

Where exceptional families thrive

Issue 143
March 2022

Table of Contents

SEAC Updates 2

Just See What Happens 4

Steph's Corner 5

What's Happening at WRFN 8

Community Info, Resources and Opportunities 9

What's In This Issue?

Through the difficulties of the last two years, one thing we've continually looked forward to is connecting with you — our community. There's been a lot happening at home and abroad that can feel very overwhelming. We're here to remind you that sometimes, it's okay to turn off the TV or take a break from social media.

But rather than retreat completely, why not check in on your neighbours? Send a text to a cousin you haven't seen. Get out for fresh air with a friend or your family. Community connection can lift you up and make you feel less alone when things are difficult.

In this month's Family Pulse, you will find a number of opportunities to do just that. From webinars to engagement opportunities, there's— as always — something for everyone.

WE'RE ON LINKEDIN!



Support WRFN

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

SEAC Updates

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

The meeting began with an overview of Speech and Language Pathology Services. The Board has 20 Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) and 10 Communication Disorder Assistants (CDAs). SLPs can help with voice modulation, assisting with learning correct speech sounds, listening, speaking, writing, stuttering, feeding, swallowing, cognition skills, and communicating socially. There are three tiers of SLP interventions. Tier 1 includes consulting with teachers and supporting professional development. Tier 2 includes small group classroom learning for things like literacy. Tier 3 includes assessment and IEP support. There was also discussion of why Speech and Language support is so beneficial in schools.

An update was also given on behalf of the Equity and Inclusion Advisory Group (EIAG). One issue mentioned was that students who dress in certain ways for religious reasons or who identify as transgender or non-binary may be uncomfortable participating in sports. Teneile Warren, WRDSB's Equity and Inclusion Officer, is working on getting feedback from departments as well as the Ontario Federation of Student Athletic Associations to see what their policies are.

There has also been feedback from many groups, including the EIAG about the student dress code policy. One policy is that students are not allowed to wear clothing that is offensive to any group. The Student Senate is working to make itself more accessible by calling itself Student Roundtable and is no longer requiring documents like marks and attendance records to be shared to participate in the Roundtable, only parent permission. The Board received funding to hire a graduation coach for Black students, the role is to build relationships with Black students. Finally, there are ongoing discussions about how to best show support as the Board continues to make strides toward equity.

During the Trustee update, there was more discussion about the proposed motion regarding suspension and expulsion reports. Trustee Watson will take a motion to the Board requesting the reports be amended to include an analysis of students with exceptionalities that have been suspended or expelled, as well as the different types of exceptionalities. It will be taken before the Board next time they meet.

The next SEAC meeting will take place on Wednesday, March 9, 2022.

SEAC Updates

Waterloo Catholic District School Board - Special Education Advisory Committee Update

Submitted by Sue Simpson & Karen Kovats

WCDSB SEAC met virtually on February 2. Board Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) Cara Cressman gave an in-depth presentation on the role of the Speech and Language Department in our schools. She highlighted how SLP and Communicative Disorders Assistants are able to reach so many of our students in a variety of ways. In a 3-Tier model, our students may receive support through full classroom resources, small group instruction or intensive individual interventions. WCDSB Speech and Language Services are equitable and accessible for all students, collaborative, responsive and comprehensive, and support family-centered goals.

Jennifer Ritsma, Superintendent of Learning: St. David Family of Schools, School Effectiveness, Program Services, Equity and Inclusion, continued the meeting with a presentation of this year's BIEPSA (Board Improvement & Equity Plan for Student Achievement). This year "Equity" has been added and builds on the previous Board plan of the last two years. Emphasis within the presentation was put on plans for improvement in mathematics and literacy.

Association Updates were shared.

Trustee updates were shared and can be found through this link [**WCDSB Board Meeting Bulletin — January 2022 - Waterloo Catholic District School Board**](#)

The next SEAC meeting will be held virtually on March 2, 2022.

