

*Where exceptional families thrive*

**Issue 150**  
**October 2022**

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## What's In This Issue?

There's no mistaking it's October with the cooler temperature and moody weather we've been having lately! However, it's the season of thanks and being together, and we've got a lot to be thankful for.

At WRFN, we are thankful to our community of partners who are able to offer opportunities to families of children with exceptionalities. In Waterloo Region, there is something for everyone to feel included and accepted in the things they wish to pursue. And we are grateful to be able to provide some of these services ourselves!

Read through this month's Family Pulse to see what programs, events, webinars, engagement opportunities, and more are coming up this month.



**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***

At September's SEAC meeting there was a discussion on the Board's strategic plan. The priorities for the next five years were noted, including focusing on centering student voices, supporting the well-being of students and staff, and making sure equitable opportunities are in place so everyone can succeed.

The Ontario Autism Program was also discussed, and how it has funding to support students as they enter school.

The Right to Read report was also covered. Teachers are taking courses around structured literary support, and additional staff have been sent to schools to support classrooms and reading programs.

The Shortage of Educational Assistants and nurses was also a point of discussion.

The next SEAC meeting will take place on Wednesday, October 12 from 7 to 9 pm.

## SEAC Updates

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

SEAC met for the first time on September 7 for the 2022-2023 school year. The committee was introduced to our new Director of Education, Mr. Tyrone Dowling. He spoke of his interest and commitment to special education and the students that it serves.

Our group reviewed the eligibility of SEAC members with the intention of recruiting more community program members as this is an election year.

We also had an open table discussion to review options and make suggestions for topics to cover over the rest of the school year.

The next SEAC meeting will be a hybrid meeting taking place on October 5.

## **Thoughts Leading Up to World Mental Health Day**

### **Carmen Sutherland, Coffee Club Coordinator**

Shortly before I started typing this, I got some unexpected news. It is not bad news, but it caused me to have a lot of feelings. It's making me think: "Wow. I wish I had a counselling appointment today."

A few years ago, I may not have known that this news and these feelings related to it were worth talking to a counsellor about, but today I know that they are. Why? In my opinion, it's because talking about mental health has become more normalized. Many of my family members, friends, and acquaintances seek counsellors, and occasionally we talk about our experiences.

My personal social media often involves the topic of mental health as well. References to what people have learned in counselling and memes that say: "It is OK not to be OK."

All this to say, I feel very grateful that we are normalizing mental health, whatever that looks like for each of us. Please know that whatever role mental health plays in your life, we stand in solidarity with you, and we are here to support you in whatever way we can.

# What's Happening at WRFN

At this time, most WRFN programs are being offered through a virtual format or through phone and email connections. We are slowly transitioning into some programs and services being available in person. However, we understand that these remain to be challenging times for many. Please reach out and let us know how we can help you and your family.

*Do you have a question about community resources or child development?*

## WRFN Drop-Ins at EarlyON

### Meet with Erin, our Family Resource Coach

Erin will be hosting in-office drop-in meetings at various EarlyON locations this fall & winter. Meetings do not require an appointment, but are on a first-come, first-served basis.

DATE	LOCATION	TIME
Oct 12	EarlyON   Roger St 161 Roger St, Waterloo	10-11 am
Oct 14	Early ON   Cedar Creek 55 Hilltop Dr, Ayr, ON	9:30-11 am
Oct 18	EarlyON   Water St 73 Water St., N., Unit 105 Cambridge	9:30-10:30 am
Oct 19	Early ON   Oak Creek 80 Tartan Ave, Kitchener	10-11 am



### Contact Erin -

erin.sutherland@wrfn.info  
226-808-5460

**More dates to come in November & December!**



[www.wrfn.info](http://www.wrfn.info)



# Save the Date: WRFN Family Activity Day

WRFN and Scotiabank present:

## WRFN'S FAMILY ACTIVITY DAY

in celebration of World Children's Day

COME AND JOIN US!

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20  
2 PM - 4 PM

DOON HERITAGE VILLAGE &  
KEN SEILING WATERLOO  
REGION MUSEUM

10 HURON ROAD, KITCHENER  
N2P 2R7

- A fun-filled day of activities for you and your family
- Inclusive and accessible activities
- Access to Doon Heritage Village & indoor museum exhibits
- A safe environment to rediscover in-person events in the community



Registration details to follow!



## A NEW CHAPTER

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

We have a new feature to our meetings called "Ask Us Anything" from 9-9:30pm. This is a chance for those who attend the meeting to ask questions or clarify points when the main part of the meeting is over.

