

Where exceptional families thrive

Issue 141
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What's In This Issue?

Happy New Year to you all!

Whether you like to commit to resolutions at the start of a new year or not, this is a great time to embrace learning and growth. And with the new year comes a variety of new webinars and courses in our community. Winter programming for your children and youth is starting soon too, so be sure to have a look at all the new offerings in this month's issue. Let us help you get ready for the rest of the year.

Have a look, there's something for everyone!



Support WRFN

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

SEAC Updates

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

This SEAC meeting began with a presentation from the Waterloo Wellington Down Syndrome Society (WWDSS). This included information about Down syndrome and what WWDSS does (including events, education, programs, parent support, and bursaries). Some of the programs include a new parent program and a Mothers' Connection Program. They also provide bursaries in exchange for volunteer hours. These may cover programs such as therapies, camps, and conferences. There is also a transition bursary for families awaiting passport funding. They offer free or subsidized events for their members.

There was also an update on the Special Incidence Portion (SIP) Funding. There will now be funding through a temporary formula, rather than an application process. This means that all Boards will be funded their 2020-2021 allocated amounts in addition to a 5% increase. This will be enough for 2.5 more Educational Assistants.

There was discussion of the student support process, including how staff is trying to keep more students in class, and how there are many staff on support teams to help with this.

There was discussion about using clearer language to communicate with parents and caregivers, including trying to use simpler language on the website, using clear, concise language and good questions on Individualized Education Plans.

In terms of COVID relief funding, the Board has been given \$250,000, which they will use for positions such as resource teachers, mental health supports, social workers, and psychologists to support the 5,000 students in remote learning.

Last, there was a discussion about Trustee Watson's motion for the Waterloo Region District School Board to write a letter to the Minister of Education requesting that the Suspension/Expulsion, Annual Reports and monthly Suspension/Expulsion reports be amended to include an in-depth analysis of students with exceptionalities who have been suspended or expelled. This analysis would also include the different types of exceptionalities and the number of students with exceptionalities that have been suspended or expelled. This data will help the Board determine if suspensions/expulsions are ultimately enforced on special education students with unmet accommodations or needs.

The next SEAC meeting will take place on January 12, 2022.

SEAC Updates

Waterloo Catholic District School Board - Special Education Advisory Committee Update

Submitted by Sue Simpson & Karen Kovats

WCDSB SEAC met virtually on December 1, 2021. Gerald Foran and Erin Lemak reported on summer programs offered through WCDSB.

SEAC continued with our small group reviews of the Special Education Plan reporting back to the larger group with questions and feedback. We will continue with this review process next month.

Association updates were provided.

Trustees provided updates which can be found here **<https://www.wcdsb.ca/wcdsb-board-meeting-bulletin-november-2021/>**

The next meeting will be held virtually on January 5, 2022.

Choose Your Own Adventure

By: Carmen Sutherland, Coffee Club Coordinator

Two or three special people in my life are embarking on adventures these days, and it has gotten me thinking. Can I find my own adventure in 2022? What does that look like?

One of the people I mentioned is about to live a life that looks drastically different than her life a year ago, and I can't help but wonder, could I make my life look like that, too? And that of course led me to thinking...could you?

Maybe some of you can, and you just need encouragement to take that next leap. If that's you, do it! Maybe next January I can tell you all about how my adventure paid off, and you can tell those you trust the same.

And then there are others of you, who are thinking: I don't have the time/money/schedule for an adventure. Please don't think I'm leaving you out! I am the QUEEN of an adventure consisting of a new Netflix show, a book from the library, or, a personal favourite, living vicariously through the adventures of my loved ones by squealing over their joy...really! I intend to do a combination of all of these things this year. Join me? :)

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.

We're happy to announce that Artful Connection is returning this January! WRFN is pleased to be partnering with Wendy Newbery and Rachel Tanner from Stepping Stones Expressive Arts again to provide Expressive Arts experiences to our community of caregivers.

Join Rachel and Wendy as they lead us online in a fun, relaxing and reflective art experience.

Keep an eye on your inbox next week for more details!



A NEW CHAPTER

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

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



JANUARY 4, 2022
Completing the Puzzle: Consider the missing pieces in your loved one's future plan.

We will review some useful tools for gathering important information needed for launching our kids and supporting them in their life beyond us. These tools will focus on assisting parents and caregivers to compile the kind of information that only we know such as medical history, favourite recipes, and what goes into making a good day.

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

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

What's Happening at WRFN



KidsAbility and Waterloo Region Family Network Present

Virtual Camp Fair 2022

Monday January 10th 2022, 7pm – Overnight camps

Monday January 24th 2022, 7pm – Waterloo Region Day camps for children ages 4 - 12

Monday February 28th 2022, 7pm – Day camps, day programs, and getaways for teens and adults



It's Easy to Register!

