

Where exceptional families thrive

Issue 162
October 2023

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What's In This Issue?

As the leaves begin to change and the crisp air settles in, we welcome the arrival of October! This month is often associated with apple picking, pumpkin carving, and giving thanks, but it is also a time to recognize and celebrate the diversity of our community. Special awareness days this month include; Invisible Disabilities Week, Canadian Down Syndrome Week, Learning Disabilities Month, Disability Employment Awareness Month, and more.

As parents of children with exceptionalities, you play a crucial role in promoting inclusivity and advocating for the unique needs of your child.

In this month's Family Pulse, we will highlight resources and events that aim to support you and your family. We hope you find this information helpful and informative as we navigate the fall season together!



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

September's SEAC meeting began with a discussion of the different areas to work on related to SEAC this year. There was a discussion on creating resources to provide information to families about Special Education topics (for example, what an IEP is) to make it easier to understand. There was also talk of the importance of creating more ways for families with students in the Alternative Continuum of Education (ACE) program to connect, particularly because ACE students do not always attend their home school, and some students are not able to report opportunities to connect to their loved ones.

Other updates were also shared included Bill 98, focused on giving notice about Professional Development Days. This Bill requires notice to be put on the School Year calendar two weeks in advance.

There was also a discussion of PPM 169 regarding Student Mental Health. Within this Mandate, the Board needs to plan for Student Mental Health and well-being. It states the board and other school authorities must, "provide culturally responsive, evidence-informed student mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention services that respect students as complex individuals and provide appropriate supports for their diverse needs." Gwen Le Phong, who is now the lead for Social Work and Psychology, including mental health, is working on this along with other team members.

Overall, school start-up was successful. All superintendents went to different schools to be with students on the first day. There have been some transportation issues, but everyone is working hard to resolve them.

Shannon Taylor, who represents Epilepsy South Central Ontario, is the new Chair of SEAC.

The next SEAC meeting will take place on October 11, 2023.

SEAC Updates

Waterloo Catholic District School Board - Special Education Advisory Committee Update
Submitted Erin Sutherland & Karen Applebee

School System Operational Business

L. Garrioch, Senior Manager of Equity Services with WCDSB, provided a presentation on equity services at the board. An overview of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) from the board perspective can be found here: <https://www.wcdsb.ca/wellbeing/equity-diversity-and-inclusion/>

Erin Lemak shared the Professional Development (PD) schedule for the 23/24 school year. For both elementary and secondary, click here for the schedule and topics: <https://www.wcdsb.ca/our-schools/school-year-calendar/>

Erin Lemak shared revisions to the SEAC brochure for committee members to review.

Ministry updates – none.

Association updates were provided and can be viewed within the minutes here: <https://www.wcdsb.ca/programs-and-services/special-education/special-education-advisory-committee-seac/>

Trustee updates – Please see here: <https://www.wcdsb.ca/?s=board+of+trustees>

The next SEAC meeting is October 4, 2023.

Thoughts Leading up to Invisible Disabilities Week

Carmen Sutherland, Coffee Club Coordinator

The other day I was supporting my friend "E" on a call. This friend has both physical and speech exceptionalities. During the call, I waited anxiously to see if the professional woman we were speaking with would speak to E in a condescending way. For the most part, I felt E was treated with the respect she deserves, and I feel I have been treated that way as well for most of my life. I would like to think this is because people are realizing that those of us with visible disabilities are capable people who can speak and make decisions for ourselves.

But I also think of the "other side of the coin" these days. When people see my wheelchair and I tell them I need an accommodation, or simply that I need assistance putting something in my backpack, I am believed. Nobody wonders why I cannot do that myself, or thinks I am lying about my abilities. But what of the person who has light sensitivity, or has trouble remembering things? How does it feel to have people assuming you can complete tasks without accommodations as opposed to assuming you can't? If that were my scenario, I think I would feel even more isolated, knowing that the only way people would "see all of me" is if they chose to.

This month, as we celebrate Invisible Disabilities Week, I pledge to do better at not assuming anything about a person's abilities based upon how they present. I will celebrate every person for who they actually are and meet their needs whenever I can. I know that WRFN strives to do this every day, and that those in our community will do the same.

What's Happening at WRFN

WRFN programs and services are transitioning into being available in person. Supports are also available through phone and email connections and through other virtual formats. 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. Meetings do not require an appointment, but are on a first-come, first-served basis.

DATE	LOCATION	TIME
Oct 10	Early ON Oak Creek 80 Tartan Ave, Kitchener	10-11 am
Oct 11	EarlyON Roger St 161 Roger St, Waterloo	10-11 am
Oct 13	EarlyON Cedar Creek 55 Hilltop Dr, Ayr, ON	10-11:30 am
Oct 17	EarlyON Water St 73 Water St., N., Unit 105 Cambridge	10-11 am
Oct 18	EarlyON St. Boniface 225 Starlight Ave, Breslau	10-11 am



Contact Erin -

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

More dates to come!



www.wrfn.info

WATERLOO REGION FAMILY NETWORK

SATURDAY

14

OCTOBER



11 AM -

4 PM



CAMP DAY 2023





.....

WRFN's Camp Day in partnership with YMCA of Three Rivers has returned! Join us for a chance for children and youth to give camp a try in a safe and supportive environment. This is a drop-in event. A meal will be provided between 1:30 and 2:30 pm with a s'mores dessert at the campfire after.

.....