Just See What Happens

Carmen Sutherland, Coffee Club Coordinator

I don't write creatively often – I do it mainly for this newsletter – so I experienced my first case of writer's block in a long time today. I had an idea and tried to write it a couple of different ways, but it was not communicating the way I wanted it to. So, I decided to just write freely and see what happened. And isn't that what we all have to do at times? Just write, ask a new friend for coffee, or parent your child, and see what happens? Life certainly does not come with instructions for every situation. What works for one person or situation may not be right for another.

I, for one, need to practice so many things related to uncertainty like having patience to see how things turn out, being present in the moment, being okay if something less-than-ideal happens. I think I would really benefit from practicing these inner skills.

When we "see what happens," sometimes something good can come from it. Maybe a piece of art or writing is created that is somewhere between decent (may I present Exhibit A?) and beautiful. Maybe a situation goes horribly wrong and you learn from it, or maybe someone or something doesn't meet your expectations and you adjust for next time.

No matter what, "just see what happens" will move you from Point A to Point B, and more often than not, that is better than staying in one place.

Steph's Corner

Spring is Coming!



Spring will be here soon. I like the spring because the weather is warmer, the days are longer and I can be outside more. It makes me happy to see the snow melting and the flowers coming up. Goodbye winter. Hello spring.

Do you like the spring? I like lots of things about the spring:

1. I like being outside with my support worker Hannah. When we go on walks we see lots of different flowers popping up in people's gardens. I really like seeing different flowers. Yellow and pink flowers are my favourite. I like to take photos for my notecards.
2. I'm looking forward to sitting on my front porch and seeing people walk by and saying hi. I love to see people, kids and dogs go by.
3. I can hardly wait to have porch parties with my friends. When we have a porch party, we have a cold drink, talk and play cards or a game. Sometimes we even take my jigsaw puzzle outside to do it on my front porch.
4. I would like to try biking again in the spring with my sister Beth. I like it because it's good exercise and it's fun.

I can hardly wait for the spring this year because I am going to be doing something I have never done before with a community connection, Angela. We are planning a Garden Project for the front yard at my apartment 😊. There is lots to do ... plan, prepare the soil, plant the seeds, water, weed, pick the vegetables. This is what we have done so far.

Our Garden Project:

- We connected with a gardening expert. Angela and I let her know the size of our growing space and what vegetables I like. She suggested direct sow seeds...yellow, green and purple beans, carrots, squash, zucchini, chives and lettuce. I will use the carrots to make carrot soup with Angela and the chives to make chive garlic bread. Angela is also giving me some everbearing strawberry plants from her garden. She knows a lot about gardens and I'm so glad that she is teaching me.

The Garden Project will be a lot of work but it will be so much fun to do it together with Angela. I am learning a lot, I will get some exercise, and it will be so great growing some food that I can eat and share. I will let you know how it goes.

Happy Spring to Everyone!



Steph Prysuk

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.

A New Chapter

The Caregiver Toolkit: A Pilot Project

This winter, eight mothers connected with WRFN's A New Chapter group for parents and caregivers of youth and adults with disabilities have taken on a new challenge. We are meeting every two weeks to complete a document that holds all the most important information about, and for, our kids. Those of us who signed up for this challenge recognize the importance of having all our important information in one place and having it ready should illness or tragedy strike or should we have the opportunity to take an extended holiday.

The Toolkit contains sections for listing contacts, recording medical history and current medical issues, compiling legal and financial information, sharing information about quirks, and describing daily and weekly routines. This document is intended to be updated as new information comes along. The location of the document will be shared with those important to the family.

Documents of this kind have been put together by many organizations and support groups. Anne Yardley and Wendy Newbery, who are part of the A New Chapter planning group, worked on this one with the intention that it would be as simple as possible. Anne and Wendy hoped that families would add as much information to the document as needed to capture what someone outside the present caregiver circle would need to know.