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



**October 4, 2022**

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**Grief & Loss**  
 with **Lisa Robinson**  
 from Andrea Warnick  
 Consulting.

This month, we are focusing on how to support our youth and adult loved ones who live with disability, as they move through their own grief process.

For too many years, people with intellectual disabilities were excluded from grieving rituals and family loss conversations. As we begin to support our loved ones who have experienced loss in new and inclusive ways, we see that not only can they cope better with their grief, but their unique perspective can be helpful in supporting others who are grieving as well.

All meetings are virtual  
 Zoom meetings from  
 7:30pm-9:00pm

*If you would like to receive emails about our monthly meetings (always the first Tuesday of the month), please email Mary at [maryjpik@hotmai.com](mailto:maryjpik@hotmai.com) and ask to be put on our email list.*

At our October meeting we will welcome back Lisa Robinson from Andrea Warnick Consulting. We'll resume our conversation about grief and loss with Lisa. This month, we are focusing on how to support our youth and adult loved ones who live with disability as they move through their own grief process.

We are excited about this discussion! For too many years, people with intellectual disabilities were excluded from grieving rituals and family loss conversations.

As we begin to support our loved ones who have experienced loss in new and inclusive ways, we see that not only can they cope better with their grief, but their unique perspective can be helpful in supporting others who are grieving as well.

Join us online on Tuesday, October 4th from 7:30-9 pm. Please email Mary Pike ([maryjpik@hotmai.com](mailto:maryjpik@hotmai.com)) to RSVP for this meeting and she will send you the link closer to the date.

# 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](mailto:Cristina.Stanger@wrfn.info).

## Parent Mentor Program

Through our Parent Mentor Program, we provide a means for parents to connect with each other, as well as guide, support and help empower each other to work through the highs and lows that make up their journeys.

Our Parent Mentors provide information and emotional support; share ideas and strategies; and connect their mentees with community resources.

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

## School-Issue Parent Support Group

This peer-led group provides support, advice and a safe environment for parents who have questions or concerns about school issues affecting their children with special needs. The WRFN School Issues Support Group meets on the last Wednesday of each month during the school year. The next regular meeting will take place October 26.

For more information, please contact Sue Simpson at [Sue.simpson@wrfn.info](mailto:Sue.simpson@wrfn.info).

## Family Resource Coach

Erin Sutherland, our Family Resource Coach, is available to meet in person, by phone, email, or virtual call to lend a helping hand and personal guidance to families and to connect you to updated information, resources, and opportunities available in our community.

Call Erin Sutherland at 226-808-5460 or email [Erin.Sutherland@wrfn.info](mailto:Erin.Sutherland@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](mailto: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.*

### Programs & Recreation

#### Carizon Programs

*Newcomer Mental Health Program (NMHP)*

The Newcomer Mental Health Program provides services to newcomer refugee persons in the Waterloo Region with GAR, PSR or Protected Persons status.

*Community Resource Program (CRP)*

The Community Resource Program (also known as CRP) provides services to families in the Waterloo Region with children ages 4-17 years.

*Children and Parents Connecting (CAPC)*

The Children and Parents Connecting program (also known as CAP-C) provides services to families in the Waterloo Region with children between the ages of 0-6.

*Canadian Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP)*

The Canadian Prenatal Nutrition (also known as CPNP) provides services to pregnant women and their support persons in the Waterloo Region.

*Financial Wellness*

The Financial Wellness program provides support to individuals and families in the Waterloo Region seeking support in managing finances.

*Pathways to Education*

The Pathways to Education program provides supports like tutoring, groups, and scholarships (and more!) to youth in grades 8-12 living in the Kingsdale and Chandler-Mowat communities.

**[Carizon Community Services - Current and Upcoming Free Programming](#)**

## Information, Opportunities & Resources

### Let's Talk Positive Parenting "Snap Shot" Series

*Encouragement or Praise* – Tuesday, October 4, 7 – 8 pm - This presentation will help you learn the difference between encouragement and praise and give you some new strategies for encouraging your children.

*Screen Time* – Wednesday, October 12, 6 -7 pm - As parents, many of us are struggling with reinstating screen time limits to pre pandemic levels. What are the pros, cons, and concerns and how can we help keep our children safe online both physically and emotionally?

*Discipline or Punishment* – Thursday, November 10, 8 – 9 pm - This presentation looks at the impact of both discipline and punishment on the behaviour of children and teens and helps you to understand the difference between the two.