WATERLOO REGION
Family Network



YMCA of
Three Rivers

CAMP KI-WA-Y

3738 HESSEN STRASSE,

ST. CLEMENTS, ON

Register at www.WRFN-Camp-Day-2023.eventbrite.ca

Register Now!

WATERLOO REGION FAMILY NETWORK PRESENTS A...

HOLIDAY

Cooking Class

FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!

NOVEMBER
4

VIRTUAL CLASS
STARTS AT
5 PM

\$150
FOR WRFN FAMILIES

\$220
FOR COMMUNITY
SUPPORTERS



COOKING LESSON BY THE TEAM AT

THE CULINARY STUDIO

Participants will learn to cook a delectable Mexican meal as a group, with a choice of white or red wine to complement their culinary creations!

Register HERE now!

Register Now!



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 3, 2023 *All About Host Family Home Programs*

Representatives from Extend-a-Family, Christian Horizons and Cambridge Community Living will tell you about the programs they provide and how they work.

A Service Navigator from Developmental Services Ontario will share information about how families can make sure they are on the registry for this program.

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 maryjpike@hotmail.com and ask to be put on our email list.

ANC Continued...

You're invited to the next ANC meeting on Tuesday, October 3 from 7:30 - 9pm (with the Ask Us Anything component from 9 - 9:30 pm) on Zoom.

The ANC group has expressed interest in learning more about how our loved ones can establish a home for themselves beyond the family home. With this in mind, ANC has planned a presentation on Host Family Home (sometimes called Family Home, Life Share, or Associate Home). This is an arrangement where eligible individuals can reside with an individual or family who provide some of the supports they need.

Representatives from Extend-a-Family, Christian Horizons, and Cambridge Community Living will tell you about the programs they provide and how they work.

There will also be a Service Navigator from Developmental Services Ontario present to share information about how families can make sure they are on the registry for this program.

To attend this online meeting, please make sure to RSVP to Mary Pike at maryjpike@hotmail.com to receive the Zoom link.

Preparations for the November meeting:

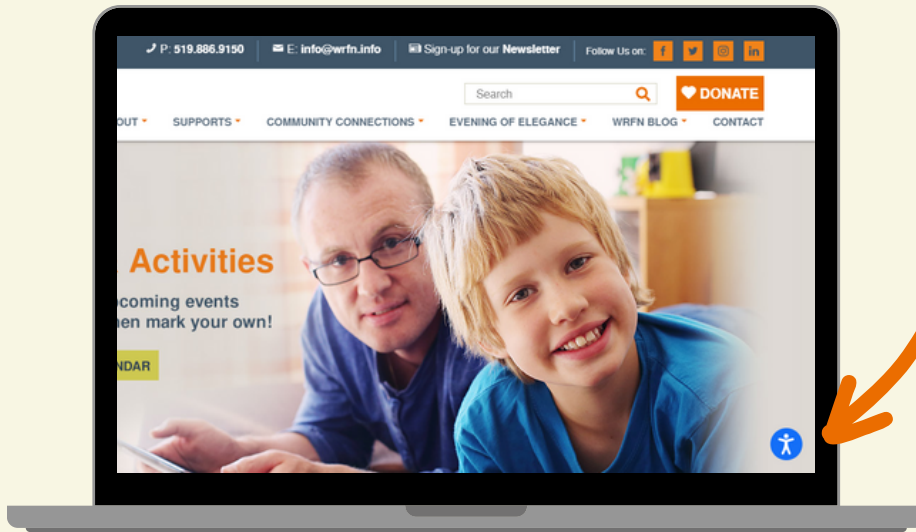
ANC would like to know what you would want to learn from the November 7 speaker, Brendon Pooran. Brendon is a Disability Lawyer who is known to be the definitive word on all things legal for families in the disability community. He is good at addressing questions in group settings. ANC is looking for your input to assist him in his preparations by providing some of your questions in advance of the session.

If you have questions about Wills, Estates, Trusts, Microboards, Power of Attorney, Guardianship, Supported Decision Making Agreements, legal issues related to RDSP, or other broad questions, please send your questions and concerns (as concisely as possible) to Mary at maryjpike@hotmail.com by Friday, October 20.

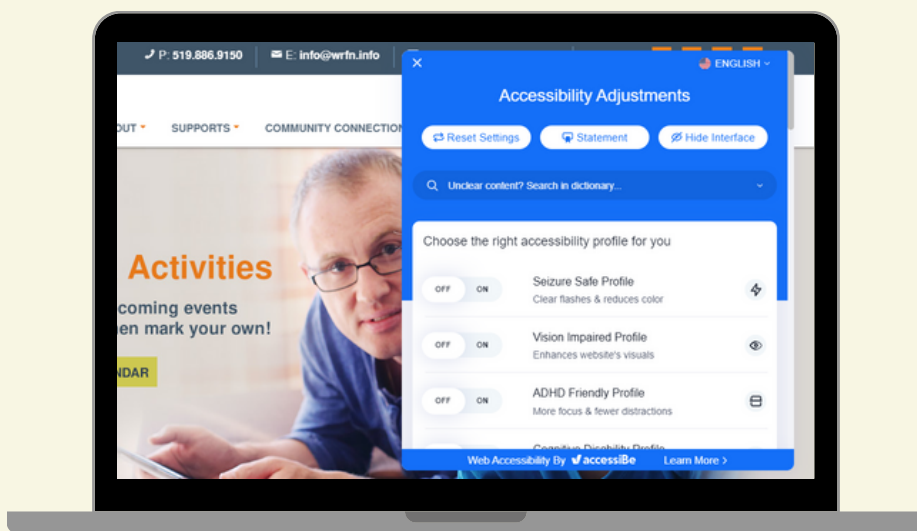
Please note: This is not the place to address specific legal advice for your family. These concerns should be directed to your own lawyer or addressed with Brendon via a personal connection. If you would like to contact Brendon, you can do so via his website

<https://pooranlaw.com>.