Having such a document in hand is one thing, actually completing it and having it ready to use is another. Within the present group, several parents have attempted to complete similar documents before but never with the help of a group such as this who are working on their Toolkits together. When we meet, we discuss how our entries in the document are going and we motivate each other to take on a new section of the document before the next meeting. The accountability really helps us to accomplish this task. In addition, thinking about planning for the future can be scary for some, so it is reassuring to share the experience with others who have similar emotions. Sharing the experience allows us to deepen our relationship with each other, to talk candidly about our fears, and always to have a laugh when something strikes us as funny.

By the end of April, the group will have completed the Toolkit and will evaluate the experience of doing this together. We will make changes to the Toolkit and the process, if needed, so that we can better support other families when they are ready to take on the challenge of getting things on paper.

What's Happening at WRFN

A New Chapter

Upcoming meeting topics:

March 1st - Making & Using One Page Profiles

April 5th - What it's like to be part of a Network

May 3rd - Families who have Microboards share their Experiences

A New Chapter is a group for family members & caregivers interested in preparing for the future of their youth/adult family member with a lifelong disability. All meetings are virtual Zoom meetings from 7:30 - 9 pm. They always take place the first Tuesday of the month.

If you are interested in A New Chapter and would like to join, please reach out to Mary at maryjpike@hotmail.com. You can also join our Facebook group called "A New Chapter – parent and caregiver connections."



What's Happening at WRFN



We are so pleased to announce the return of Waterloo Region Family Network's annual fundraising event, Evening of Elegance. We would like to formally invite you to join us at our in-person event at St. George Banquet Hall on Saturday, April 30. Mark this date in your calendar today!

We are so excited to have the opportunity to meet with you in person. Public safety and the health of our guests is our number one priority, therefore we will be following public health guidelines during the evening. Keep an eye on your inbox because tickets will be on sale March 1.

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 Team

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.

Inclusive Summer Camps

Deadlines for City Run Summer Camps

Important registration deadlines approaching for city-run camps:

- City of Kitchener registration opens **March 1**
- City of Waterloo registration opens **March 9**

Mark your calendars!

LEG Up! March Break Camp

LEG Up! is offering two March Break Camp options this year. First is the 3D Butterfly Canvas option on March 15, 2022 2 pm - 4 pm. The second is a St. Patrick's Day Gnome Painting class on March 17, 2022 10 am - 12 pm. Both classes will cost \$32.00. Please note that proof of full COVID-19 vaccination is required to attend all in-person classes. If you have a medical exemption, please connect directly with LEG Up!.

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

Camp Awakening

Camp Awakening focuses on outdoor recreation for children and youth with physical disabilities (ages 8-18). Kids are given the chance to increase independence, make lasting friendships, develop confidence and accomplish things they never thought possible.

For more information, [visit https://campawakening.com/](https://campawakening.com/)

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Summer Camp Directory

If you missed out on the Virtual Camp Fairs that we held in partnership with KidsAbility, not to worry! KidsAbility has been collecting everything you need on its website.

For recordings of the previous sessions, please see the following links:

- Watch the [2022 Overnight Camp Fair](#) video
- Watch the [2022 Day Camps Fair for Children](#) video
- The 2022 Camps for Teens & Adults Fair will be available shortly

In the mean time, you can watch the video from 2021's session.

- Watch the [2021 Camp Fair for Teens and Adults](#) video.

KidsAbility also hosted Summer Camp Planning workshops to help families plan a successful summer camp experience for children with exceptionalities.

- Watch the [2022 Cambridge Summer Camp Planning Workshop](#) video
- Watch the [2022 Kitchener Waterloo Summer Camp Planning Workshop](#) video
- Watch the [2022 Guelph-Wellington Summer Camp Planning Workshop](#) video

To search through the Camp Directory for Summer 2022, please see the links below:

- [Overnight Summer Camps Across the Province – Children to Adults](#)
- [Day Camps for Children: Inclusive Day Camps \(age 4-12\)](#)
- [Day Camps, Programs, and Getaways for Teens and Adults](#)