*Parenting Your Teen* – Tuesday, November 22, 7 –8 pm - This snapshot focuses on how we can build and strengthen our relationships with our pre-teen or teenaged children & specific strategies to keep those lines of communication open.

To register for programs or to get more information, email: [parenting@kwcounselling.com](mailto:parenting@kwcounselling.com)

### Infant Massage

This is a one-on-one 5-week course for families with babies 0-12 months of age. This program encourages and supports families through teaching stroke techniques, offers a relaxing environment, a place to ask questions, learn with others, and receive referrals to other community organizations.

Shawna will be offering one-on-one and group sessions in clients' homes. Fees are \$150 (about \$30 a week). Families can register for the program at

[www.kwinfantmassage.ca](http://www.kwinfantmassage.ca) and find out more information as well. They can also email [shawna@kwinfantmassage.ca](mailto:shawna@kwinfantmassage.ca).

### Region of Waterloo Libraries

The Region of Waterloo Libraries has a handful of great fall-themed events coming this October. Check out the [full line-up of events](#) happening this month at Region of Waterloo Libraries' various locations. For more information and to register, visit

<https://www.rwlibrary.ca/en/>.

## Information, Opportunities & Resources

### **Family and Children Services (FACS)**

FACS has variety of upcoming Fall groups. There are both virtual and in person groups for children, youth, and adults, with the intent to help ensure safety for all. Here are just a few:

*Trusting Loving Connections (In Person)* – Tuesdays, 10 – 11:30 am, October 4 – December 6. Virtual available on Wednesdays. A 10-week group for caregivers parenting children between birth and 12. The program seeks to offer support to caregivers to gain a better understanding of how their own childhood experiences and attachment relationships affect their parenting and their relationships with their children. [Click here to Refer](#)

*Circle of Security (In Person)* – Wednesdays, 10 – 11:30 am, October 13 – December 1. Virtual Available Thursdays. An 8-week program to support caregivers to see their child's behaviour through an attachment lens. The program supports caregivers in understanding their child's emotional world by learning to read emotional needs. [Click here to Refer](#)

*Healthy Together (In Person)* – Tuesdays, dates TBD, 4 -5 pm – For caregivers and their children 7- 12 years old. Healthy Together is a family education program that engages the entire family in addressing nutrition, money management, movement, and family connections. In this after school program, meals will be prepared and enjoyed together. [Click here to Refer](#)

*Resilient Rebels (In Person)* – Tuesdays bi-weekly, October 4 – June 13, 2023, 5 – 7:30 pm. For youth 13 -18 years old. This group allows opportunities for youth to gain valuable experience/skills, personal growth, leadership, empowerment, local/global awareness, positive peer connections/social interactions, community connections, and earn volunteer hours, that can be put towards resumes, job applications and high school community service hours. Youth will also enjoy a delicious homemade meal each night. [Click here to Refer](#)

## Information, Opportunities & Resources

### Monica Place

**Monica Place** is offering “The Village Drop-In”: young parents who live in Waterloo Region are invited to join a weekly drop-in group at Monica Place Waterloo and Monica Place Cambridge. Bus tickets can be provided if needed. Snacks are provided along with time to chat with other young parents and playtime with other children (including music and story time). There is no cost to this group. If you have any questions, please let Judy (judyf@monicaplace.ca) or Andrea (andrear@monicaplace.ca) know.

### Fun Fearless Females

Get ready for cooler days and nights by joining Fun Fearless Females' cozy fall activities this month. If you're a fan of Halloween, you're in luck. On October 7, FFF will be having a fall outdoor movie night (Hocus Pocus 2). On October 21, there will be a Ghost Walk in downtown Guelph and a Halloween movie night on October 28. If You can also join the girls at a giant book sale on October 14.

### [Events — Fun Fearless Females](#)

### Cambridge Career Connections - Youth Job Connection

The Youth Job Connection program serves youth who experience barriers to employment by providing supports beyond traditional job search and placement opportunities. Program features include:

- Participants receive minimum wage for 60-90 hours of employment-related workshop
- Assistance securing employment from a skilled Job Developer
- Financial placement supports for participants and hiring incentives for employers
- Ongoing support provided through coaching and mentoring

<https://cambridgecareerconnections.com/for-job-seekers/youth-job-connection/>

### Return of the Dragon

Return of the Dragon Martial Arts offers a safe and positive environment for students to build their skills and confidence. Whether you are looking to lose weight or wanting to learn self defense, they can help you achieve your goals. They offer Kung Fu, Kickboxing, Jiu Jitsu, Bootcamp and self defense seminars for all ages and genders. Visit [www.rotdma.com](http://www.rotdma.com) or call 519-503-6087 to learn more.

