



Family Pulse

Where exceptional families thrive.

Issue 115 November
2019

What's in this issue?

Inside this issue:

| | |
|--|---|
| SEAC Updates | 2 |
| What's Happening at WRFN? | 3 |
| Coffee Club Update | 5 |
| Creative Ideas to Foster Communication | 6 |
| Upcoming Community Events | 8 |

It's November. Hopefully you are enjoying the changing of the seasons. In this issue we have an article about unique ideas to help people and families communicate, a reminder about our A New Chapter group, as well as our usual SEAC updates. Additionally, don't forget to check out What's Happening at WRFN and Upcoming Community Events.



Support WRFN Today

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

SEAC Updates

Waterloo Region District School Board - Special Education Advisory Update

Submitted by Carmen Sutherland, WRFN SEAC Representative

First the EQAO results were discussed. Some results to note include that the Board is up 6% in Grade 3 reading scores and 1% in Grade 6 reading scores since implementing the 2016 Strategic Plan in terms of students who passed, although they are still below the provincial average for these measures. The OSSLT (grade 10 literacy test) results are down 3% first time eligible and 5% for previously eligible students but these scores are right around the provincial standard. The most significant improvement was the Grade 9 Applied Math which saw a 12% improvement from 2016 scores and is above the provincial standard. Grade 9 Academic Math was also up 5% from 2016 score and exceeds the provincial standard. The Board also reached its operational goal of 85% graduation rate in 2018, and they have a plan to get to a 100% graduation rate which includes supporting indicators such as having eight credits in Grade 9 and being successful in the EQAO in reading, math, and writing.

There was also discussion of policy and procedures for off-campus experiences and SEAC gave its opinion on both with the focus on making accessibility top of mind in planning trips.

Waterloo Catholic District School Board - Special Education Advisory Update

Submitted by Sue Simpson, WRFN SEAC Representative

At the October 2, 2019 SEAC meeting, John Klein, Superintendent of Learning, presented on the Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement (BIPSA) and the School Improvement Plan for Student Achievement (SIPSA).

The 2019-2020 BIPSA is Year 1 of the Board's renewed three-year BIPSA. BIPSA is informed by Ministry of Education priorities, curricula updates, budgets, etc. and by the Institute for Catholic Education's (ICE) Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations. The following link outlines the 2019-2020 BIPSA.

<https://www.wcdsb.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/36/2017/01/WCDSB-BIPSA.pdf>

Like the BIPSA, the SIPSA has a basic starting point: knowing the needs of the learner. From this, all else flows: choice of strategies, wise use of data, resource selection and use, capacity building, and monitoring. The SIPSA should connect to the school's Pastoral Plan. SIPSAs are at the heart of the superintendent/principal/vice-principal/SIT dialogues.

Ministry Updates

There were no Ministry updates.

Trustee Updates

Trustees Tracey Weiler and Jeanne Gravelle presented September Trustee updates at the meeting. The following link outlines these updates.

<https://www.wcdsb.ca/wcdsb-board-meeting-bulletin-september-2019/>

Association Updates were also shared.

The next WCDSB SEAC meeting will be on Wednesday, October 30 at 6 pm at the Catholic Education Centre.

What's Happening at WRFN...



A NEW CHAPTER

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

RSVP to Mary Pike would be appreciated,
maryjpike@hotmail.com.

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

SEPTEMBER 3
Summer Review &
Fall Transitions -
success or challenge?

OCTOBER 1
Planning for a Crisis -
a supportive
conversation to share
individualized
planning tools and
strategies to
minimize crisis

NOVEMBER 5
Post Secondary
Education -
tips and resources

**Doors open at
6:30pm,
meetings run from
6:45 - 8:30PM at
The Family Centre
65 Hanson Ave., Kitchener
**Bring your own
reusable water bottle or
tea thermos****



What's Happening at WRFN...

We have a broad number of resources to help you and your family thrive! Please visit www.wrfn.info for a full list of our supports.

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. Meet with Cristina to discuss your own questions and concerns to gain new insights and ideas. This program is open to individuals with disabilities, families, or service providers. For more information on Ask A Self-Advocate please contact Cristina Stanger at Cristina.Stanger@wrfn.info.

To request a booking please complete the [request form](#)

Kaleidoscope Kids—Kaleidoscope Kids is a free drop-in program. There is no age limit, and you are encouraged to bring your children with exceptionalities, siblings, or come by yourself.

Kaleidoscope Kids meets every Friday (except July and August) from 10-11:30am. Learn more [here](#).

School-Issue Parent Support Group—Do you have questions/concerns about school issues for your child/youth with exceptionalities?

Join us at our peer-led parent support group. This is a great opportunity to share questions, concerns and successful tips in a safe environment while learning from others. The support group is held the last Wednesday of every month (except June, July and December). Learn more [here](#).