Beechwood Brainery

Beechwood Brainery is offering inclusive camps at both its Cambridge & Waterloo locations this summer! There are part-time & full-time options available, spaces are limited. Age groups include Critters (ages 4-6), Explorers (ages 7-10), and Leaders (ages 11-14). Camp is \$350 per week per child. Please email info@bbrainery.ca for registration information & forms.

www.bbrainery.ca

Wilmot Family Resource Centre

Summer Camp 2022 is almost here! Join Wilmot Family Resource Centre's day camp for arts and crafts, science, group games, outdoor exploration. There's something for everyone with its energetic, outgoing and inclusive team! Camps run Monday to Friday from 9-4, but extended hour options are available. Registration opens February 14.

www.wilmotfamilyresourcecentre.ca

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Programs & Recreation

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!

KidsAbility Transition to Adulthood Clinic updated

The Transition to Adulthood clinic has been renamed the School Years Transitions Clinic. The School Years Transitions Lead is available to meet with you to answer your questions and provide resources related to the transition to high school/the teenage years (age 10-14) OR the transition to adulthood (14+). This clinic is particularly helpful for those with a physical disability and addresses issues related to physical functioning at home and in the community. Clinics occur on a monthly basis over Zoom. To schedule an appointment, talk to your KidsAbility therapist or call Intake at 1-888-372-2259 x1214.

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 March 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

Bridges to Belonging

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 here: from 7-8 P. M. at BE-Connected, a community where EVERYONE is welcome and belongs. Please email communityrelations@bridgestobelonging.ca for the Zoom information. Use the following Zoom link to join:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81897785039?pwd=bkpEZklwdHZZOVI5WHJV1FobXpwUT09>

Meeting ID: 818 9778 5039

Passcode: 012889

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. We have lots of fabulous friends waiting for buddies.

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

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](#).

Fun, Fearless Females - Stretch and Unwind

Do you find yourself sitting more often, feeling anxious, low mood, or stressed? Gentle movement can help you feel better now! Take some time for self-care. Join weekly to stretch and breathe your way into a more relaxed state. Join us from the comfort of your home on Mondays from 10:15am - 11:00am. Drop in for \$16.50+hst. Services are covered through Passport Funding. To register please email lori@funfearlessfemales.ca.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Brightside ABA Services

Flexible Thinkers: May 18 - Aug 17, 2022 from 4:30-5:30 on Wednesdays. For children 8-10 years of age with a diagnosis of autism or intellectual disabilities. Topics covered include, flexibility, self-regulation, and perspective taking. This program offers weekly group sessions with ABA consultants, assessment of your child's strengths and needs, and a summary report of your child's progress. Your child will have the opportunity to develop their executive functioning skills. Deadline to Register: April 29, 2022

Job Readiness: May 17- Aug 16, 2022 on Tuesdays from 3:30-4:30 pm. For youth 15-18 years of age with a diagnosis of autism or intellectual disabilities. This program will include resume writing, social skills, on the job interview skills. This program offers weekly group sessions with ABA consultants, assessment of your child's strengths and needs, and a summary report of your child's progress.

Transition to Highschool: July 12, 2022 - Aug 25, 2022 on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2-3 pm. For youth 13-15 years of age with a diagnosis of autism or intellectual disability. Topics include time management, working in groups, organizational skills, bullying, hygiene, and money handling.

For Job Readiness and Transition to Highschool, please apply by June 21, 2022.

To register contact Lauren Harris at 519-894-6156 ext. 2904 or brightside@sunbeamcommunity.ca

YMCA of Three-Rivers

Tuesday, March 8, 2022 | 11 am – 12 pm

- Posture Workshop- Get a fresh perspective on how your posture can affect your health.

Wednesday, March 23, 2022 | 6:30 pm – 8 pm

- Shoulder Pain: Anatomy, Interventions, Exercise - Shoulder issues can range from simply bothersome to quite painful and debilitating.

Wednesday, April 6 & 13, 2022 | 6:30 pm – 8 pm

- Walking Well Into Spring- For many of us walking has become our primary form of exercise. But what does it mean to walk well?