Accessibility Improvements to our Website!



Our website just got a bit more accessible! We've integrated AccessiBe's accessWIDGET, an adjustment tool that makes accessibility modifications based on a user's accessibility needs.



Visit www.wrfn.info to give the tool a try!

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 or call 226-753-9090.

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. We will be taking a break over the summer. Our regularly scheduled meetings will return in the fall. For more information, please contact Sue Simpson at Sue.simpson@wrfn.info.

Family Resource Coach

Our Family Resource Coaches are 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.

Call Leah Bowman at 226-898-9301 or email Leah.Bowman@wrfn.info.

Call Marla Pender at 226-338-7274 or email Marla.Pender@wrfn.info.

Coffee Club

Greetings from Coffee Club! We currently meet on Zoom, usually on Thursdays from 3 - 4 pm. Generally, we are just catching up and chatting, mixed with a little bit of watching YouTube. Coffee Club has also started meeting in-person two Mondays each month from 7 to 9 pm. The next get together will be a Halloween movie night at 99 Ottawa Street South (KW Habilitation) October 23.

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.

Programs & Recreation

Cambridge Family Early Years Centre

Cambridge Family Early Years Centre is offering “Young Parents Connect,” a free family program for pregnant and parenting youth, Tuesdays from 1-3 pm. Call the centre for the next session start date. Each week the group cooks a meal to enjoy together and discuss a parenting topic/resource/service that is of interest to the group. At the end of each session, join EarlyON staff for a fun interactive circle time with the children. Cambridge Family Early Years Centre, Unit 105, 73 Water Street North, Cambridge, Ontario.

Shore Centre – Pride and Joy

SHORE Centre is excited to share their newest program “Pride and Joy”—a free prenatal education series for 2SLGBTQIA+ families. Topics include: pregnancy and prenatal planning, labour and birth, comfort measures, postpartum care and planning, newborn care, birthing locally as a 2SLGBTQIA+ family. Pre-registration is required. For more information, call 519-743-9360.

Hope for Families Counselling Centre

Hope for Families Counselling Centre is hosting a monthly social gathering for families with Trans and gender diverse children and teens. Contact holly@hopeforfamilies.net for more information.

P4P - Planning and Facilitation Collaborative

The **Planning and Facilitation Collaborative (PFC)** has gone live! The PFC is a space where professionals and aspiring professionals can gather together to share knowledge and experiences, while also continuing to develop their skills and expertise through a series of online courses on planning and facilitation.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

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>

Sunbeam

Sunbeam's new Recreation & Wellness Program enhances the quality of life of program participants. With a focus on recreation, socialization, inclusion, and community, including both physical and emotional wellness, the Recreation & Wellness team provides fun and engaging programming at various community locations.

- The Recreation & Wellness program is offered as a fee-for-service option to individuals living with a developmental disability.
- Program participation is an eligible activity for the use of Passport Funds, which are intended to address the community participation services and support needs of individuals.
- For all activities and events, participants must be accompanied by their own support person or a family member.

For more information about this program, its calendar of upcoming events, and how to register please click to visit: www.sunbeamcommunity.ca/recreation-wellness-program.

Youth Exploring Possibilities - YEP Social at KW Habilitation

YEP is a social program for youth ages 13-21. The October activity calendar is now available! Join events like a games day, Halloween baking and a costume party. See the [full calendar here](#) and [register here](#).

Fun Fearless Females

Fun Fearless Females offers a variety of supportive services and social events and programs that create a welcoming environment for all women to have fun, try new things (be fearless) and connect with other women. Check out the events calendar to see all the wonderful (and spooky) events happening this October!

<https://www.funfearlessfemales.ca/events>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

OK2BEME

OK2BEME– Families in TRANSition (FIT) is a program for trans, non-binary, and gender-questioning kids and youth ages 5-18 and their parents/caregivers. FIT is open to all adults who play a primary caregiving* role for a trans/non-binary/gender-questioning person aged 5-18. There are separate groups (by age) for the kids and youth that run at the same time in different rooms. If the young person doesn't want to attend or isn't able, the parents/caregivers can still attend the parent/caregiver group. Please visit the [webpage](#) for more info about the FIT program.

*biological, adoptive, kinship, foster, legal guardians, informal caregiving and extended family

Siblings Canada: Savvy Siblings

Siblings Canada, in partnership with PLAN, is delighted to introduce [Savvy Siblings: Strengthening the Financial Security of Your Sibling with a Disability](#). Funded by the Government of Canada, this free online course is for adults who want to play a role in improving the financial security of their siblings with disabilities—whether today or in the future. [Register for Savvy Siblings today!](#)

LCOworks

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.

SPECTRUM Youth Under the Rainbow

Join SPECTRUM across the Region as they read stories, explore art and have fun together in a safe and supported environment for 2SLGBTQIA+ youth, families and allies. Visit <https://wrfn.info/CommunityNewsAndUpdates/Family-and-Youth-Under-the-Rainbow.htm> to see a full list of upcoming events and where to register.