WRFN Outreach at EarlyON Child & Family Centres

Through our partnership with the local EarlyON centres, we are pleased to provide monthly drop-in support at EarlyON centres throughout the region. Erin is available to meet individually to discuss your concerns, no need to book an appointment. The EarlyON schedule can be found [here](#).

What's Happening at WRFN

Autism in High School

“[Autism in High School](#)” is a web-based guide to help students with Autism Spectrum Disorder and their families as they navigate the transitions and common challenges of high school. This website was developed as a joint initiative between Extend-A-Family, Waterloo Region Family Network, members of the former Autism Services Waterloo Region, the Waterloo Region District School Board, the Waterloo Catholic District School Board, and the University of Waterloo with generous funding from the [Sifton Family Foundation](#)

Coffee Club Updates

Monday, November 11, 7 to 9 P. M. Moose Winooski's (20 Heldmann Rd, Kitchener, ON N2P 2J1.) We will be having dinner together, please bring your own money for dinner.

Monday, November 25, 7 to 9 P. M. Beaver Creek Housing Co-op (590 Bearinger Rd., Waterloo). The Studio was not available, so we will be watching *The Incredibles 2* in Lyn's community centre. Please arrive right at 7 as the movie is two hours long. I'll bring popcorn, bring snacks and drinks if you wish, but it is not necessary.

If you need to get ahold of me, do not hesitate to contact me at 519-500-7153 or carmen.sutherland@wrfn.info.

Creative Ideas to Foster Communication

By Cristina Stanger, Self-Advocacy Liaison WRFN

Effective communication and emotional expression can be difficult, even at the best of times. The upcoming holiday season adds extra stress and strain to relationships; it is an overwhelming time for most, making communication both more important and harder to do.

No person exists in a vacuum. We are all impacted by various elements throughout our day: a good night's sleep, a pleasant visit with a friend, getting stuck in traffic, forgetting to take medication, a nice walk, a substitute personal support worker, a disagreement with a coworker, a favourite meal, an unexpected change in routine, etc. All of these types of things impact how we are feeling, and in turn, affect how much energy we will have to invest in communication with other people.

Communication challenges related to various exceptionalities can further complicate things. Perhaps you (or your loved one) are unable to communicate verbally. Perhaps you struggle to identify and express emotions. Perhaps your ability to read non-verbal cues is not as strong as you would like, leaving you with missing information. When I work with different individuals and families, finding more effective ways to communicate comes up often in discussion, particularly when trying to understand each other's feelings. Here are some creative ideas you and your family may wish to explore:

Be general if you cannot be specific

Simply saying, "Something is wrong, but I am not ready to talk about it yet" gives loved ones an idea that you are working through something challenging, but also allows time to process things. Personally, I have needed as much as three days of time before I could even articulate what had happened to upset me.

- Consider a signal system, such as a red, yellow, and green rock with a designated meaning, along with a specified location where you leave whichever rock best represents how you are feeling or how capable you feel to communicate. This gives family a general guideline about how best to interact with you at that particular time.

Be patient and gently check-in with each other, if possible

- As I have trouble picking up some non-verbal cues, sometimes I misinterpret the demeanor of a loved one, usually assuming I've inadvertently done something to upset them. These days, I try and check-in with that person first before jumping to a conclusion. I've found the question, "What are you thinking about?" to be very effective - 95% of the time my family member is caught up in thought about something completely unrelated to me.
- Accept "I don't know" as a viable answer about how someone feels. Notice the question above isn't "How are you feeling?" because sometimes finding the word for an emotion, or isolating the main feeling, is a real challenge for some individuals. In some cases, consulting with a professional psychological support can be helpful when processing important events or if you desire coaching on how to more effectively process your emotions.

Be creative and utilize a different medium to express yourself

- Use the words of others who have been there to help guide you. Personally I've found reading works by authors who share my diagnosis to be, not only validating, but effective tools to explain what my exceptionality can mean in different situations. By finding short, accessible articles and memoirs, highlighting the sections I relate to (even making notes in the margins) and then sharing these with family members willing to read them, I have been able to give them some insight, even when I cannot explain something myself.
- If you want to express your own feelings or ideas, but conversation or written word does not suit you, consider selecting/creating some other art form to communicate important ideas to the people you care about. For example, find a scene from a movie relevant to how you feel, make a collage of images, create a music playlist, etc.