Register at: <https://www.ymcacambridgekw.ca/en/health-fitness-aquatics/ark/community-health-and-wellness-workshops.asp>

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>

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/>

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.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

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.

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

EarlyON

EarlyON is reopening for in-person activities once again! Please visit

<https://bit.ly/3Ma0jVq> for the latest information on reopening and planning your next visit. Registration for March classes is now live, so check it out soon.

Abilities Centre

Join the Abilities Centre for Virtually Together: You. Me. We. These sessions are designed for children of all ages to be physically active, socially interact with their peers, and have fun in a inclusive and supportive online environment. Virtually Together sessions run from 6-7pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Participants are welcome to join any and all sessions, or drop in as they are able! Registration is free and no diagnosis is required- siblings and friends are welcome to join!

New this winter is a special Wednesday evening session, also 6-7pm. These are You Me We "hangout" days, and will feature rotating activities including Dance Fit, art and STEM activities, karaoke, and talent night!

<https://bit.ly/3Mes536>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Workshops & Training

Ontario Independent Facilitation Network

OIFN has shared two of three Building Capacity in Independent Facilitation OIFN Shared Learning Events. The last will occur in March:

- 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 broлло@oifn.ca.

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

P4P Tips for RDSP Plan Holders

Tuesday, March 1 at 7pm

Creating an RDSP is a critical start but once an RDSP is open there is much more that Plan Holders can learn to ensure they are optimizing the plan. Once you've opened your RDSP there is still so much to consider. This webcast provides tips and strategies for Plan Holders so they can manage an RDSP effectively and maximize its value over time. The webcast will give guidance on what you need to do before and AFTER opening your RDSP, and on strategies for your investments.

<https://www.planningnetwork.ca/events/tips-for-rdsp-plan-holders>

FASD and Sensory Challenges

March 3 at 7 pm.

This workshop will discuss the "Pyramid of Learning" and how children's early developmental movements, milestones, and early life trauma affect the nervous system. Heather will discuss attachment based OT interventions, sensory-motor activities, the Safe and Sound Protocol from Interactive Listening Systems, and the importance of co-regulation. She will discuss her experience in working with psychotherapists at the Ottawa Centre for Trauma and Attachment Therapy and how a team approach has benefited her clients. Some fun, regulating gross motor activities for home will be discussed. Get ready to learn, move, and practice your breathwork in this fun-filled session.

Register: bit.ly/FASDMar3 | Email: info@healthnexus.ca

Information, Opportunities & Resources

The Azrieli Adult Neurodevelopmental Centre at CAMH

Are you a family member of an adult with a developmental disability? The Azrieli Adult Neurodevelopmental Centre at CAMH is offering two 6-week programs for family caregivers in Ontario.

Mental health for adults with developmental disabilities during COVID: A virtual course for family caregivers

- Every Tuesday, from March 1 to April 5
- 12:30 pm to 2 pm

Join this 6-week course to learn strategies and practical tips on how best to help your loved one during COVID-19. The course open to all Ontario family caregivers of adults (18+) with developmental disabilities. The curriculum will specifically address the mental health challenges that this population can face during the COVID-19 pandemic. [**Click here for more information and to register for the course.**](#)

Caring for the caregiver: A mindfulness course for Ontario family caregivers of adults with developmental disabilities

- Every Thursday, from March 3 to April 7
- 11 am to 12:30 pm

Join together with other caregivers in a program to gain self-care mindfulness skills. The program, open to all Ontario family caregivers of adults (18+) with developmental disabilities, will be led by Sue Hutton, a mindfulness teacher with 30 years of experience. The curriculum is a 6-week program that has been developed at the CAMH's Azrieli Adult Neurodevelopmental Centre. [**Click here for more information and to register for the course.**](#)

J.O.E. Job Training

Have fun, make friends and gain job skills! 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 to 11am - March 7, 14, 21, 28, April 4, 11, 18

Tuesday Sessions 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm - March 8, 15, 22, 29, April 5, 12, 19

Register: [**jobsopportunitiesenterprise.org/training-grounds**](https://jobsopportunitiesenterprise.org/training-grounds)

Registration Deadline: March 4

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Inclusive Education

The Let's Chat Series about Inclusion Education has now launched with the first two episodes now available! Join hosts Gordon Porter, Jacqueline Specht, and Diane Richler as they interview experts, teachers, parents, and other leading experts on inclusive education in Canada.

