Moving Towards Healthy Relationships *Thursdays 10:00am - 12:00pm | Jan 21 - Mar 11

A group for women who have experienced emotional or physical abuse, focusing on safety, building of self-esteem, ending the cycle of violence and learning how to be healthy in relationships. **Closed group,** assessment required and completion of "Understanding Me" is a prerequisite. **Onsite at 400 Queen St. S. Fully funded.**

Building Better Boundaries Wednesdays 6:30pm - 8:30pm | Jan 20 - Mar 10

Provides education and support for women who have experienced any form of abuse and are working towards setting better boundaries in their lives. **Closed group.** Online. *Fully funded.*

Your Mindfulness Break Tuesdays 12pm - 12:40pm | Jan 12 - Mar 30

Learn to meditate and calm your mind. You will be given some instructions, provided time to practice and a few minutes to debrief and ask questions at the end. **Informal group - come when you can.** Online. *Fully funded.* To self-register click here: <https://bit.ly/2K6Gow1>

Taming our Anger Mondays 7:00pm - 8:30pm | Jan 11 - Mar 8

A learning opportunity for adults who have difficulty expressing and/or managing angry and aggressive feelings. **Closed group after second session.** Online. *Note: No group on Feb 15 - Family Day.* *Fully funded.*

Beating the Winter Blues Wednesdays 6:30pm - 8:00pm | Jan 13 - Mar 3

Winter can be hard! It's cold, dark, isolating, and many people can experience low moods, low energy, and even feelings of depression, anxiety, and loss of interest in things they usually enjoy; the effects of months of pandemic lock-down may make it even worse. But there is hope and things you can do to improve your mood, increase your energy and brighten your outlook. Each week will focus on a different self-care strategy with concrete, hands-on learning for you to practice. **Open group.** Online. *Fully funded.*

From Fear to Freedom: Overcoming Anxiety Thursdays 6:30pm - 8:00pm | Jan 21 - Mar 11

A skill-based interactive group for adults for whom anxiety causes problems in daily living. Participants will learn how to become more mindful of their emotions and how to better tolerate and accept "negative" emotions, allowing them to move past anxiety and towards the things that matter in their lives. **Homework completion between sessions is an expectation of this group.** **Closed group after second session.** Online. *Fully funded.*

Chronic Pain Monthly Support Group Third Thursday of the month 1:30-3:00pm
Jan 21, Feb 18, Mar 18, Apr 15

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. **Open group:** clients can register at any time. Online. *Fully funded.*

400 Queen St. S. Kitchener, ON | www.carizon.ca
 Call 519.743.6333 or email intaketeam@carizon.ca for information or registration

Information & Resources

Foundations in Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) is a basic training course intended for everyone that will come into contact with individuals with FASD including all sectors of work, families, individuals with FASD, spouses, and the general public. This foundational level training program provides the perspective of individuals who have FASD, is evidence-based, employs a culturally sensitive approach, and is presented in a way that is responsive to the learners needs. This online basic training course will take on average two hours to complete. Level 1 training will provide knowledge and understanding of:

- an overview of FASD assessment and diagnosis in Canada
- an introduction to FASD interventions and promising approaches
- the effects of prenatal alcohol exposure on the fetus
- the impact of alcohol on brain development
- issues related to stigma and FASD
- strategies for prevention and support
- barriers to prevention and support
- the signs and symptoms of FASD across the lifespan

A certificate will be provided to each participant upon completion:

<https://estore.canfasd.ca/foundations-in-fasd>

Sunbeam Centre's Brightside ABA Services specialize in supporting clients that are 9 years of age and up to support skill development in key areas such as social skills, communication skills, emotional regulation skills, building independence in activities of daily living, and to reduce challenging behaviours.

Go to <https://brightsideabaservices.com/>

Sunbeam Centre Brightside ABA Services is also offering Virtual Parent Coach Workshops beginning February 2, 2021. Spaces are limited. See flyer below on how to register.

Information & Resources

Artshine Virtual Accessible Art For Kids, Teens & Adults living with disabilities. 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!

Max 20 participants for personalized attention.

Supplies are pre-shipped to your group home or to each participant's home, with exciting new mediums every month.

Click the picture below or [here](#) for more information!



ACCESSIBLE ART
VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS

VIA ZOOM

for KIDS, TEENS & ADULTS LIVING WITH DISABILITIES

EASY-TO-FOLLOW LESSONS

max **20** participants Personalized attention catering to all skill levels.

EXCITING NEW MEDIUMS EVERY MONTH!

SUPPLIES PRE-SHIPPED

to your group home or to each participant's home

\$75 FOR A 4-WORKSHOP PACKAGE
(* HST and shipping)

Email us directly at manager@artshine.ca or visit:

ARTSHINE.CA
LET YOUR ART SHINE

Information & Resources



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. It also offers a link to resources designed for parents through the Parenting Now website.