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 get 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](#).

City of Kitchener

Are you an older adult looking to learn about tech? Join one of the [Kitchener Tech Connect](#) courses. Programs are being offered in person at the Downtown, Kingsdale, Chandler Mowat & Doon Pioneer Park Community Centres. These free tech courses are for older adults in our community looking to improve social connections, access to information and digital literacy. [Click here](#) to see upcoming courses and to register!

Keep Your Head Up Foundation

Join Keep Your Head Up Foundation for its new Waterloo Region Youth Mindfulness and Movement program for all ages of individuals living with the effects of traumatic brain injury (there's also a national program available, too). These are free virtual classes to do activities like gentle yoga, meditation, beading, painting and more. Registration is now open! Visit www.KeepYourHeadUp.ca/mindful-moments.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

EarlyON Grandparents Connect

Join an empowering and supportive program specifically for grandparents like you who are residing with and raising grandchildren in today's complex world. This program brings together a compassionate community ready to provide you with the knowledge, resources and emotional support you need to make the most of this important role. Weekly meetings include free childminding, snacks and the opportunity to increase your circle of support! This program is Co-facilitated with Camino Wellbeing + Mental Health. Registration is required for this program. Registration will close each week at 9 am, the Monday before the programs date. Visit www.KEyON.ca for dates, times, and registration.

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 fashioned mail. They mail letters, postcards, colouring sheets, activity sheets, stickers and other fun goodies!

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

City of Cambridge

The City of Cambridge has two new yoga programs for youth: Adaptive Yoga for teens with disabilities (13-21 years) on Wednesdays 6 – 6:50 pm and Girls Only Yoga (10-14 years) on Wednesdays 7-7:50 pm. For the Adaptive Yoga classes, participants can bring a program assistant when using a PAL card and there will also be a Leisure Buddy to support the class. For more info, connect with Jenn at blanchardj@cambridge.ca.

Skills Corner Adult Day Centre

A new program for young adults, located in Kitchener-Waterloo at Forest Hill United Church (121 Westmount Rd E). Have fun, learn new skills, socialize and grow. Register by calling 519-589-4022. Program starts September 5. Team includes Dinorah Romas, PSW and Registered EA and Child Youth Worker. Dinorah has 10+ years of experience working with special needs adults and kids on the spectrum. Georgina Radu has 20+ years of experience in the field, both professionally and personally. She is a registered EA.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Recreational Respite

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!](#)

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>

Oak Bridge Academy - Acknowledging the Sibling Experience

[Acknowledging the Sibling Experience](#) (ASE - pronounced ACE) is a well-being curriculum for siblings of neurodiverse individuals-that is divided into two subgroups (grades 5-8 and grades 9-12). The ASE curriculum incorporates psychoeducational and psychotherapeutic tools that are strategically implemented across the 7-week program. If you are interested in being contacted when ASE opportunities resume (hoping to resume as of October 2023), please visit <https://ow.ly/Oe0150Ppj84>.

Cambridge Food Bank

Cook, stuff, plant, bake and play at the [Cambridge Food Bank!](#) To learn more about and register for programs offered at Cambridge Food Bank, please contact Vanessa Tonic: vtonic@cambridgefoodbank.org 519-622-6550 x109.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Camino Wellbeing + Mental Health

Camino Wellbeing and Mental Health has space in both the School Program and Live-In Program programs for prenatal and postnatal youth (formerly Monica Place).

- Camino Herbert St. School Program in partnership with the Waterloo Region School Board, offers prenatal participants to complete their school credits and participate in prenatal parenting programs, life skills programs, and so much more.
- Intake is open for prenatal and postnatal youth. This 24/7 staff supported live-in program with onsite counseling, prenatal and postnatal programs, life skills programs, parent coaching and so much more. Please contact Andrea (arennie@caminowellbeing.ca or 519-573-7498) if you are interested in learning more or to complete a referral.

CADDAC

Understanding Adult ADHD

ADHD impacts all areas of life, and understanding is a pivotal starting point for moving forward. This new 4-week program, running November 2 -23, is designed for adults who are newly diagnosed with ADHD and are embarking on a personal journey of self-discovery. Join us to unravel the complexities of Adult ADHD in an interactive, supportive, and collaborative environment.

[Visit our Website to register.](#)

H-CARDD

Acceptance and Commitment Training (ACT) for Siblings from Siblings Canada

Join our 6-week ACT workshop for adult siblings of a person with an intellectual disability or autism. The facilitators are siblings of people with intellectual disabilities and autism. This online workshop is spread over five consecutive Wednesday evenings followed by a refresher evening session three weeks later: Oct 4, 11, 18, 25, Nov 1, and 29. 7 - 9 pm. **[Registration is now open.](#)**

If you'd like to learn more about this program, you can watch a short webcast here for more information: **<https://learning.siblingscanada.ca/courses/ACT-for-siblings-info-session>**

Information, Opportunities & Resources

H-CARDD Continued...

ACT Workshop for Fathers in Ontario

This workshop is open to fathers of loved ones with neurodevelopmental disabilities (NDDs) and living in Ontario. This is an experiential workshop co-facilitated by a father of a loved one with an NDD, as well as clinicians. It is important that participants attend all five sessions.