1. Sign up through the following registration links:
 - [Overnight Camps](#)
 - [Waterloo Region Day Camps \(4-12\)](#)
 - [Day Camps/Programs/Getaways for Teens & Adults](#)
2. Receive the Zoom links by email the morning of the event, and tune in on the day(s) that you registered.
3. Join us to learn about camp options and have your questions answered by the camp directors themselves.

Questions?

For more information, contact
Sue Furey at:
sue.furey@wrfn.info
 or call 226-898-9301.

Virtual Camp Nights

are FREE and take place at 7 PM - 8:30 PM each night.

See You There!

Join us, and get started with plans for your happy camper.




Registration Links:

Monday, January 10	<u>Overnight Camps</u>
Monday, January 24	<u>Waterloo Region Day Camps for children 4-12 years old</u>
Monday, February 28	<u>Day Camps, Programs and Getaways for teens and adults</u>

What's Happening at WRFN

Ask A Self-Advocate

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

Parent Mentor Program

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

Learn more about our Parent Mentor Program [here](#).

School-Issue Parent Support Group

This peer-led group provides support, advice and a safe environment for parents who have questions or concerns about school issues affecting their children with special needs. The WRFN School Issues Support Group meets on the last Wednesday of each month.

For more information, please contact Sue.Simpson at Sue.simpson@wrfn.info.

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.

Call Erin Sutherland at 226-808-5460 or email Erin.Sutherland@wrfn.info.

Call Sue at 226-898-9301 or email Sue.Furey@wrfn.info.

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.

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

5th Annual Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Symposium

The 5th Annual Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Symposium will take place on January 25, 2022, featuring a new look at addressing mental health including stigma faced by people with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). This Symposium is for anyone who recognises that they interact regularly with people with FASD – at work, at school, at home and in the community – and want advice on strategies to improve these interactions. This conference is designed to not only provide tools for working with individuals with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder but will also provide in-depth learning for those working in the education, health, mental health, child development, law enforcement, corrections, child welfare, and social services sectors.

To register, visit: <https://bit.ly/3mgU4nd>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Programs & Recreation

Project Read

Get Set Learn is a fun, free program for families with children 0-4 years of age. It helps children get ready for school while parents learn and practice skills to support their children. Parents learn skills that can help with their future goals.

Get Set Learn winter program is online and starts January 25.

Families can sign up in one of the 3 ways:

- Call 519-570-3054 and leave a message. Project Read will return the call.
- Sign up online: <https://bit.ly/GSLsign-up>
- Send an email at: info@projectread.ca

Kinbridge

This January, Kinbridge will be offering programs Monday through Saturday at its main location, 200 Christopher Drive, with Covid-19 protocols in effect. Winter programming includes everything from dance, sports, STEAM and Coding for Kids!

For more information, visit: <https://bit.ly/3q4cRmY>

Axon Music Therapy

Axon Music Therapy is looking forward to continuing "Create & Connect" (for adults 18+). This is a virtual program, held over Zoom. It is inclusive to all and does NOT require experience to participate! The term will be a total of 10 weeks, with 4-5 participants in each group.

To learn more and register, visit <https://bit.ly/32ca6ra>.

If you have any questions, please reach out via email or phone at 519-841-4982.

Artshine Virtual Accessible Art For Kids, Teens & Adults

Social distancing doesn't need to rob you of the joy that comes from expanding your art skills! Artshine has live video lessons via Zoom for all ages. Art supplies will be mailed to you in advance of classes!

Maximum 20 participants for personalized attention.

Click [here](#) for more information!

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Opportunities from Bridges to Belonging

Wills, Estates, Henson Trusts and Power of Attorney Event - B2B invites you to join other families and caregivers in Waterloo Region on January 13, 2022 from 6:30-8:30 pm to learn from David Amy, a local lawyer with Amy, Appleby and Brennan. He will share valuable information and answers your questions about Wills, Estates, Henson Trusts and Power of Attorney and critical considerations to planning a safe and secure future for your loved ones with a disability. To learn more and register, visit: <https://bit.ly/FuturePlanningSeries2122> and keep an eye out for the future events!

BE-Connected — Are you looking for a place to hang out and meet a great group of people who will always welcome you and celebrate who you are? Come join us on Wednesday nights from 7-8 pm at BE-Connected, a community where EVERYONE is welcome and belongs. Use the following Zoom link to join:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81897785039?pwd=bkpEZklwdHZZOVl5WHJVV1FobXpwUT09>

Meeting ID: 818 9778 5039

Passcode: 012889

BE-Friends Program — We want to welcome Samantha Panchaud, our newest facilitator and Project Coordinator for the 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 is a bridge to meaningful reciprocal relationships and lifelong friendships.

People are being matched and friendships are blooming. We invite you to become part of this friendship adventure!

If you are 17 years old or older, living with a disability, and want someone to spend time and build a lasting friendship with, we invite you to [Click Here](#) and fill out an application to be matched with a Buddy Community Volunteer.