## Information, Opportunities & Resources

### Woolwich Counselling

Woolwich Counselling Centre is providing in-person and virtual small group therapy sessions and workshops for children, youth, adults, and seniors in 2022-2023. There are many workshop/support group options. To register, please call 519-669-8651 or email us at [info@woolwichcounselling.org](mailto:info@woolwichcounselling.org). There are limited spots for small group therapy sessions and some workshops, so please register early. Registration closes one week prior to the start of the event.

[Upcoming Events - Woolwich Counselling Centre](#)

### 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!

### 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 October virtual group program calendar, for Children and Youth and Young Adults!

<https://www.recrespite.com/virtual-services/>

### Sensory Workout

Sensory workout is a program that combines what we know about exercise and sensory processing to make physical activity more accessible and enjoyable for all! The Sensory Workout trainings and demo videos are created by Aptus' Clinical Services team, with generous funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation and the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services.

[Check out Sensory Workout on YouTube!](#)

### LCOworks – Employment training and job connections for people with developmental disabilities in Ontario

LCOworks is a free online program that supports positive employment outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities, a traditionally underrepresented and at-risk population in the labour market. Any Ontario resident with a developmental disability is eligible to participate in LCOworks. Email to apply or learn more at [support@lifecourseonline.com](mailto:support@lifecourseonline.com).

## Information, Opportunities & Resources

### Bridges to Belonging

**BE-Friends:** 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](#).

We are also matching seniors together for fun and connection. If you are 65+ and are interested in making a new friend to connect with in community, [please apply here](#).

### March of Dimes Connect & Share

Wouldn't it be wonderful to visit with someone regularly who shares your interests? March of Dimes virtual Connect & Share program was designed to make that happen. You will be matched with a volunteer who shares your interests and your buddy will visit with you (as often as you like) – just for the fun of it.

You can have phone visits or you can have a video call using a platform like Zoom.

<https://www.marchofdimes.ca/en-ca/programs/rec/connect>

### 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>

## Information, Opportunities & Resources

### **ConnectABILITY's Friendly Connections**

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

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

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

### **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/](https://goodlifekids.com/MOVE/)

### **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](mailto:kim.sproul@eafwr.on.ca)

<https://www.eafwr.on.ca/programs/community-development/open-space/>

### **Launch**

Launch is an afterschool program offering STEAM programming, making science, technology, engineering, art, and math a new sport for kids. STEAM League (for kids in grades 3-8) and Littles League (for kids in Kindergarten to grade 2) will start October 17. Launch offers virtual and in-person options (run at a location on Erb St in Waterloo). Visit <https://www.launchwaterloo.ca/cmsa> to learn more about STEAM League.

# Information, Opportunities & Resources

## Workshops & Training

### CADDAC

*Interactive ADHD Child Parenting Course* - For parents and caregivers beginning the ADHD journey. October 6 - November 24 at 6:30-8:30 pm.

[Interactive ADHD Child Parenting Course - CADDAC](#)

### VILA (Virtual Inclusive Learning Academy)

VILA is an online campus and part of DANI Toronto Day Program. VILA offers interactive online courses with focus on pre-employment and vocational training, academic development and engaging social opportunities. VILA would be a great opportunity for individuals who have just graduated from high school, for those who currently are not attending in-person programs, or those who enjoy learning from the comfort of their home.

The program is currently accepting new students for the Fall 2022 session which will begin on October 11th, 2022. Visit the website at <https://vila.dani-toronto.com/>.

### Developmental Services Ontario

*Creating Your Individualized Housing and Support Plan* – Free Virtual workshop series. 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. Sessions will run October 4, 11, & 18 at 10 am -12:30 pm.

[Creating Your Individualized Housing and Support Plan - October 2022 \(3 Sessions\)](#)

### Futures Found - Stress + Anxiety Reduction

Caregiving and parenting can be stressful, especially when combined with anxiety and other concerns. This workshop is presented in six 1-hour sessions for caregivers of individuals with autism and other neurodevelopmental differences. Participants will take away new insights along with practical tools to implement for everyday stressors and caregiving/parenting stress.