Family Compass has added a Back to School bucket on their Covid-19 webpage. Parents can access resources and articles pertaining to children and youth returning to school during the pandemic. Resources are being added daily and can be accessed via their COVID-19 response link: <https://childrenandyouthplanningtable.ca/covid-19-resources-for-children-youth-and-families/>

Mighty Hawks Laurier is a group of passionate student leaders from Wilfrid Laurier University that believes a developmental disability does not define the scope of one's abilities. This group holds weekly workshops to support each individual in development of work-relevant and financial literacy skills with one-to-one support from Mighty Hawk Facilitators. The Mighty Hawks support social enterprise businesses and offer experience to its members. See here for more information: <https://enactuslaurier.ca/project/mighty-hawks/>

Lutherwood is available to help people find employment during the pandemic. All of their programs are still operating and can be accessed at: www.beemployed.ca

We are still here to help you find employment.

Although times are challenging right now due to the COVID-19 pandemic, **Lutherwood Employment Services** is still here to help you find work. Contact us today to access our **free** services.

BeEmployed.ca

Lutherwood
Caring people. Strengthening lives.

Cambridge 519-623-9380
Kitchener 519-743-2460
Guelph 519-822-4141

**HEY CAMBRIDGE!
NEED A JOB?**

WE'VE GONE VIRTUAL!

While Lutherwood's **Preston Idea Exchange** and **Langs** visits have been temporarily cancelled due to COVID-19, we are still offering our services via telephone or video chat.

Contact Melissa to set up a virtual appointment


Melissa Small, Employment Advisor
519-497-2839
msmall@lutherwood.ca

Lutherwood
Caring people. Strengthening lives.

lutherwood.ca/employment

Information & Resources

The document below shows what safety protocols are in place and what to expect when having an in-person appointment or entering the building at **Lutherwood**.



COVID-19 Screening Questions

1. Do you have one or a combination of any of the following common symptoms of COVID-19 that are not related to any known causes or conditions including:
 - Fever (temperature of 37.8°C or greater)
 - New or worsening cough
 - Shortness of breath

2. Do you have one or combination of any of the following other COVID-19 symptoms that are not related to any known causes or conditions such as allergies, cold weather, anxiety, etc. including:
 - Sore throat
 - Runny nose or sneezing or nasal congestion
 - Difficulty swallowing
 - New lack of smell or taste
 - Nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain

3. Do you live with or have you had close prolonged (more than 15 minutes) contact with someone who has any of the above symptoms of COVID-19

4. Do you live with someone who has a confirmed case of COVID-19?

5. Have you travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days?

6. Do you live with someone who has travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days?

If you answer yes to any of the above, please contact the office to reschedule or to arrange a virtual/phone meeting.

35 Dickson Street Cambridge, ON N1R 7A6 519-822-9380	89 Wingham Street North Cambridge, ON N1R 4E9 519-822-4141	161 King Street East Kitchener, ON N2C 2Y8 519-743-2460	1770 King Street East Kitchener, ON N2C 1Z1 519-749-2992	41 Weber Street West Kitchener, ON N2C 3P1 519-749-2450	285 Benjamin Road Waterloo, ON N2L 3Z6 519-884-1470
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Families can choose to have **Extend-A-Family Waterloo Region** administer their Ontario Autism Program (OAP) funds. Funding applications are registered through MCCSS.

OAP is a funding resource available to children and youth under the age of 18 who have a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder. Eligibility and approvals are determined by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS).

For information on how EAFWR can assist, please email oap@eafwr.on.ca

Information & Resources

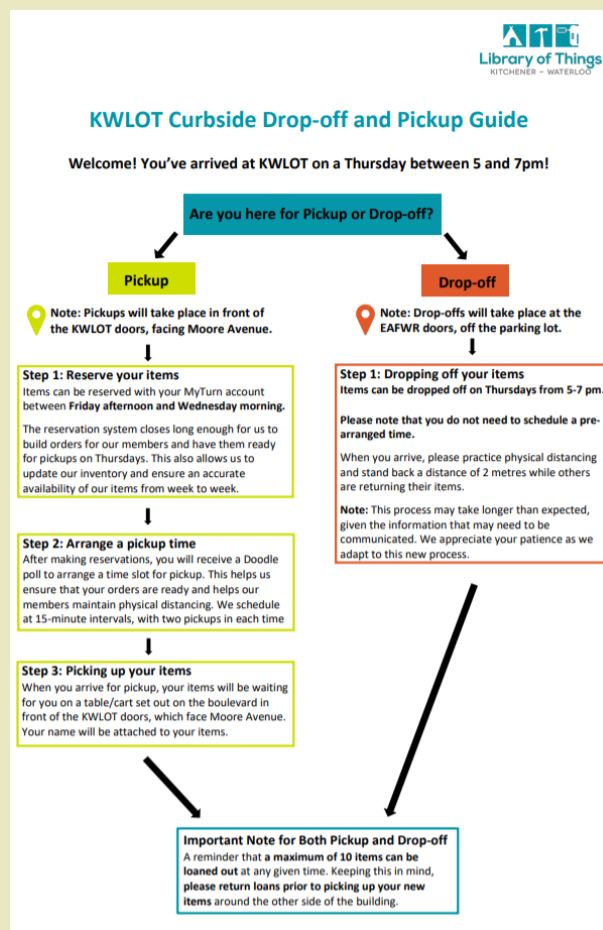
More from Extend-A-Family Waterloo Region:



Looking to connect to folks on a weekly basis?
 Join one of our virtual Open Spaces on Monday evenings! Both begin at 6:30pm.
 Email Kim Sproul for more details!
kim.sproul@eafwr.on.ca

Working on a garden? Getting to that long-overdue DIY? Learning new cooking/baking skills? Moving?
Extend-A-Family Waterloo Region's *K-W Library of Things* is up and running with curbside pickups and dropoffs of our extensive inventory of kitchen, camping, gardening and DIY tools. Hop over into our inventory to see if we have what you need! <https://kwlibraryofthings.myturn.com/library/inventory/browse>

The K-W Library of Things has established a process for safe pick-up and return of items. See image below.



Information & Resources

From our friends at **Bridges to Belonging**:

Are you/your son or daughter looking for a group where you/they can build their network of friends, talk about different topics, have fun, and be celebrated for the gifts and strengths that you have?

Then come join us for BE-Connected Wednesday nights from 7-8 p.m using this Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83768786396?pwd=Z1lhcEVkNm9YWZHZDT2JhN2VkSyEdz09>

You can also join our Facebook group here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1340275669505577> you must agree to the group rules to join!

Bridges to Belonging is also offering Future Planning, a free webinar series on important considerations in creating a safe and secure future for yourself or your loved one with a disability.

Click here to register and for more information:

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/future-planning-webinar-series-registration-128555959335>



Bridges to BELONGING BRIDGES TO BELONGING PRESENTS:

FUTURE PLANNING FREE WEBINAR SERIES

Learn from legal and financial specialists about important considerations in creating a safe and secure future for yourself or your loved one with a disability

PRESENTERS

DAVID G. AMY PAUL ARSENAULT




AMY, APPLERY & BRENNAN
Fiduciaries, Attorneys & Advisors

KINDRED
We Care About You

REGISTER HERE

[HTTPS://WWW.EVENTBRITE.CA/E/FUTURE-PLANNING-WEBINAR-SERIES-REGISTRATION-128555959335](https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/future-planning-webinar-series-registration-128555959335)

For more information please email:
info@bridgestobelonging.ca

DATES AND TOPICS

SESSION 1 - DECEMBER 3, 2020 6:30 - 8:30PM
ESTATE PLANNING - WILLS & POWERS OF ATTORNEY

SESSION 2 - FEBRUARY 11, 2021 6:30 - 8:30PM
ESTATE PLANNING - TRUSTS & HENSON TRUST

SESSION 3 - TBD
POWER OF ATTORNEY AND PERSONAL CARE

SESSION 4 - TBD
INSURANCE AND TAX PLANNING

Information & Resources

The University of Waterloo has a research opportunity for parents of a child, 6-12 years old with physical special needs. See poster below for more information and/or see the signup form with the newsletter/blog post. The password to access the form is SIRRL2020:
https://uwaterloo.ca/1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_72QNTGBIZNThQDr

University of Waterloo

User-focused study of robot interaction methods

If you have a child who is 6-12 years old with physical special needs, especially upper-body gross and fine motor special needs, you and your child may be eligible participate in a robot design focus group

The Social and Intelligent Robotics Research Laboratory (SIRRL) needs your help!

We are conducting an online study regarding a robot that facilitates play between children regardless of special physical needs.

We need children accompanied by their guardians (siblings and caretakers are welcome as well) to call us at the SIRRL lab at the university of waterloo in order to give feedback regarding a new state-of-the-art robot prototype and suggest improvements on it. Please note that your call will be recorded for research review only. The call will be either a phone call or virtual meeting on a conferencing software.

Participants' input and opinion will be invaluable in the final touches leading up to trials with the robot.



We hope this will be an exciting activity for participating children and will result in a more accessible play activities that account for their needs.

Participants will receive:

- A \$20 Tim Horton's or Walmart gift card of choice
- A tour of the SIRRL lab showcasing new and advanced social robots once the university re-opens for public

Are you eligible?