If you are 19 years old or older and want to create an authentic friendship as a Volunteer Buddy to a person with a disability and be part of their journey to living their best life, we invite you to [Click Here](#).

Information, Opportunities & Resources

KidsAbility Winter Recreation Programs

KidsAbility is having fun and keeping it safe this Winter with Recreation and Social Programs. They're committed to providing safe, inclusive and meaningful opportunities that will build your child's skills and confidence in group settings. There are also a few new offerings this year including:

- [Family Art Hangout](#)
- [Creative Expressions](#)
- [Express Yourself](#)

For more information on these programs, and a full list of all offerings, please visit <https://www.kidsability.ca/recreation-social-programs>.

Additionally, KidsAbility has opened up one-on-one sessions with their music therapists. For more information on this opportunity, please visit <https://www.kidsability.ca/music-therapy>.

Recreational Respite Virtual Services

Virtual group programs have been developed in partnership with participants to address a variety of interests, skill practice, goals and outcomes that promote inclusion, encourage community participation and nurture social connectivity. Visit the website for the January virtual group program calendar, for Children and Youth and Young Adults!

<https://bit.ly/30TF1YF>

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>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

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>.

CNIB's Virtual Program Offerings

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

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

Brightside ABA Services

Flurries and Friends

This program takes place February 1, 2022 - April 26, 2022 from 5-6 pm on Zoom. It's for children 7-9 years of age with a diagnosis of autism or intellectual disability. Your child will learn conversation skills, how to make and keep friends, and communicative skills.

Flexible Thinkers

This program takes place February 2, 2022 - April 27, 2022 from 5-6 pm on Zoom. It's for children 10-13 years of age with a diagnosis of autism or intellectual disability.

This group will learn about flexibility, self-regulation, and perspective taking.

To register for either program, please contact Lauren Harris at 519-894-6156 ext.

2904 or brightside@sunbeamcommunity.ca. Cost for both programs is \$710 and are Eligible Ontario Autism Program expenses.

ConnectABILITY's Friendly Connections

Friendly Connections is focused on helping its community and individuals of all ages with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, overcome isolation.

It aims to help improve the well-being of individuals through socializing and providing entertaining resources. Friendly Connections wants to connect with individuals across Canada through phone calls, video calls, emailing, messenger chats and good old fashion mail. They mail letters, postcards, colouring sheets, activity sheets, stickers and other fun goodies!

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

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Our Place KW - Family Resource and Early Years Centre

Our Place continues to offer a variety of programming opportunities.

Stork Secrets - Pregnancy and postpartum adjustment peer support.

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

KW Habilitation - LEG Up! Winter Programming

Everyday Math FUNdamentals

- Monday 10:30 am - 12:00 pm In-Person

Kitchen Smarts

- Monday 1:00 - 3:00 In-Person & 1:30 - 2:30 Virtual

Let's Make Supper

- Monday 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm Virtual

Cooking Comfort Food

- Tuesday 11:00 am - 12:00 pm Virtual

On My Own

- Tuesday 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm In-Person
- Build skills, so you will feel comfortable living independently.

Learn to Draw

- Tuesday 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm In-Person
- Beginner Course Jan.11 - Feb.8, 2022
- Intermediate Course Feb.15 - Mar.15,2022

Mid-Week Social

- Wednesday 10:00 am - 11:00 am Virtual
- Come ready to participate in these interactive classes!

Musical Exploration

- Wednesday 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm In-Person

Interactive Learning

- Thursday 10:00 am - 12:00 pm In-Person
- Let's learn and discuss a broad range of interesting topics.

Arts and Crafts

- Thursday 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm In-Person & 1:30 pm - 2:30 pm Virtual

Baking

- Friday 10:30 am - 11:30 am Virtual

Mellow Moves

- Saturday 9:30 am - 10:30 am Virtual
- Join your LEG Up! Instructor for self-care on Saturdays in January.

To register, visit <https://www.kwhab.ca/leg-up-registration/>

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. EarlyON Waterloo Region is offering both in-person and virtual programs.

Check their website earlyyearsinfo.ca for information about programs and new locations opening soon!

Province-Wide Monthly Virtual Groups for Adults with FASD

The Fetal Alcohol Resource Program at ABLE2 is happy to announce the first two Province-wide virtual groups for adults living with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). They include the FASD Educational Group and the FASD Social Group. Both groups will be held monthly. You can participate at your comfort level from the comfort of your home.

For more info contact the Fetal Alcohol Resource Program at 613-761-9252 Ext. 234 or fasd@able2.org

Woolwich Sledge Hockey

Woolwich Sledge Hockey is open to any person with a physical disability, young or old! Learn more at: woolwichsledgehockey.com.

Kitchener Kicks Dragon Hearts

Kitchener Kicks Dragon Hearts program practices on Saturday mornings at 9am for individuals with special needs. Both virtual and in-person options are available.

New participants are welcome to try the program for free before signing up.

Visit <https://bit.ly/2XK5t5O> for more information.