- *6 Daytime Workshops* - go to <https://bit.ly/3AH6E5D> 1:30-2:30 pm on Tuesdays from 18 Oct to 22 Nov, 2022
- *6 Evening Workshops* - go to <https://bit.ly/3cFu8A9> 7-8 pm on Tuesdays from 18 Oct to 22 Nov, 2022.



## Information, Opportunities & Resources

### **Bridges to Belonging**

*Choice, Connection, and Community:* Bridges to Belonging is running another session of Choice, Connection and Community for seniors and older adults! This is a series of four in-person workshops supported by individualized facilitation for YOU to discover your gifts and strengths, connect them with your interests and passions and create a plan for social connection and belonging in community. There will be a few more workshops this year. For more information, please contact [spanchaud@bridgestobelonging.ca](mailto:spanchaud@bridgestobelonging.ca).

*LINKS workshops* are being adapted to include more one-to-one facilitation and mentorship. If you or your loved one identifies as having a disability, facilitators will be with you, shaping the life YOU want. Walking along with your own facilitator, meeting new people, finding resources in your neighborhood, uncovering opportunities: it's all about you and the life you want. To find out more information about LINKS workshops, email [info@bridgestobelonging.ca](mailto:info@bridgestobelonging.ca).

*Future Planning:* Join with other families and caregivers in Waterloo Region Thursday, October 27 from 6:30 - 8:30 pm for the first of the Future Planning series events on the Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP), and the Disability Tax Credit with Paul Arsenault from Kindred Credit Union. [Click here](#) to learn more and register.

# Information, Opportunities & Resources

## Events & Webinars

### Employer Forum Series

This 4-part series will bring together employers, employees on the autism spectrum or with an intellectual disability, employment agencies, labour market analysts, researchers and other subject matter experts from across the country to present and discuss the various impacts and implications of inclusive employment. Each webinar will consist of a panel presentation with plenty of time for questions and answers.

*Forum 1: Corporate Leadership – How to Innovate Through Inclusive Hiring*

Tuesday October 4, 12:30-1:30 pm

Insights from: Costco, Auticon, DHL and EY

*Forum 2: The Future of Work and Emerging Employment Opportunities*

Wednesday October 5, 12:30-1:30 pm

Insights from: Statistics Canada, Specialisterne and SCE LifeWorks

*Forum 3: Diversity and Inclusive Hiring in the E-Commerce, Manufacturing, & Logistics Sectors*

Thursday October 6, 12:30-1:30 pm

Insights from: Amazon and Sephora

*Forum 4: From Jobs to Careers - Exploring Career Advancement*

Wednesday October 12, 12:30-1:30 pm

Insights from: Ference and Company, Gateway Associates and Avalon Employment

This webinar is for:

- Employers of all sizes and industries; it will be particularly relevant to executives, managers, human resources, and hiring managers;
- Employees on the autism spectrum or with an intellectual disability;
- Employment agencies looking for more information on how best to support clients;
- Anyone interested in advancing workplace inclusion is also encouraged to attend!

ASL interpretation and closed captioning will be provided in each session. Sessions will be in English only. A recording of the webinar series will be available in French shortly after. [Learn more and register.](#)

## Information, Opportunities & Resources

### **Community of Practice: It's Time to Build Back Better & Re-focus on Community!**

Community Living Ontario, in collaboration with the Provincial Executive Director's Coordinating Committee, and People Minded Business, invites you to participate in the next Community of Practice session.

Join on Thursday, October 6 from 11 am – 12:30 pm.

'There isn't one right way but there is one direction' is the focus of October's Community of Practice — and you don't want to miss it! Much of this session will take place in breakout rooms where you will participate in engaging discussions with colleagues and other stakeholders from across the province. Explore the enablers that lead to success and the barriers that get in the way of moving forward and share ways to overcome them.

[Register now](#)

### **Partners for Planning (P4P)**

*The Disability Tax Credit* - For all ages - October 12 at 7 pm - It can be difficult to begin thinking about financial planning but if you have a disability or support someone with a disability, there is an easy way to get started. This updated webcast will provide critical information on applying for and using the DTC.

*Future Planning With Siblings In Mind* - For adult siblings - November 2 at 7 pm - When considering the future for a child with a disability, many parents feel conflicted when thinking about the roles their other children may play. Learn how parents and adult siblings can come together to begin ongoing conversations on planning for a family member with a disability.

*Microboards: Sustaining Your Future* - For all ages - November 9 at 7 pm - In this webcast, Executive Director Karen Bell, from Microboards Ontario will introduce families to this innovative concept, and discuss things that families should consider when deciding if a Microboard is the right fit for them.