This virtual workshop is offered over five sessions on Wednesdays: Oct 11, 18, 25, Nov 1, 29 from 7 - 9 pm. Interested? Contact Alex Porthukaran at

Alex.Porthukaran@camh.ca.

ECHO Ontario Adult Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities (AIDD): New Program Starts October 20

This program is open to healthcare providers and developmental service professionals with experience working with adults with developmental disabilities. It is a 6-week online program offered every Friday morning from Oct. 20 – Nov. 24, 2023, from 9:30 to 11 am. The curriculum will address the mental health challenges that this population can face as we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. It also supports healthcare providers in applying the 2018 Canadian consensus guidelines on primary care for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

[Register here](#) or visit the [ECHO AIDD website](#) for more information.

New Mindfulness Programs Starting October 2023

Join one of three 6-week Canada-wide virtual mindfulness programs, led by Sue Hutton, a mindfulness teacher with 40 years of experience. These programs were made possible by the Canadian Centre for Caregiving Excellence; there is no cost to participate.

- **[Leaders and Management Professionals in Health, Home Care, and Disability Support Services](#)**: Every Wednesday, Oct. 11 – Nov. 22, 2023, 1 - 2 pm (no session Nov. 8). [View our flyer](#) and [register here](#).
- **[Frontline Professionals in Health, Home Care, and Disability Support Services](#)**: Every Wednesday, Oct. 11 – Nov. 22, 2023, 6:30-7:30 pm (no session Nov. 8). [View our flyer](#) and [register here](#).
- **[Family Caregivers](#)** of individuals with disabilities, those who are aging, and those experiencing a challenging illness. Every Monday, Oct. 16 – Nov. 27, 2023, 1 - 2 pm (no session Nov. 6). [View our flyer](#) and [register here](#).

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Workshops, Training & Events

P4P

Understanding a Trauma-Informed Approach to Support

Please join us on Tuesday, October 3 at 11 am for a webcast presented in partnership by [The Ministry of Children and Community Services](#) and [Partners for Planning](#) - Understanding A Trauma-Informed Approach to Support. This is a webcast designed for professionals supporting people with a developmental disability. In this webcast, Dr. Karyn Harvey introduces the various ways people with a developmental disability experience trauma, the impact this has on people's lives and where service providers can focus their efforts to support healing.

[Understanding A Trauma Informed Approach to Support - October 3 at 11:00 am \(constantcontact.com\)](#)

Strategies for Employment: Preparing, Finding and Retaining Work

The world of work can be an important and meaningful way to build a good life. If you have a loved one with a disability who has employment-focused goals, then this webcast is for you! Join P4P on Tuesday, October 3 at 7 pm to discuss strategies that can support jobseekers who are preparing, or currently searching for job opportunities. They will discuss some ways people can continue to expand on their employment goals even if they have a job already. The webcast includes a live Q&A with panelists.

Register here: [Partners for Planning - Strategies for Employment](#)

The Value of Family-to-Family Connection and Family Networks

For over 75 years, families in Ontario have come together to build better lives for their loved ones with a disability. This webcast on November 7 at 7pm will discuss the power of family-to-family connections and the impact circles of support can have on caregiver's lives and the lives of their loved one with a disability. In addition, it will cover the value of Family Support Networks and their role in providing places for families to meet and connect with one other.

[Partners for planning – The Value of Family to Family Connection and Family Networks \(planningnetwork.ca\)](#)

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Passport Claim Support Virtual Drop-In

Passport Community Development Team & Central West Specialized Developmental Services are hosting a virtual drop-in on October 4 from 12- 1 pm. Have a question about passport claims? Join for a virtual lunch hour drop in where a member from the team can help answer your questions. No registration necessary. If you have any questions, contact Mercedes at mweeks@cwsds.ca.

[Launch Meeting - Zoom](#)

DSO

Bricks and Mortar

Join DSO Housing Navigators on Thursday, October 5 from 2 to 3:30 pm for a free virtual presentation on various types of home ownership options and resources. Topics covered will include: Affordable home ownership, building on what you have, co-ownership and co-housing, tiny homes, condominiums, funding opportunities (that may exist in your area), guides to help you, and the value of partnerships.

[Bricks and Mortar - October 5, 2023 2:00pm-3:30pm \(constantcontact.com\)](#)

Waterloo-Wellington Appointment Based Virtual Drop-In

RSVP for an opportunity to meet with a DSO staff on Wednesday, October 25 between 4 to 7 pm to ask questions, provide updates, and explore service options. [Register now](#).

Conestoga College CICE

Conestoga College CICE (Community Integration Through Co-operative Education) information sessions are here! Join a virtual information session on Zoom to find out more. Information sessions include:

- CICE at the Doon (Kitchener) Campus – October 10 at 6:30 pm.
- CICE at the Brantford Campus – October 17 at 6:30 pm.
- In person open houses to come in December

For more information contact Sara Wardell at swardell@conestogac.on.ca

CADDAC Conference

CADDAC's ADHD Conference, on October 28 and 29, provides information for adults with ADHD, parents and/or caregivers of children with ADHD and their families, as well as educators and allied health professionals.

Venue: Foothills Academy, 745 37 Street NW, Calgary, Alberta T2N 4T1, Canada

<https://caddac.ca/programs-events/caddac-2023-annual-adhd-conference/>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Free Online Life Plan Workshop

Secure an Amazing Future for Your Loved One with a Developmental Disability. This workshop takes place October 17 from 7 – 8:30 pm. In this workshop, you'll discover the 7-Step Life Planning process to support your loved one to:

- Prepare for independence and gain meaningful friendships.
- Be included in their community and create a home of their own.
- Create security so that they are well-cared for when you are no longer able to.