DARE at Dance Adventures

DARE will be hosting in-person classes. DARE Jr. will run Thursday from 4:30-5:15pm. The Teen/Young adult class will run Thursday from 5:15-6:00pm.

Learn more: <https://danceadventure.ca/registration/>.

Carousel Dance

Carousel Dance will be offering in-person classes this fall. Integrated and specialized dance programs are offered for children of all ages and abilities. The program focuses on adapted dance, creativity and social interaction in a fun and encouraging environment. Fall registration is closed, but Term 3 will start in February.

Learn more here: <https://bit.ly/3i0aONr>.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Woolwich Adapted Aquatics

Woolwich Adapted Aquatics will run on Fridays. A parent or caregiver must participate to support their swimmer in the water. Program offers a 1:3 ratio.

Visit: <https://bit.ly/3CDA3x6>

You're invited to take a look at MOVE by GoodLife Kids!

MOVE is designed exclusively to get youth with special needs active, and is offered FREE to families. Registered participants get access to three live online small-group sessions each week led by one of MOVE's passionate coaches.

Learn more at: goodlifekids.com/MOVE/

Virtual Sensory Storytime

Join KPL for stories, games and songs during Sensory Storytime.

Children of all ages and abilities are welcome.

Registration is required: <https://bit.ly/3odj8NZ>

Kijengle

Kijengle Inclusive Music Education & Music Therapy is an innovative, creative, family-centred organization. They will continue to offer both in-person and virtual music and music therapy programs. Learn more at: kijengle.ca.

Adults in Motion Life Skills Workshop

An intensive life-skills focused day. Four-week sessions.

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.

To learn more, visit the Adults in Motion [website](#).

Arts Abound

Arts Abound is excited to get back into the studio for fall classes. There are a variety of age groups and class types available. Please see their website for details:

artsabound.ca.

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

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Workshops & Training

Parents for Children's Mental Health

PCMH will be hosting a seminar called, *How to Effectively Advocate for your child/youth with Mental Illness*. As parents with children with mental health challenges, we will never stop advocating - but it is tiring and frustrating. Sometimes it is hard to stay focused and to get our point across. Parent Peter Ostrowski has been advocating for his child for many years and has had bad experiences and major wins. Join this webinar on Thursday December 2 at 7 pm. To register, visit: <https://bit.ly/3yAR4XK>

Sunbeam Development Resource Centre

Information Session on Financial Supports (Virtual)

Join Sunbeam to learn more about the various financial supports, including eligibility criteria, which are available to families who have a child ages 0-18 diagnosed with Autism and/or Intellectual Disability. Appropriate for: Family or community members who want to learn more about financial supports. This workshop will not cover OAP Funding. Presenters will be Audrey MacLeod and Lindsay Hickey. Join on Tuesday, February 8, at 11 am to 12:30 pm. Please register by February 4.

Workshop on Discussing Puberty & Sexuality with Your Child (virtual)

This workshop will address body and behavioural changes that occur during puberty. We will give you resources and strategies to help you guide your child through this next step in their development and give them the knowledge and skills to keep them safe. This is appropriate for parents and caregivers of children with developmental disabilities. Presenters will include Louise Rodgers, RN, BScN and Jessica Fortunato, M.A., BCBA. Join on Tuesday, February 22, from 6 pm to 7:30 p.m. Please register by Feb 18.

Interested persons can go to Sunbeam's website to register online at:

<https://www.sdrc.ca/workshops-clinics-training/> or they can email r.khanam@sunbeamcommunity.ca, or call 519 741 1121 ext. 2201 to register.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Parenting Now

Winter 2022 Parenting Series

This series of one-hour positive parenting “snapshots” will get you thinking about your choices as a parent and help you develop strategies to become the parent that you want to be. Each session stands alone. You can attend just one or all of them. All Snapshots will be presented on Zoom. Registration is required.

Screen Time. How do we help our kids maintain a balance?

- Thursday, January 20, 2022 from 8 – 9 pm

Teens: The Joys and Frustrations.

- Tuesday February 8, 2022 from 7 – 8 pm

Encouragement or Praise. What is the Difference?

- Thursday February 17, 2022 from 12 – 1 pm

Connection or Correction. How do they work together?

- Monday, March 21, 2022 from 7 – 8 pm

Positive Parenting ‘Conversation Series’ – Chat with Kris and Teresa

This series of one-hour positive parenting conversations will be less “formal” than our workshops. The intention of our conversation series is to invite and encourage parents & caregivers to join us for conversation and strategies on your parenting journey. One of our Parenting Now Staff will facilitate each session. They will be presented on Zoom; registration is required and limited to 15 participants.

Let’s Talk about “Routines and schedules”. Do kids need these? Why or why not? Share what works and what doesn’t work in your family.

- Wednesday, January 12, 2022 from 12 – 1 pm

Let’s Talk about “Social media and screen time” – We live in a world filled with social media, is your child spending too much on screen time? How about you as a parent? Share some concerns and strategies.