Register and learn more at <https://planningnetwork.ca/#freeonlinewebcasts>.

## Information, Opportunities & Resources

### **Developmental Services Ontario (DSO)**

*Developmental Services Provincial Housing Strategy Forum – Strengthening Partnerships, Building Communities - October 26, 2022 9 am – 3 pm.*

In 2017, people with developmental disabilities were highlighted as a priority group in the National Housing Strategy, recognizing the need for affordable housing and appropriate supports. This forum will highlight creative stories and replicable actions being taken towards creating housing inclusivity. In partnership, we can all work together for housing solutions.

**[Register now](#)**

### **Family Counselling Centre of Cambridge and North Dumfries (FCC)**

To celebrate World Mental Health Day, FCC will be holding an event to honour its donors, supporters, and community, while also presenting its new agency name and branding. You won't want to miss it!

When: Tuesday, October 11 from 3 - 5 pm

Where: 1725 Beaverdale Rd., Cambridge.

### **CADDAC's ADHD Conference**

CADDAC's 14th Annual ADHD Conference is back again on October 22 & 23. This year's focus is on lived experiences with ADHD and comorbid conditions like eating disorders, sleep disorders, ASD, anxiety, depression, PTSD, substance use disorder, OCD and more.

**[Canada's 2022 ADHD Conference | Oct 22 & 23 | Register now! \(caddac.ca\)](#)**

# Information, Opportunities & Resources

## Resources

### Aide Canada

Many of Aide Canada's resources relate to autism, but there are also plenty that apply to all disabilities. There is a parent series of "Ask a Question" where families & self-advocates can respond with their experience. There is also a resource page where you can borrow books and items and is available Canada wide. Check it out at [www.aidecanada.ca](http://www.aidecanada.ca).

### Resources from Inclusion Canada

Pathways to Home Ownership — The Pathways to Homeownership project demonstrated inclusive models of homeownership and created resources to help people with disabilities (and their families) purchase their own homes. Inclusion Canada is currently working on new resources to support Pathways. It will be coming soon. Learn more here: <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:jdigirolamo@ccrw.org)  
<https://www.ccrw.org/>

### March of Dimes Hi, Tech!

If you have a disability and are 18 years or older, you are eligible to be matched with a tech support coach. Your coach will answer your technology questions and help get you set up. To learn more visit <https://www.marchofdimes.ca/en-ca/programs/atech/hitech>.

### Children and Youth Planning Table (CYPT)

Children and Youth Planning Table has released the [3rd disaggregated Snapshot Report](#) from the Youth Impact Survey—Gender Identity. This snapshot contains the most differences to date amongst subpopulations. Please take a moment to review.

## 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. Session Two will begin October 12, but you can catch up with Session One online.
- *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](#).

### 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>.

### Partners for Planning

Every high school graduate deserves a bright future. The Beyond Graduation Toolkit can help families think creatively, collaborate with school teams, and explore pathways that can lead to a full and meaningful life for their son or daughter once they reach the end of their high school career. Designed for parents with a child transitioning out of high school in the next few years, this new toolkit provides critical concepts and resources that can help parents prepare for this transition. It includes:

[Partners for Planning - Planning for a Good Life Beyond Graduation Toolkit - Overview \(planningnetwork.ca\)](#)

## 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.

### **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](#).

### **The Royal Mental Health Care & Research**

The Royal Mental Health Care & Research is one of Canada’s foremost mental health care, teaching and research hospitals, located in Ottawa. The Institute of Mental Health Research, affiliated with the University of Ottawa, brings together leading mental health professionals, scientists, and technology to gain a deeper understanding of the brain, and investigate innovative approaches to preventing and treating mental illness. To learn about The Royal’s programs, please visit: <https://bit.ly/3dRvlo2>

### **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](http://www.vulnerablepersonsregistry.ca)

# Information, Opportunities & Resources

## Support Groups

### Parents for Children's Mental Health (PCMH)

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 4000 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. Waterloo PCMH groups will begin meeting again this fall. **Regular support group meetings** will take place Oct. 25, Nov. 22, and Dec 27. The ADHD support group dates are Oct. 19, Nov. 16, and Dec. 21. Find your closest child and youth mental health centre here: <https://www.family.cmho.org/>

### 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/>

### 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 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>

### 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](mailto:fasd@able2.org).



## Information, Opportunities & Resources

### **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. 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](mailto:bpsgroup2020@gmail.com).