- Have a child age between 6-12 with an upper limb fine or gross motor challenges
- Willing to spend about 30 minutes – 1 hour of your time

If you're interested email a member of the study team:
hmahti@uwaterloo.ca

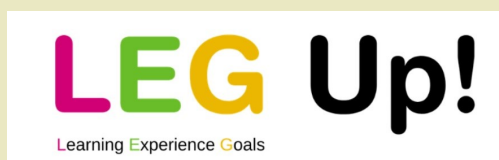


This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through a University of Waterloo Research Ethics Committee

EarlyON | Waterloo Region provides a variety of developmentally appropriate, fun, and interactive learning opportunities for you and your child to explore together. Join us to sing, dance, explore, discover and be active Monday-Saturday LIVE on our Facebook page [@EarlyONWR](#). We look forward to you joining us! We also encourage you to visit our website earlyyearsinfo.ca regularly for new songs, and activities every week.

Some EarlyON Centres have reopened. Please go to <http://earlyyearsinfo.ca/reopening/> for the latest information and check back often, and look out for messages through our [Email Newsletter](#) or social media pages on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Information & Resources



Sign up for Classes Today!

There are still classes scheduled for December. Once you have completed the registration, a LEG Up! Instructor will contact you with the Zoom link, supplies/supply lists, detailed recipes and other important information for each class. For the current schedule and registration information, go to: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KAR2ZRqbdOCWwXsvl0l6W96cbX5QgGKB/view>

LEG Up! is excited to announce the Holiday Evergreen Centerpiece Pop Up on Dec.10, 2020, 6-7:30 pm. Supplies will be provided to create this holiday creation. This activity is for people 18 and older.

To keep everyone safe, the following safety guidelines will be observed:

1. Each person will be required to complete a health assessment which will include a temperature check.
2. We will be maintaining physical distancing of 6 feet for all participants and instructors.
3. Each person will be wearing a mask.
4. We will be practicing frequent hand hygiene.
5. Cleaning protocols are in place.

Registration is \$25.00 and there are 12 spaces available (2 groups of 6).

For more information and registration, go to:
<https://www.kwhab.ca/leg-up-pop-up/>

Information & Resources

Our Place KW - Family Resource and Early Years Centre continues to offer great programming. Head over to <https://www.ourplacekw.ca/programs> for registration and more information

[Parents for Children's Mental Health](#) is excited to offer virtual one-to-one peer support is available by calling one of our three sites.

ADHD Support Group is the third Wednesday of every month.

The General Family and Caregiver Support group is the fourth Tuesday of every month.

Group information is available by emailing selfhelpgroup@cmhaww.ca

See below for information on the **McMaster University** Autism Mentorship Program which is open to secondary students on the autism spectrum.

INTERESTED IN POST-SECONDARY SCHOOL? CONSIDER JOINING

MCMASTER'S AUTISM MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

You will be paired with a trained student mentor from McMaster University who will be an online peer support that can answer questions about

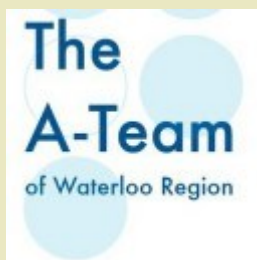
- Post-secondary programs
- Extracurriculars and social life
- Student accessibility supports
- And anything else!



EMAIL US AT MAAP@MCMASTER.CA TO SIGN UP!

Note: This program is for secondary school students on the autism spectrum.

Information & Resources



The A-Team of Waterloo Region is primarily run by individuals with Aspergers Syndrome, for individuals with Aspergers Syndrome, with some assistance from WRFN. Their goal is to create a safe and welcoming environment to meet fellow adults (age 18+) with Aspergers Syndrome [or ASD – level 1], discuss topics of interest, share experiences, and embrace our neurological diversity.

Please go to <https://ateamwaterlooregion.wordpress.com/about/> for more information on how to register and attend the upcoming virtual meetings!

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 parents' thoughts on how child and youth **mental health system can improve the quality of services for children under 6 throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Families are invited to complete the survey below, which focuses on understanding:

1. What information or services you accessed during the COVID-19 pandemic, in order to support your youngest child's well-being; and
2. How we could help to improve the quality of this information and services as we continue to move through the pandemic (and perhaps a second wave)

For additional information, please visit:
<https://surveys.sickkids.ca/surveys/?s=EJWFY9JW4E>

Information & Resources

The KW Chapter of **Association of Parent Support Groups Ontario** is currently meeting, via Zoom, on Wednesdays at 7:15pm. Contact Steve Keczem at 519-888-1053 or go to apsgo.ca for more information.



Plan Institute is offering a 4-Part Online Learning Series on the proposed Canadian Disability Benefit. Registration is free.

Go to [Plan Institute Learning Series](#) for more information.

The Literacy Group is conducting free, virtual clinics on Digital Literacy and Customer Service Skills. Go to theliteracygroup.com to enroll and for more information!