- Tuesday, February 22, 2022 from 12 – 1 pm

Let’s Talk about “Teens – the Joys and Frustrations” Come with your stories, questions & concerns, share support and learn strategies from each other.

- Thursday, March 10, 2022 from 7 - 8 pm

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Parenting Now Continued...

Temper Taming Together (over Zoom) is a program that helps parents and children understand and manage BIG EMOTIONS. This series of three sessions, one-hour in length is designed specifically for parents of pre-school aged children (birth - 5). You will gain understanding of how emotions become so big, develop parenting skills to help your small child with their big emotions and learn some strategies you can teach to your children. Registration is limited to 12 participants, and is required for all three sessions. Sessions will be on Zoom and are only for parents or caregivers. Certificates of completion will be given after the third session.

- "Brain and Body" takes place Tuesday, Jan 18 from 8 - 9 pm.
- "BIG Emotions" takes place Tuesday, Jan 25 from 8 -9 pm.
- "Calming Strategies" takes place Tuesday, Feb 1 from 8 -9 pm.

Temper Taming Together—for Parents of School-Aged Children (over zoom) This series of 3, one-hour sessions is designed specifically for parents of school aged children (ages 5- 12). Please see above for full description

- "Brain and Body" takes place Wednesday, Jan 19 from 8 - 9 pm.
- "BIG Emotions" takes place Wednesday, Jan 26 from 8 -9 pm.
- "Calming Strategies" takes place Wednesday, Feb 2 from 8 -9 pm.

To register for any Parenting Now webinars or for more info, contact: parenting@kwcounselling.com.

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:

Tuesdays: January 11 to February 15, 2022; 2:30 — 3:30 pm

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

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Sunbeam & Waterloo Region FASD Community

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Fundamentals for Caregivers

This is a four-part online training for caregivers supporting individuals with FASD. Dates are: January 13, 20, 27 & February 3 from 10 am to 12 pm via Zoom. Register with Michelle Hughes, FASD Coordinator at m.hughes@sunbeamcommunity.ca.

Ontario Independent Facilitation Network

OIFN is pleased to announce 3 upcoming Building Capacity in Independent Facilitation OIFN Shared Learning Events:

- January 18 & 19, 2022: The Power of Possibility: Who I am and Why I Do What I Do
- March 1 & 3, 2022: Conscious Listening and Speaking

OIFN believes in learning together and sees people, along with the support of their loved ones, as the directors of their lives.

Please know that, where costs would stop someone from participating, OIFN has some bursaries available for people, family members, and/or loved ones, and independent facilitators. There is a link to the Bursary Request Form on the flyer.

If you have any questions, please contact Bill Rollo, OIFN Administrative Assistant, at 519-966-8094 or brollo@oifn.ca.

<https://tinyurl.com/OIFNSharedLearning21-22>

Strong Minds Strong Kids

Kids Have Stress Too! is a program to teach you, parents and caregivers, how to support your loved one in identifying and managing their stress, while working toward a resilient future. And because children experience different stressors at different points in their lives, sessions are divided by age groups.

Learn more and register to our upcoming trainings here <https://conta.cc/39tQAag>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Centre for ADHD Awareness Canada (CADDAC)

Creative Interventions for Children with ADHD

Live webinar on January 27, 2022

Time: 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. EST

Facilitator: Liana Lowenstein, MSW, RSW, CPT-S.

This webinar will highlight the diagnostic features of ADHD and will present practical and effective interventions along with ways to optimize online therapy sessions for children aged 4 to 12 years with ADHD. Don't miss this unique opportunity to learn new and innovative approaches. Gain the skills to help children feel motivated, focused, and organized, allowing them to perform closer to their true potential.

Registration fee: \$125 (\$112.50 with promo code CADDAC10)

<https://bit.ly/3e6VFY8>

Supporting the Mental Health needs of Racialized Young People

Live webinar on January 28, 2022

Time: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. EST

Facilitator: Amy Gajaria, MD, FRCPC.

This webinar will give guidance to those providing mental health care to young people and their families, on providing culturally competent care for diverse young people. It will discuss various ways that young people may have felt unheard of or uncomfortable in mental health settings due to their racial and/or ethnic identity.

Participants of this training will gain a greater understanding of the barriers to mental health care faced by racialized young people and their families. Acquire strategies to engage racialized young people and their families. They will be able to identify specific struggles that racialized and underserved children and youth may face and how these might affect their mental health.

Registration fee: \$250 (\$225 with promo code CADDAC10)

<https://bit.ly/30AiLDt>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Homecare Hub

Services & Care for Individuals with Developmental Disability - Webinar

Homecare Hub is an innovative, purpose-driven, homecare service delivery organization that helps people with caregiving needs receive care safely and comfortably in their own community.