Be strategic and set the stage for success

- Allow time (hours or days, not just minutes) for emotional processing before discussing something that is emotionally charged. Give advance notice to discuss something important - avoid conversations that take someone by surprise when possible. For example, "I noticed you seemed upset about what happened at dance class today. I'd like to talk about it with you sometime, would Thursday after school be an okay time?"
- A shared activity, particularly one where the participants are situated side-by-side, can be an effective environment to converse. The joint activity gives a starting point for the conversation, face-to-face interaction isn't expected/necessary, and pauses in conversation are not as awkward. Going for a walk together, or going out for a car ride are my personal favourites.

Please bare in mind, this is not an exhaustive list. And as always, you know yourself and your family best, so these ideas are merely food for thought. I am not a perfect communicator, if anything, writing this article has reminded me about areas I would like to work on in my own life. I hope they've sparked something for you to consider as well..

Upcoming Events

Here at WRFN, we are community oriented and committed to connecting families to local events and learning opportunities.

The information provided in this newsletter is not a recommendation, referral or endorsement of any resource, therapeutic method, or service provider. You are urged to use independent judgement when considering any resource.

EVENTS

Sensitive Santa

This special time to visit with Santa is reserved for children with social, emotional or behavioral needs. This sensory-friendly environment provides lower lighting and quieter surroundings.

To keep this event sensory friendly and organized, we ask that each family register in advance. Space is limited.

Events run Sundays: Nov 24, Dec 1, Dec 8 and Dec 15

If you know a child that would benefit from this event, please contact hylandr@cambridge.ca or call 519-740-4680 ext. 4292 to register.

Understanding the Sensory World Around You (USWAY)

USWAY is an education workshop, presented by an Occupational Therapist and developed for parents/caregivers of children that are experiencing sensory processing difficulties. The workshop will provide you with an understanding of our senses, explain how we typically react to sensory experiences and provide some general strategies on how to cope with sensory experiences in everyday life.

KidsAbility is pleased to offer this workshop to anyone interested in attending. Professionals who would like to learn more about sensory processing are welcome to join as well.

Wednesday, November 6, 2019 Time: 6-8 P. M. (Waterloo)

Wednesday, November 13, 2019 Time: 6-8 P. M. (Guelph)

Please go to this link for more information:

<https://www.kidsability.ca/school-yearssensory-world-around-you-usway-registration-76040596471>

Healing Together

Working Through Our Grief and Loss

For frontline workers and peers of people who use substances
Increase awareness of the impacts of grief and loss on our clients and ourselves

Help to work effectively in the presence of grief and loss

Tools and coping processes for maintaining well-being

November 26, 5:30-8:30 P. M.

Guelph, CHC Community Room

November 28, 2019

12:30-3:30 P. M., Kitchener Public Library

Stay tuned for registration on Eventbrite

Upcoming Events

Sensory-Friendly Screenings

Cineplex Entertainment in partnership with Autism Speaks Canada is delighted to present Sensory Friendly Screenings. This program provides a sensory-friendly environment for individuals with autism spectrum disorder or anyone for whom the environment is suitable and their families to view new release films in theatres across the country.

Upcoming film(s):

November 30—[Frozen 2](#)

Autism Ontario Events

There are many events happening with Autism Ontario all over the region. For more information, please go to www.autismontario.com/events

Upcoming Events

Preemie POWWR Chat and Play Group

Join other parents of children born prematurely, talk openly about your questions and concerns among a group who understands. Bring your children along for interaction with other preemies at different stages.

Upcoming Events:

Our Place Family Resource Centre, 9:30-11:30a.m. (65 Hanson Ave. Kitchener) - November 16

Cambridge Family EarlyON 9:30-11:30am (105-73 Water St. N. Cambridge) - November 18

Find their regular events and special annual events on their Facebook page including a World Prematurity Day Celebration November 16 and 17

<https://www.facebook.com/preemiepowwr/>

Contact Carolyn at preemiepowwr@gmail.com to learn more.

Programs and Recreation

Just Hangin' Out

The Just Hangin' Out program (Youth 13-21) will take place at the Chaplin Family YMCA, Teen Drop in Centre located at 250 Hespeler Road. This program is designed to provide a safe and inclusive place where youth with developmental disabilities can develop character building, health and wellness, and life skills while socializing with peers. This program runs for 10 weeks.

Winter Session: January 14 – March 10

For information contact meloh@cambridge.ca, 519 740-4680 ext.4369

Cost \$80 + supply fee

Guelph Bulldog

Bulldog's Cooking Program

This program allows children to learn, prep and create foods depending on the themes such as international or seasonal!

4 week activity program, Tuesdays 6:30-8 P. M.

Ages 8-12

Cost \$80 + supply fee

Click [here](#) for more information

Neighbourhood Nature Play Project After School Programming

Join our Nature Play Animators at Kingsdale Park and Gzowski Park for FREE nature-based programming designed to help children and their families connect with nearby nature through games, activities, and crafts that draw attention to the natural and built elements of their neighbourhood parks.