### **South Asian Wellness Group**

The South Asian Wellness Group is a drop-in group every Thursday from 6 pm to 7:30 pm on Zoom with occasional in-person meetings. With a South Asian Peer Facilitator fluent in Punjabi, Hindi and Urdu, this group will focus on coping, recovery, and fostering hope from a South Asian lens. 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](mailto:selfhelpgroup@cmhaww.ca). To view this information in Punjabi, please [click here](#).

### **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!

## Information, Opportunities & Resources

### **CIA - Connecting, Interests and Activities**

CIA is a group in Waterloo Region for adults (18+) with Asperger's or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) level 1. The purpose of the group is to create a safe and supportive space for people to have fun, meet and connect with others, and take part in activities. Join if you're looking for a positive place of belonging! Meetings take place at the Downtown Community Centre (35 B Weber Street West), in the Multi-Purpose Room. This is a drop-in group, so folks are welcome to join anytime between 5 and 7 pm. The next meetings will be taking place October 13, November 10, and December 8. If you have any questions, please reach out to Kelly Groh at 519-731-3923.

### **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.

Go to [apsgo.ca](http://apsgo.ca) for more information.

# Information, Opportunities & Resources

## Engagement Opportunities

### **University of Waterloo School of Optometry and Vision Science**

University of Waterloo School of Optometry and Vision Science is seeking infants aged 18-47 months for a vision study to test for a new way to measure how well babies/toddlers can see. Contact Dr. Lisa Christian [lisa.christian@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:lisa.christian@uwaterloo.ca) for more information.

### **YWCA Cambridge**

YWCA Cambridge "Roots of Empathy" is seeking families with infants 2-4 months in October. Roots of Empathy is an evidence-based program that has shown a significant effect on reducing levels of aggression among school children while raising social/emotional competence and increasing empathy. A parent visits a local school classroom with their baby and a trained Roots of Empathy instructor nine times throughout the school year, each time for about 30 minutes. (Note the program runs virtually when necessary) To learn more or sign up, visit <https://www.ywcacambridge.ca/roots-of-empathy/>

### **McMaster University Research on Postpartum Depression Treatment**

McMaster University is conducting a research study to determine if women who receive an online peer-delivered CBT-Informed support for postpartum depression improve more than women who receive standard healthcare. You may be eligible if you are living in Southern Ontario, 18 yrs+ and have a baby under 12 months. For more information please email: [peercbt@mcmaster.ca](mailto:peercbt@mcmaster.ca)

### **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

### **Inclusion Canada**

*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>

### **Infant and Child Mental Health Lab at York University**

The Infant and Child Mental Health Lab at York University is inviting caregivers and their infants (aged 3 - 10 months), to participate in a 2-part online research study. The first part examines caregiver-infant interaction at times when the caregiver is busy with common, everyday tasks. The second part examines the role of caregivers' experiences as they interact with their infants. To learn more about our study, please visit our webpage: <https://bohr.lab.yorku.ca/participate-in-our-studies/> Interested participants can email us directly at [yorkparentingproject@gmail.com](mailto:yorkparentingproject@gmail.com), or sign up using the form on our webpage.

### **Time Poverty Study**

A York University Masters Student is looking for participants for a study investigating time poverty. They are looking for participants 18-65 years old, who are caregivers (paid or unpaid), and immigrant women from the English-speaking Caribbean. Contact for more information: [taylersi@yorku.ca](mailto:taylersi@yorku.ca).

### **City of Cambridge**

City of Cambridge is seeking feedback to understand the needs and actions to be taken to improve accessibility within the City of Cambridge. [Please complete this short survey](#) before Oct. 21, 2022. Your feedback will help inform the development of a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2023-2026). This survey is available in different formats (including language translation e.g., paper, email, telephone). Please contact [accessibility@cambridge.ca](mailto:accessibility@cambridge.ca) or 519 740-4680 ext. 4292 for more information.

## Information, Opportunities & Resources

### **Empowered Kids Ontario & McMaster University**

In partnership with Empowered Kids Ontario, researchers at the Offord Centre for Child Studies at McMaster University are completing an evaluation of virtual care services offered to children across Ontario. If your child currently receives virtual care in Ontario (or has received virtual care in the past), and you are interested in learning more about participating in this research, please contact us at [ekoeval@mcmaster.ca](mailto:ekoeval@mcmaster.ca) or call 905-525-9140 ext. 21263.