Register at [Free Workshop: Secure the Future for your Loved One \(empoweringability.org\)](https://empoweringability.org)

Microboards – Free Fall Workshops

Register now for the Fall series, which begin in early November. Sessions on governance, employing and contracting staff, financial management and more will be offered via zoom and are geared for those who are already part of a Microboard, or are planning to be. Know someone who's not sure if a Microboard is right for them? They can register for our Introduction to Microboards workshop on November 29. Space is limited for all workshops so register early!

Register here: [MyCommunityHub](https://mycommunityhub.ca)

Canadian Caregiving Summit - Working Together

The Canadian Centre for Caregiving Excellence (CCCE) is hosting the first Canadian Caregiving Summit from November 6 -8, 2023 in Ottawa. This in-person and online event will bring together lived experience experts, leaders, policymakers, and researchers across the age, disability, and illness communities to work together to build the foundation of a national caregiving strategy. For more information and to register, visit the [website](https://www.cccce.ca/summit).

Hold the date: CYPT Annual Forum

The Children and Youth Planning Table (CYPT) Annual Forum is coming back in November! Please hold Monday, November 20 and Tuesday, November 21 in your calendars. More information to come.

Woolwich Counselling

Woolwich Counselling Centre has many great small group therapy sessions and workshops for children, youth, adults, and seniors. See the link below to learn what's new this month! To register, please call 519-669-8651 or email info@woolwichcounselling.org.

<https://woolwichcounselling.org/upcoming-events/>

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.

Breastfeeding Dashboard

Canada's "[Breastfeeding Dashboard](#)" is now available on PHAC's Public Health Infobase platform. Along with this data tool, the first edition of Canada's Breastfeeding Progress Report is available. The data provides an overview of breastfeeding rates in Canada, including information on breastfeeding initiation, duration and exclusivity, examined by various geographic and sociodemographic factors. Reasons for not breastfeeding and reasons for stopping breastfeeding before six months are also presented, as are rates of vitamin D supplementation of breastfed infants. Questions related to the new materials can be directed to: dca_public_inquiries@phac-aspc.gc.ca

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 or email 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>.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Plexus

Plexus is a network of FASD support and services in Waterloo Region. The services of the Plexus team are available to children, youth, and families living with (potential) FASD up until the age of 18 or 21 and still attending school. You must reside in the Waterloo Region. A referral can be made by the individual or their legal guardian. Plexus will also accept referrals from extended family members, family physician, or any agency acting on the individual's/family's behalf if permission to do so has been provided by the individual or their guardian. Referrals can be made here: [Plexus Referral](#)

Positive Behaviour Supports Corporation (PBS Corp.)

PBS provides high quality Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) therapy to children and adults diagnosed with Autism or other qualifying diagnoses. Services are provided in the home, school, and community settings. ABA is implemented in real world situations with the parents being an integral part of ABA therapy. PBS also offers respite services for your family.

<https://www.teampbs.com/>

Family Support Network for Employment

FSNE is a family-led coalition advocating for employment opportunities and jobs in the open labour market for individuals with developmental disabilities who face higher employment barriers.

[Click here to find out their mission and explore resources.](#)

Rainbow Community Calendar

[The Rainbow Community Calendar](#) from SPECTRUM collects 2SLGBTQIA+ events from organizations across Waterloo Region (and sometimes in Guelph-Wellington). SPECTRUM's events will include the name in the title. Please read the details of each event carefully.

Imagine Canada

Imagine Canada has a ton of great resources and information on non-profit and charity sector-related policy in their newsletter, The Early Alert.

<https://bit.ly/3IH2kQg>

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.
- *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](#).
- *Caregiving Communities* : a new portal that provides an easy way for people to search for organizations in their community that can help with: Grocery pick up and delivery, delivery of prepared meals, medication pick-up, social support – friendly phone calls, accessing communication devices like a tablet, mental health support, spiritual support, providing things to do like books, games and crosswords. www.ontariocaregiver.ca/caregivingcommunities

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. To learn more, please visit <https://www.familycompasswr.ca>.

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

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 \(planningnetwork.ca\)](#)

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

EarlyON Onsite Services

EarlyON Centres partner with a variety of community agencies to provide onsite appointments for your child and family. [Learn more.](#)

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Breakaway Passport Services

Breakaway Passport Services is a unique, person-centred approach to providing people with meaningful, engaging, Passport-approved activities. The team at Breakaway has worked in the field of developmental services for over 20 years combined. Their mission is to enhance the experience of people who live with intellectual disabilities by supporting them to engage in their community, develop relationships, pursue interests, and direct their lives. Connect with the team at www.breakawaypassportservices.com, breakawaypassport@gmail.com, or call 519-721-7932.