New episodes will be available every Monday on [Inclusive Education Canada's website](#). An accompanying discussion guide provides topics for conversation and resources related to the subjects covered during each episode.

Upcoming dates: March 7 with Lesley Trudel, March 14 with Liz Baile, March 21 with Gillian Parekh, March 28 "Lets chat with the hosts"

Bricks and Mortar: Exploring Your Home Ownership Options

March 8, 2022 at 6:30 – 8:00 pm

Join DSO Housing Navigators for a free virtual presentation on various types of home ownership options and resources. This free online webinar will be facilitated by Martha Beach, Housing Navigator for DSO East and South-East Regions, and Alexandra Shannan, Housing Navigator for DSO in Toronto. It is open to people with a developmental disability, their family members and/or support networks, and professionals in Ontario

Register here: <https://conta.cc/3Mauzzq>

Partners for Planning (P4P)

Are you interested in learning about the Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP), a made-in-Canada, long-term savings vehicle designed specifically for individuals with disabilities? Then register for one of P4P's upcoming *Intro to the RDSP* webcasts.

- [Wednesday, March 9 at 10am](#)
- [Thursday, April 21 at 2pm](#)
- [Wednesday, May 18 at 12pm](#)
- [Monday, June 13 at 3pm](#)

For more information about the RDSP be sure to check out the RDSP resources on the [Planning Network](#).

P4P is also hosting another session:

- [Tips for RDSP Plan Holders - Tuesday, March 1 at 7pm](#)

Information, Opportunities & Resources

March Virtual Workshop Series – Creating Your Individualized Housing Plan

Another option from DSO, this three-session workshop series is designed to help you begin creating an individualized housing and support plan for you or a family member with a developmental disability. DATES: March 10, 17, and 24 from 10 am -12:30 pm. NOTE: It is recommended you attend all three sessions as the content of each session is connected.

Register here: <https://conta.cc/36Ni6l0>

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.

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 “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.

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

To register for any Parenting Now webinars or for more info, contact:

parenting@kwcounselling.com.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Bridges to Belonging Future Planning Webinar

Building Community for Safety, Security, and Belonging March 10, 2022, 6:30 to 8:30 pm. Participants will gain a better understanding of having unpaid networks of support and meaningful contributions as valued citizens. Presenters will include Al Etmanski and Rebecca Pauls. Al Etmanski is a parent disability advocate who contributed to the creation of the RDSP, closing of institutions, and author including Impact and The Power of Disability. Rebecca Pauls is the Director of Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network (PLAN) in BC.

Register at: <https://bit.ly/3K67lbB>

Sunbeam: Safety for Independent Living

March 21 - 25, 2022 from 10 am - 12 pm

This is 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.

Virtual (ZOOM) -link will be sent upon completion of registration

COST: \$55.00 - Passport Funding Admissible

Please reach out to Rehana to register or for more information at r.khanam@sunbeamcommunity.ca.

Geneva Centre Presents: The Shift

Trauma and Burnout in Autism: A Conversation

March 22, 12 pm - 1 pm

Join the Geneva Centre during this workshop to understand and address the issues of trauma and burnout in autistic individuals. Speakers Stephanie and Lauren will be discussing the relationship between autism, trauma and autistic burnout. Stephanie is a social worker providing mental health supports to neurodivergent individuals. Lauren is a mental health professional who was diagnosed as autistic in adulthood. Together they will have a conversation and provide information, clinical examples and strategies to promote wellness in autistic individuals who may be experiencing burnout and trauma.