Homecare Hub's scope of care has been expanded to help individuals with developmental disabilities and their families through Shared Living Homes, Cluster Care, Adult Day Programs and Home Care. This webinar is focused on how Homecare Hub is helping those with Developmental Disabilities.

Webinar options include Thursday, January 13 at 5:30 pm and Wednesday, January 19 at 10:30 am.

<https://bit.ly/32aDj60>

Jobs Opportunities Enterprise (JOE) Online Training Grounds

Learn about staying safe at work, food handling, and customer service. This training program is 7-week sessions offered via Zoom. The cost is \$145 for seven sessions.

Session Options:

Monday Sessions: 10 am - 11 am January 10 - February 28

Tuesday Sessions: 1- am - 11 am January 11 - February 22

The registration deadline is January 7.

To register, visit jobsopportunitiesenterprise.org.

Microboard Presentation

A Microboard is a group of at least five committed family and friends who join together with a person who has a disability to create a supportive not-for-profit corporation. Southwest Collaborative Communities (Alice Saddy Association, Community Living St. Marys and Area, Ingersoll Support Services Inc., Quad County Support Services and South-East Grey Support Services) is pleased to offer a free, on-line information session for people and families who are interested in learning more about Microboards on Thursday, January 27 at 6:30 pm via Zoom. The registration deadline is January 22. To register, please contact Cathy Smith at Alice Saddy Association, 519-433-2801 x 271 or cathys@alicesaddy.com.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

KidsAbility Summer Camp Planning Workshops

Are you thinking about a summer camp for your child? Join KidsAbility for a summer camp planning workshop over Zoom! This workshop is designed to give caregivers and service providers the information they need to plan a successful summer camp experience for a child with special needs.

In this free parent workshop, you will learn about:

- How to find inclusive and specialized camps in your community
- The different types of inclusion supports available and how to access them
- Funding options for camp fees and specialized supports
- Sharing information about your child
- Preparing your child for camp
- Municipal and YMCA camps and supports available

Registrants will receive a Zoom link via email the morning of the workshop.

Cambridge Summer Camp Planning Workshop:

Date: Tuesday, January 11, 2022

Time: 7:00 - 8:30 pm

Location: Online via Zoom

Register: <https://summerplanningworkshopcambridge.eventbrite.ca>

Registration Deadline: January 10, 2022

Questions? Contact Sheryl Dedman at sdedman@kidsability.ca or 519-886-8886 x3260

Kitchener/Waterloo Summer Camp Planning Workshop:

Date: Tuesday, February 15, 2022

Time: 7:00 - 8:30 pm

Location: Online via Zoom

Register: <https://summerplanningworkshopkw.eventbrite.ca>

Registration Deadline: February 14, 2021

Questions? Contact Meg Shirley at mshirley@kidsability.ca or 519-886-8886 x1302

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Resources

Family Alliance Ontario

Despite the unknowns, we can take steps. It's time to help your loved one live their best life, now, and in the future. No need to travel this road alone —especially as Covid carries on. We can share ideas, advice and support with like-minded families. What are some Covid-friendly ways that your family can connect with other families? Check out the fifth and final action guide in our Managing the New Normal series to learn more.

Managing The New Normal Action Guide Here: [Connecting to Family Networks and Supportive Relationships](#)

DON'T FORGET TO READ:

[Action Guide One: Moving Beyond the Pandemic](#)

[Action Guide Two: Staying Healthy and Motivated](#)

[Action Guide Three: Reconnecting with Friends and Family](#)

[Action Guide Four: Opportunities to Get Involved](#)

Resources from Inclusion Canada

Pathways to Home Ownership — The Pathways to Homeownership outlines an inclusive model of homeownership and provides solutions to the problems faced by people with intellectual disabilities when buying their own house as well as resources to navigate the process.

[Learn more here: https://bit.ly/3B4n0E2.](https://bit.ly/3B4n0E2)

Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work

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

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

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

Information, Opportunities & Resources

The Family Support Network for Employment

FSNE is proud to announce the launch of the “Learning Path to Employment,” an online course designed for families of individuals with a developmental disability. The goal of the course is to provide individuals and their families with the knowledge and tools they need to advocate for, and secure, meaningful paid employment. The course can be found here: <https://fsne.ca/courses/learning-path-to-employment/>. The course can be accessed 24/7, is free, and there is no time limit in which you must complete it.

You Don't Have to Do this Alone - Parents for Children's Mental Health

If you are a parent/caregiver worried about your child, or a young person looking for help yourself – please reach out. Our network of child and youth mental health centres has 4,000 professionals ready to help children, youth and families with free counselling and treatment. We provide care in person, on the phone and virtually. No problem is too big or small.

Find your closest child and youth mental health centre here:

<https://www.family.cmho.org/>

March of Dimes Hi, Tech!

If you have a disability and are 18 years or older, you are eligible to be matched with a tech support coach. Your coach will answer your technology questions and help you get you set up.

To learn more visit shorturl.at/yEGK3.

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.

Visit the [Take5 website](#).