Indwell

Indwell is a Christian charity creating affordable housing communities to support people seeking health, wellness & belonging. They are one of the fastest-growing developers of new supportive affordable housing in Ontario. Looking for housing? Visit <https://indwell.ca>

Qualia Counselling Services

Qualia Counselling Services is accepting new clients at all six locations with no waitlist. Qualia Counselling Services offers counselling sessions, in person and by telehealth, with skilled clinicians. They offer services for children (5+), adults, families and couples. Qualia Counselling Services provides the most evidence-based interventions to help individuals of all ages become their best self. In addition to therapeutic services, Qualia offers a robust selection of professional development courses, workshops, lunch & learns, bootcamps and CBT supervision to professionals. Follow the link provided for further details. <https://qualiacounselling.com/training/>

Pearson Airport

Pearson Airport has partnered with Autism Ontario and Magnusmode (creator of the Magnus Cards app) to create an activity book to help prepare for travel. The airport also has sunflower lanyards that can be requested to signify the presence of an invisible disability. There are 20 different Magnus Card decks (on phone app) to help navigate aspects of travel. For more Pearson Airport neurodiversity support options, please visit: [Travel tools for autism and other diverse needs](https://traveltoolsforautism.com) | [Pearson Airport \(torontopearson.com\)](https://torontopearson.com)

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. [Join the next Waterloo PCMH meeting on October 18 at 7 pm.](#)

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/>

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 7:15 pm. Go to [apsgo.ca](https://www.apsgo.ca) for more information.

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

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 second and fourth Tuesday of each month from 7 – 8:30 pm 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.

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. 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 on the second Thursday of each month. This is a drop-in group, so folks are welcome to join anytime between 5 and 7 pm. The next meetings will take place Thursday, October 12, November 9, and December 14. If you have any questions, please reach out to Kelly Groh at 519-731-3923 or grohtech@explornet.com.

Virtual Support Group for Adolescents with FASD

The return of the Virtual Support Group for Teens with FASD. This group meets every Wednesday night at 7 – 8:30 pm.
Contact Rob for more information rmacdonald@lutherwood.ca.

CADDAC Support Groups

ADHD Support Groups - Adult ADHD and Parent Support Groups

CADDAC is excited to announce that our ADHD Support groups for both Adult and Parents are now back in session! In addition, we are excited to introduce a new Western Time zone Parent Support Group. You do not need to join the group of the time zone you're in. You can join whichever regional meeting that fits in your schedule.

[Learn more and register!](#)

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Engagement Opportunities

Vulnerable Persons Alert - Support Bill 74

There is a Bill in front of the Provincial legislature right now called Bill 74 Missing Persons Amendment Act. It proposes to amend the Amber Alert system to add vulnerable people - children and adults with disabilities, adults with dementia, other vulnerabilities. The bill passed second reading and is waiting for the Justice Policy Committee to set dates to hear deputations to then pass it in the house. You can help push the government to pass this act! Show your support by emailing your MPP and ask them to pass Bill 74. Sign the petition here:

https://www.moniquetaylormpp.ca/vulnerable_persons_alert

Infant & Child Studies Group at University of Waterloo

Infant and Child Studies Group is a group of researchers interested in better understanding child cognition: so how kids learn! All studies are designed as games for children to play while we observe how they respond to various toys, videos, or sounds. The activities are fun for the kids, and help us understand concepts like how children learn new words, when children can begin to understand math, or what learning strategies kids use to understand new concepts. We deliver studies in person, as well as online and in take-home formats. Learn more or sign up at: <http://uwaterloo.ca/infant-and-child-studies-group/>

Autism & Mental Health Services – Focus Group Participants Needed

The Counselling Collaborative of Waterloo Region (CCWR) is a collective of five nonprofit counselling agencies that together are aiming to improve the quality and integration of mental health services for Autistic Youth & their families. Looking to hear from:

- Autistic Youth
- Caregivers of Autistic Youth & Children
- Mental Health Professionals (Social Workers, Psychotherapists)
- Allied Health Professionals (Behaviour Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Speech Pathologists)

The aim of the focus groups is to hear about your experiences accessing and navigating supports as caregivers, autistic youth, and health professionals. Your voices will help to shape how we provide neurodivergent mental health services and work with community partners in the future.

Please email Kelly.reitzel@woolwichcounselling.org to participate.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Laurier University

Volunteers are needed for a Laurier University students' research study on the lived experiences of parents with children with developmental disabilities navigating the school system. They are looking for parents or caregivers of a child with a developmental disability using the public school system in Ontario. Participants will complete a background questionnaire (5-10 minutes) and a one-on-one semi-structured interview (30-90 minutes). Participants will also be able to add, remove or clarify any information shared during the interview by reviewing the transcript. To participate, please contact dias8170@mylaurier.ca.

Health Nexus: The Confidence Project

The "Confidence Project" aims to deliver to pregnant, breast/chest feeding Canadians, and those planning to become parents vaccine information to better able to make informed decisions about the COVID-19 vaccine for themselves and their families. The Confidence Project seeks breast/chest feeding, pregnant people, planning to be or new parents to respond anonymously to our survey on the COVID-19 vaccine, before, during pregnancy or while nursing a baby. To respond to the survey in English, French, Tamil, Hindi, Gujarati, Punjabi and Arabic, [click here](#).

SickKids – Infant and Early Mental Health Promotion

Infant and Early Mental Health Promotion: if you are a researcher or community builder, please take a moment to [complete this survey](#) and help inform the development of new ways to communicate child development to parents.

Perinatal Mental Health Survey

Are you a parent/guardian of a child born in or after 2018, or are you currently expecting a child? Do you live in the Waterloo region? The Research Shop and Perinatal Mental Health Alliance in the Region of Waterloo want to hear from you. Share your experiences in talking about mental health with medical health professionals by [answering this short survey](#).