<https://hopin.com/events/traumaandburnoutinautism/registration>

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

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

Developmental Services Ontario (DSO)

You've applied to DSO - now what? While you're waiting for Ministry-funded services, here are some things you can do.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5tveyIWXA_Y

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>.

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>.

Fostering Information from Family & Children Services

Are you interested in learning more about fostering? For general information about fostering, please visit <https://www.facswaterloo.org/foster>.

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.cpbf-fbpc.org/covid19>

Sawubona Africentric Circle of Support

Sawubona Africentric Circle of Support, formally known as The Black Parent & Caregiver 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. Sawubona is a Zulu greeting. It literally means "I see you." More than words of politeness, sawubona carries the importance of recognizing the worth and dignity of each person.

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.

Chronic Pain Monthly Support Group

This groups 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.

Stork Secrets

Stork Secrets is a pregnancy and postpartum adjustment peer support group from Our Place. If you're feeling nervous, anxious or overwhelmed about parenthood, you are not alone. Stork Secrets is a place for support, discussing coping strategies, ask questions and develop friendships. To register, visit www.ourplace.ca/programs.

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). Started: January 13, 2021 When: Thursdays, 7:30-8:30 pm or Saturdays 9:30-10:30 am. 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.

Strong Moms, Safe Kids

Strong Moms, Safe Kids is a program from KW Counselling for mothers who may have experienced abuse in intimate relationships. Interpreters can be provided for those not comfortable communicating in English. The group provides time for families to learn about the impact of abuse together, and also provides smaller groups for mothers, youth and younger children. If you are interested in talking about whether the Strong Moms, Safe Kids program is right for your family, please call 519-884-0000 and ask for the Strong Moms, Safe Kids Coordinator.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

South Asian Wellness Group

The South Asian Wellness Group is a drop-in group every Thursday from 3 pm to 4:30 pm. With a South Asian Peer Facilitator fluent in Punjabi, Hindi and Urdu, this group will focus on coping, recovery, and fostering hope from a South Asian lens. This group is intended for folks who identify as South Asian to connect and build community with one another. ALL Self Help & Peer Support groups are open to adults living in Waterloo Wellington communities who identify as living with mental health or/and substance use issues. To join this group or if you have questions about it, please send us an email: selfhelpgroup@cmhaww.ca. To view this information in Punjabi, [please click here](#).

Sharing and Caring FASD Support Group

This is a virtual speaker series and peer support group from SKHC's Four Directions Mental Wellness Program. All caregivers, individuals with FASD and their support persons are invited to share, learn and find support for their FASD journey. The next session takes place Wednesday, March 23 from 6 - 8 pm. Guest speakers include Zoe Higgins, SLP, and Kelly Oreskovich, MSW, RSW, *Building Social Skills, Building Resilience*. For more information and to register, please contact Kelly, FASD Coordinator at 705-675-1506 ext. 239 or email at koreskovich@skhc.ca.

Our Place - Young Parenting in a Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic is a challenging time to be a young parent, a partner, a friend. This virtual peer support program for parents age 24 and under focuses on the emerging needs and challenges around parenting, self-care, and self-regulation during the pandemic. The program will offer connection, support, and resources through a weekly Zoom group session. Mondays 8:30 – 9:30 pm. This program runs until March 28.

www.ourplacekw.ca/programs

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Engagement Opportunities

Disability Without Poverty

Please click on the link below, go to the survey tab, and make sure that, at every chance you get, you add comments in the 'Other' box to state what needs to be fixed for people with disabilities to not be left behind in the Spring federal budget. This is our only chance since none of the boxes have the word 'disability'.

<https://www.letstalkbudget2022.ca/let-s-talk-budget-2022>

Need help figuring out what people with disabilities need? Go to

<https://www.disabilitywithoutpoverty.ca/>

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](#).

Intersection of disability and cultural identity survey

Individuals aged 18+ are invited to participate in a research survey that will help reinvent an inclusive environment, via disability programming, by understanding the needs of different cultural groups. For more information, please email makh0100@mylaurier.ca.