### **Siblings: Citizens with a Cause Is Recruiting!**

Siblings: Citizens with a Cause is a group of sibling advocates with a vision for a more inclusive Canada. Our team of siblings have important advocacy roles at Community Living Ontario, as they ensure that siblings of those who have disabilities are heard and represented in all settings. Their daily interactions with their siblings allow them to see first-hand the exclusion their siblings face, which is their motivation to advocate for a more inclusive Canada. This supportive network of youth shares personal stories, resources, and are a helping hand to anyone who would like it through advocacy initiatives such as their Siblings meetups. At these monthly webinars, youth and allies come together to discuss navigating life in Canada. If you have questions or wish to apply, contact: Agnes Palaganas, CLO's Youth and Community Engagement Coordinator, at [apalaganas@communitylivingontario.ca](mailto:apalaganas@communitylivingontario.ca) or Payal Khazanachi, Director of Inclusion Initiatives at [pkhazanachi@communitylivingontario.ca](mailto:pkhazanachi@communitylivingontario.ca).

### **Join the Youth Advisory Committee (YAC)!**

The Re:Action4Inclusion Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) is a provincial movement of youth from across Ontario that has steadily advocated for social change for over a decade. This movement is driven and empowered by youth leaders, with and without a disability, who see the importance of the basic human need to belong. This provincial network of youth is committed to overcoming the feelings of isolation and exclusion youth feel by embracing a culture of equity and inclusion. Interested in getting involved with the Youth Advisory Committee? Want to work with a team of like-minded people to make a difference? [Apply here!](#) Want to learn more? [Click here.](#)

And if you still have questions, contact: Agnes Palaganas, CLO's Youth and Community Engagement Coordinator, at [apalaganas@communitylivingontario.ca](mailto:apalaganas@communitylivingontario.ca) or Nicole Canzoneri, Chair of YAC 2021–2022, at [nicolecanzoneri@gmail.com](mailto:nicolecanzoneri@gmail.com).

## Information, Opportunities & Resources

### **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>.

### **Psychology, Law and Neurodevelopment Research and Policy Group at U of G (PLAN)**

PLAN is inviting youth and young adults between the ages of 12 and 24 with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) to participate in a study. Youth are eligible to participate whether they have had actual contact with the criminal justice system as our study asks about both hypothetical and real-world legal decisions. Youth will be asked to answer questions relevant to their own past experiences. To participate, youth must be able to speak English and must currently reside in Canada.

Interested individuals can email: [PLANLab@uoguelph.ca](mailto:PLANLab@uoguelph.ca) or call 519-824-4120 ext. 53622.

# Information, Opportunities & Resources

## Community News

### Changes to Ministry of Health & Family-Managed Home Care funding

Guardianship is no longer a barrier to accessing Family-Managed Home Care (FMHC) funding. The Ministry of Health (MOH) has officially updated the definition of “Substitute Decision-Maker” in its FMHC Program specifications to include, “an individual managing Ontario government funding from the MCCSS specifically from the Passport Program, Ontario Works, and/or the Ontario Disability Support Program on behalf of the Client who is an adult.”

Together with Community Living Ontario, PooranLaw has been advocating for changes to the MOH policy for over three years. This change took effect on Thursday, September 1, 2022. [Read more](#) to learn how this news impacts people living with a disability and their families.

## Family Alliance Ontario

On behalf of Family Alliance Ontario, we would like to remind everyone that it is time to renew your FAO membership. The membership form can be filled online [on the website](#). If you are not yet a member but would like to be, please review the Family Alliance Ontario Accord. To learn more about FAO, please check out their website at <https://family-alliance.com/> Please contact: [alliance@family-alliance.com](mailto:alliance@family-alliance.com) for further information. Also, save the date for Family Alliance Ontario’s Annual General Meeting. It will be held Saturday, October 29 at 10 am until 12:30 pm through Zoom. If you are an FAO member, updates will be shared via email.

## Inclusion Canada

[\*\*Inclusion Canada is advocating for all federal political parties to fast-track Bill C22\*\*](#), proposed legislation that would create a new Canada Disability Benefit. They are encouraging everyone to send a letter to their federal MP as soon as possible, while the legislation is being debated in the House of Commons. [Click here to find your member of parliament](#) and their contact details. By entering your postal code or just searching by your province you will then find your local MPs and their contact details, including their email address, where you can send an email on the importance of the Canada Disability Benefit and passing Bill C-22. Template letters in English and French can be found at the links below:

[EN letter](#)

[FR letter](#)