LDAWC

The LDAWC (Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County) is asking for parent feedback through a [quick 5-minute survey](#). The survey results will help the LDAWC plan and build workshops and programs that can better support our community and the families that are working to advocate for every child to reach their full potential.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Access Recognition Awards

The **Guelph Barrier Free Committee** is excited to announce that the Access Recognition Awards are back! The ARAs are nomination based, and there are two categories:

1. Outstanding Contribution of an Individual or a Business:

- This category recognizes an individual (or a group of individuals) who has made an outstanding contribution above and beyond the expectations and requirements of the current Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) **Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation** (IASR) by recognizing, removing and/or preventing barriers for individuals with disabilities recognize individuals or businesses who have made an outstanding contribution above and beyond the , and outstanding accomplishments of individuals.

1. Outstanding Accomplishment of an Individual:

- This category recognizes an individual (or a group of individuals) with a disability who has/have overcome personal barriers to accomplish or fulfill a goal or a dream.

Nominations will open on Tuesday, September 5 and close on Tuesday, October 10 (6 weeks).

CADDAC: ADHD in the Workplace

Is your company looking to learn more about Neurodiversity in the workplace? CADDAC's new ADHD workshop is designed for Managers and HR Professionals working with people with ADHD.

By the end of the workshop, participants will have a deeper understanding of ADHD and how it can impact work performance, as well as practical tools and strategies to ensure employees with ADHD are able to thrive in the workplace. If your company is interested, please contact us for more information!

[Learn more](#)

WRDSB

The WRDSB is building a public education system where every student can experience success - but, they can't do it alone! These three new engagement plans will allow them to better hear from the students, families and community members they serve: <https://wrdsb.social/468vSsf>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

OMSSA Recreation Providers Survey

This Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA) survey collects baseline information about recreational care availability across Ontario. Results will help identify gaps in provision, staffing and funding across the province.

[Take the OMSSA Recreation Providers Survey here.](#)

Laurier University Study

Engaging communities in developing culturally relevant solutions to autism service disparities. Are you a service provider with a minimum of 1 year experience working directly with autistic children and or caregiver of autistic children from newcomer or indigenous families? Researchers at Laurier would like to hear from you. Participation in this study will take approximately 2 hours and all participants will receive \$100 gift certificate of their choice or cash e-transfer. If you're interested, please contact larc@wlu.ca.

CanChild

Researchers at CanChild Centre for Childhood Disability Research have developed a new questionnaire to measure parents' experiences with healthcare services for their children with disabilities. Now we would like to have parents test it out and share their feedback! Complete a set of questions to tell us about your experiences with healthcare services. You will receive a \$20 e-gift card upon completion! Interested in participating? Want more information? Please email the study team at mpoc2@mcmaster.ca.

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) Lab at Queen's University

The ASD Lab at Queen's University is running an online study called the Tone of Voice study. We are trying to better understand how youth perceive emotions through tone of voice. We are seeking youth with and without autism between the ages of 13-18 to participate in our study. The study takes about 75 minutes to complete over Zoom with an experimenter, and youth will be compensated \$30 for their time. If you have question or would like to participate, please contact Daniel at tov.study@queensu.ca.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Accessibility Standards Canada

Public Review of Draft Accessibility Standard on Employment

Review the draft accessibility standard on employment!

- **[CAN-ASC-1.1 Standard on Employment](#)**

The goal of this standard is to address work-related barriers caused by both individual actions and systems. This standard envisions a work environment that is accessible, inclusive, and barrier free. It imagines a place that is free of discrimination, regardless of a worker's (dis) abilities. We want your feedback!

Please **[send us your input](#)**.

Key requirements of the standard

This standard will:

- Develop organizational systems, policies, and practices. Develop structural supports and show leadership
- Engage, educate, and create a supportive culture in the work environment
- Create a disability management system. Accommodate the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities in the work environment
- Identify, prevent, and remove barriers encountered during recruitment, hiring, and onboarding
- Identify, prevent, and remove barriers encountered in worker retention, professional development, pay equity (compensation), performance management, and job separation

Please consult the **[draft standard on our website](#)**. Your feedback will help ensure that our accessibility standard effectively removes and prevents barriers. Leaning on the knowledge and lived experience of a diversity of stakeholders, including people with disabilities, leads to better standards.

The public review will run until Tuesday, October 17, 2023, at 11:59 pm.

Options to provide feedback

You can provide your feedback on the draft standard using one of the following methods:

- **[Complete the online form](#)** on our website.
- Download the **[fillable form in a PDF format](#)** and send it to us by email, along with any related files.
- Submit your comments in text, audio, or video format.

You can find all the necessary instructions on how to send us your feedback on our **[website](#)**.

Should you need any assistance with this public review process or have questions, please **[contact us by email](#)**.

[View this message in French.](#)

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Community News

EarlyON

Extended hours at some EarlyON | Waterloo Region locations will be coming into effect as of September first. This includes Saturday hours at EarlyON | Roger Street, EarlyON | Water Street, and EarlyON | Oak Creek.

2022 Early Years and Child Care Profile

The Region of Waterloo, Children's Services has recently published the [2022 Early Years and Child Care Profile](#) (EYCC Profile), which is fully accessible and available electronically on the Children's Services website, as linked above. The EYCC Profile provides a snapshot of Early Years and Child Care programs and services in Waterloo Region for 2022. If you have any questions about the data or information, please reach out to CHSAdmin@regionofwaterloo.ca