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

Information, Opportunities & Resources

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

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 the Transition to Adulthood Clinic at <https://kidsability.ca/transition-adulthood-clinic>.

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/>

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>.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Ontario Caregiver Association

SCALE Program: Caregiver Needs and Well-being: **[SCALE \(Supporting Caregiver Awareness, Learning and Empowerment\)](#)** focuses on topics relevant to new or experienced caregivers, including caregiver stress, managing feelings of anxiety or guilt, and self-care for the caregiver. Registration is required.

Caregiver 101: Learn about caregiving roles, conflicts in caregiving, caregiver burnout, what to expect, developing resilience, and what supports are available. Access the online course **[here](#)**.

Young Caregivers Connect: Young Caregivers Connect is a website to help young caregivers aged 15-25. The website was designed in collaboration with, and for, young caregivers and offers information and resources and a way to connect that address their unique needs. Visit the website **[here](#)**.

Time to Talk Podcast: Join Host Michelle Jobin along with experts and caregivers, to discuss things that matter most to caregivers. Access the podcast **[here](#)**.

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.

Safe Voluntary Isolation Site

A safe place for you to stay to help you rest and recover, and to reduce the spread of COVID-19 within your home and in the community. There are no costs to you.

To learn more visit: **regionofwaterloo.ca/IsolationSite**

Email: safeisolation@regionofwaterloo.ca

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>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Support Groups

Waterloo Wellington Down Syndrome Society (WWDSS)

The Mothers' Connection group is a great opportunity for moms who have a child with Down syndrome (age 6 and under) to share celebrations, struggles, goals, practical information, and resources with one another. The program runs monthly, every second Wednesday at 1:30pm (currently online). WWDSS also offers a Mom's Night Out and Dad's Night Out program for parents to connect and support one another. For more information please email info@wwdss.ca.

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.

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/>

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 on their [website](#).

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Preemie Parents of Waterloo-Wellington

Preemie Parents of Waterloo-Wellington remains available online through a private Facebook group.

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.cpbfbfbpc.org/covid19>

Ontario-Wide Virtual Support Group for Black parents and caregivers

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 and 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.

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

Parents for Children's Mental health has two upcoming peer support chapters this month. The first, General Support will take place January 25 at 7 pm. To register in advance for this meeting, visit: <https://bit.ly/3q4iHom>

There will also be an ADHD Support on January 19 at 7 pm. To register in advance for this meeting, visit: <https://bit.ly/3mgbe4y>

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!

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.

Groups from Muslim Social Services

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.

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

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

Engagement Opportunities

Join Accessibility Standards Canada's newest technical committees

Accessibility Standards Canada is recruiting members for two new technical committees:

- Technical committee for emergency measures
- Technical committee for wayfinding and signage

You have until January 14 2022, to apply.

We are looking for 12 to 18 members per committee in the following categories:

Persons with disabilities, consumer and public interest, academic and research bodies, non-governmental organizations, government bodies and authorities with jurisdiction, labour and unions, standards development bodies, federally regulated industries and workplaces, federally regulated public sector bodies, municipalities, and territorial private-sector firms, business and industry.

This is your opportunity to: work with other accessibility experts; have your voice heard; and, become a leader for inclusion in Canada.

Apply here: <https://accessible.canada.ca/creating-accessibility-standards#Help+create+accessibility+standards>

COVID-19 and Down syndrome: Vaccine Response Survey

The Canadian Down Syndrome Society needs your help! More needs to be learned about COVID-19 and the related vaccine among people with Down syndrome. The Trisomy 21 Research Society (T21RS) has organized an international online survey to collect this information.

You are invited to complete this survey if you are a caregiver of a person with Down syndrome who has received the COVID-19 vaccine or who is eligible but does not plan to receive the vaccine.

<https://bit.ly/388FxmC>

Elmira District Community Living

As part of the Elmira District Community Living strategic plan to transform day supports, they are seeking input from potential, future participants who live within their catchment area. Any feedback is appreciated. No identifiable information will be shared unless you choose to provide them with your contact information at the end of the survey.

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

Information, Opportunities & Resources

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.

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

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>.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Call to action: Petition demanding a fast-track for the Canada Disability Benefit

The Open Letter previously shared spawned a [House of Commons Petition](#) that has received a positive response. Close to 11,000 voices agree with the powerful and crucial message to lift people with disabilities out of poverty.

Help keep the momentum going! There's 3 weeks remaining before the January 11 deadline. Please help us with the final push in leveraging your social media networks to spread the word about the petition!

Add your voice to [the petition](#) today, if you haven't already. Please share with your network right now!

Remember to use our key hashtags so we can help amplify your messages further. #CanadaDisabilityBenefitNow #EndDisabilityPoverty. Together, we can make a 2022 a year filled with dignity, independence, and opportunity for people with disabilities.