Please [click here](#) for the flyer and instructions how to participate.

State of employment for individuals with a developmental disability in Ontario

Since 2018, the Family Support Network for Employment (FSNE) has been working to discover possibilities and advocate for needed transformations in the developmental services and employment system. FSNE is currently taking a survey on the state of employment for individuals with a disability in Ontario to fill the current gaps in knowledge on this topic. To participate, visit:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TS7ZJBJ>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

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](#)

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/39fKVF6>.

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>

University of Guelph Child Emotion and Mental Health Lab

A Clinical Psychology PhD Student at the University of Guelph is researching parental self-efficacy, or how well a parent feels able to meet their child's needs, in parents of children with an autism spectrum disorder. They are asking for parent volunteers with a child who is 6-18 years old and has been diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder (including autistic disorder, Asperger's syndrome, or pervasive developmental disorder – not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS)) are welcome to participate. This project has been reviewed by the Research Ethics Board (REB# 21-05-012). To learn more and participate, [click here](#).

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Inclusion Canada

Inclusion Canada is launching the *This is Ableism* campaign, funded by Allstate Canada. Ableism is the view that it is “normal” to not have a disability, and that “normal” is preferred. It’s discrimination on the basis of disability. The *This is Ableism* campaign brings together people with disabilities’ own reflections on ableism, and invites us all to consider what we can do to combat discrimination in our own homes, communities, and workplaces. [Visit their website](#) to learn more about ableism and its impact on the lives of persons with disabilities.

Family Matters: Job Loss & COVID-19 Findings Now Available

This project worked with families and self-advocates to better understand the impact of job loss during the pandemic and considerations for future supports for families and individuals. You can see the report and its findings here:

<https://inclusioncanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Final-Report-EN-Oct-27.pdf>

Inclusion Canada to Support Implementation of a Canadian Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP)

The federal government committed to implement a plan to create a new Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP). Inclusion Canada is partnering with [Muscular Dystrophy Canada](#) and [Independent Living Canada](#) to consult on and inform the development of Canada's first Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP). There are four specific pillars to the plan: Financial Security, Employment, Disability Inclusive Spaces, and A Modern Approach to Disability.

You can [read more here](#) on this collaborative work which aims to ensure all people in Canada have the opportunity to provide feedback for the plan.

Accessibility Standards Canada

The review period for the draft accessibility standard ASC/CSA B651, Accessible design for the built environment, will be open until April 24, 2022. This is a revision of an existing standard. It has requirements for making built environments accessible to individuals with a range of disabilities. It updates old standards to include: new accessibility research, details on colour contrast, developments in tactile directions, and more clarity on how to meet the needs of these standards.

You are now able to review the standard, and contribute your experience in accessibility. Interested parties may access the draft on the [CSA Group website](#). A one-time registration is required. You may comment directly online.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Community News

Lutherwood Employment Support

In person appointments are now available! Virtual services will continue moving forward. Lutherwood also has a Job board, which you can find here:

<https://www.lutherwood.ca/employment/job-board>

Basic Income Guarantee is the best way to improve lives

This piece in the Hamilton Spectator was written by Colleen Cooper and Carol Stalker. It discusses the Ontario government's Poverty Reduction Strategy launched over a year ago, and highlights some of its shortcomings discovered by disability rights activists. To read this article, visit: <https://bit.ly/3rSFMet>

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/>

Every Canadian Counts

Every Canadian Counts is hiring a Project Coordinator! [Independent Living Canada](#), in partnership with [Muscular Dystrophy Canada](#) are hiring a project coordinator to lead a significant and historic project. The purpose of this project is to consult with Canadians from Coast to Coast to Coast to reach hard-to-reach Canadians with disabilities so that they can have a voice in the creation of the Federal Government's Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

To apply, please send a CV and Resume to anne.macrae@ilc-vac.ca or/and homira.osman@muscle.ca.

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 Lunsky 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](#)