Every Canadian Counts (ECC) Call for Stories

The ECC has put out a call for stories from individuals living with disabilities across Canada. You can help by asking your supporters, contacts, family and/or friends to tell the personal stories that will convince policymakers and the wider Canadian public of the need for better services and supports. If you have stories of your own to share, please do.

For more information about the stories project and how you can share your own stories please visit [here](#).

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Community News

Ontario Increasing Access to Services for Children with Autism

The Ontario government is making it easier for families to access services in the needs-based Ontario Autism Program (OAP) with the selection of the Independent Intake Organization (IIO), which will help families navigate the program from intake to funding. The province is also launching the Entry to School Program to support children on the autism spectrum entering kindergarten or Grade 1 for the first time and awarding grants to service providers to hire and train new clinical staff so they can support more families.

The IIO will be delivered through a partnership between Accerta Services Inc., McMaster University, Autism Ontario, and HealthCare 365. The IIO partners bring together significant experience in administering public programs, supporting children and youth on the autism spectrum and their caregivers, care coordination, service navigation, research, and healthcare education.

The IIO is scheduled to start supporting families in spring 2022 and will play a key role in providing more families with funding to purchase core clinical services for their children and youth. For more information, visit:

<https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/1001279/ontario-increasing-access-to-services-for-children-with-autism>

Sunbeam Children's Overnight Respite

On December 1, Sunbeam's overnight respite program (formerly known as Kids Country Club) will be re-opening! In the following memo, you will find:

- Memo of the Re-opening of Sunbeam Kids Hub – (link to our 2020-2021 annual report)
- Bulletin about Respite Program COVID-19 Vaccination or PCR Testing Requirement
- Short Break Profile Form

<https://wrfn.info/userContent/documents/Kids%20Hub-Sunbeam.pdf>

Extend-A-Family Waterloo Region

Extend-A-Family is in urgent need of homes for its FamilyHome program which places people with exceptionalities in need of housing with a family sponsor. Providing a caring, stable home environment that promotes acceptance, a focus on dignity, and helping to create belonging are the foundations of FamilyHome.

<https://www.eafwr.on.ca/programs/familyhome/>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Accessibility Standards Ontario

As we are at the end of 2021, Accessibility Standards Ontario is looking at the New Year with enthusiasm. As such, 2022 priorities will include:

- developing federal standards in priority areas;
- recommending standards to the Minister in charge of our portfolio for incorporation into federal regulation;
- collaborating with federal entities to align federal standards and regulatory development processes; and
- collaborating with provincial and territorial governments to harmonize accessibility standards across jurisdictions.

Please find below more updates on what has been achieved in the last months.

Grants and Research

Our Advancing Accessibility Standards Research grants and contribution program supports research to identify, prevent and remove barriers to accessibility and inform future standards. It funds on average 15 projects annually and has funded 24 projects so far.

Collaboration with CSA Group

We are proud to collaborate with CSA Group on three accessibility standards. This collaboration will enable us to share knowledge and expertise. (Read the November 30 News Release).

Each standard will focus on the technical requirements for accessibility and usability in one of three areas.

- Accessible design for automated banking machines and other interactive self-service devices
- Accessible design for the built environment
- Accessible Housing

Technical Committee Updates

Canadians will be given the opportunity to review six accessibility standards this year. Three are being developed as joint standards with CSA Group and three others relate to plain language, outdoor spaces, and a model standard for the built environment - accessibility. We continue to support five technical committees that are currently developing standards: plain language, outdoor spaces, model standards for the built environment - accessibility, employment, and emergency egress.

Our technical committees have started creating content for their standards. In addition, each committee has created detailed work plans for the next 12 to 18 months. Visit this webpage to learn more about our [work program](#).

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Accessibility Standards Ontario Continued...

Roadmap to 2040 - A plan to guide the work of Accessibility Standards Canada

Members of our Board of Directors have been drafting a roadmap to 2040. This roadmap will essentially guide Accessibility Standards Canada as it contributes to a Canada without barriers by 2040. I am proud to say that the roadmap is now completed. Stay tuned, as it will be published early in the New Year.

Working with the Provinces

We need to ensure our standards reflect the needs of all people with disabilities, no matter where they live. To that end, our Intergovernmental Relations team is currently negotiating agreements with several provinces. These partnerships will allow us to increase our positive impact on the lives of Canadians.

Many provinces, territories, and municipalities have their own standards. By collaborating, we can share best practices and learn more about where our standards could be adopted. This enables us to harmonize our efforts. It also helps us promote a consistent and high level of accessibility across the country.

Azrieli Adult Neurodevelopmental Centre CAMH

In response to the rapid spread of the Omicron Covid-19 variant, CAMH has shared the following resources to help those who are feeling uncertain .

- In the latest H-CARDD blog, Dr. Yona Lunskey shares five important actions we can take to stay safe right now. [Read the Blog Post here](#)
- We also have a new Easy Read pamphlet about the third vaccine shot and how to go about booking an appointment. [Find the Easy Read here](#)