Come out and explore and experience nature with us through fun, open-ended programming that allows kids to be the architects of their own play!

Tuesdays from 3:00-5:30 P. M. Kingsdale Park (**Last day November 12**) Wednesdays 3:00-5:30 PM Gzowski Park (**Last day November 13**)

To stay up to date with the program join our community of "Nature Play-ers" on Facebook and email zstevens@evergreen.ca.

Upcoming Events

Skating

The Cambridge Sports Park is offering weekly skating for persons with physical and developmental disabilities. This is a great opportunity to practice your skating skills or develop a new skill while socializing with peers.

Support and accommodation needs must be arranged by the individual attending. Supports persons and caregivers will not be charged the skating fee.

For more information contact Brian Hood, 519-622-4494 or Brian@cambridgesportspark.com

Monarch House Social Groups

Lego Club—A collaborative play therapy group where children work in teams to build Lego. Intended for children with ASD ages 5-8. Starting September 24, 2019.

Homework Club—Involves collaborative group work through completion of a group project. Participants will be given different roles each week and will learn essential skills such as problem solving, compromising, conversation skills, and team work. Starting September 26, 2019.

Both groups are located at Monarch House, 630 Weber St. N, Suite 2014, Waterloo.

To learn more about these programs contact Shawna Fleming at sfleming@monarchhouse.ca.

Social Group for Teens with ADHD and/or Asperger's/ASD

The ADHD & Asperger's Centre in Guelph is running a 5 week social group for teens from 13 - 16 yrs old who have ADHD and/or Asperger's/ASD.

November 9-December 7

You will meet every week for two hours to:

- Learn social skills
- Discuss dating issues
- Have fun
- Play games

- Make friends with other youth with neurodiversity

This group is run by Coach Kate, an ADHD & Asperger's/ASD specialized coach with ADHD and symptoms of Asperger's herself.

Learn more about this opportunity on their [website](#).

Upcoming Events

Speech and Language Musical Groups from Waterloo Region Down Syndrome Society Beginning November 4

The group would be co-facilitated by a Certified Music Therapist and a Communicative Disorders Assistant. We would focus on building language and social skills between participants while developing an outlet for creative music communication. Participants in each group would engage in a variety of music & language activities working towards achieving goals identified by the families and the therapists together. Weekly feedback would be provided to the families regarding their child's participation.

For more information and to register please click [here](#).

Community of Hearts Programs

Therapeutic Improv

This program uses improv theatre as a therapeutic technique for building confidence, social skills, and enhancing well-being. Develop personal and professional growth through self expression, creative thinking and problem solving. Improv is an incredible communication skill-building tool and so much fun! Join in this great program this autumn, no experience necessary!

Fridays: Nov 1st – Dec 20th

3:30pm – 5:30pm

Fee: \$200 (Passport Funding Friendly)

Register today:

Call the Lifelong Learning Centre (519-826-9056) or send us an email at info@communityofhearts.ca to register.

The Brunch Club

DO YOU LOVE BRUNCH? ☐

Our new BRUNCH CLUB program gives you the tools and freedom to create brunch meals independently for yourself or friends.

With the support of a Life Skills Educator, visual cookbook and colour coded measuring tools, making brunch has never been easier! Learn to make brunch meals with the group, enjoy the meal with friends and gain kitchen confidence to cook for yourself!

Wednesdays: Oct 30 – Dec 18

3:30pm – 5:30pm

Fee: \$200 (Passport Funding Friendly)

Email us at info@communityofhearts.ca to register!

Upcoming Events

Sky Zone Sensory Jumps

Sky Zone will turn off the music and dial down the distractions for the comfort and pleasure of their exceptional guests, friends and families.

Sensory Jumps are held every Thursday from 4:00pm - 5:00pm

Sky Zone will do their best to make every effort to accommodate all jumpers.

Please call us at 519-804-4455 if you have any questions.

Cost: \$15 + tax each, chaperones are free.

Gym Drop-In for Youth

The Family Centre runs a drop-in gym program Monday evenings from 7-8:30 p.m. This program is for youth ages 10-17. This is a great opportunity to get active, have some fun and try out different sports. Don't forget your running shoes!

For more information contact [Caitlyn Morton](#)

Our Place Family Resource and Early Years Centre

Our Place has shared their [November calendar](#).

Check out all the great programs they have running!

Upcoming Events

WORKSHOPS/TRAINING

Facilitation Leadership Workshop

“Building a New Story”

Would you like to help people build meaningful lives in community?

Are you creative and passionate about inclusion?

Join us 9:30 - 4:30, November 26, 2019 and January 14, 2020, and for four 1.5 hour webinars on December 5, and December 19, 2019, and January 2, and January 9, 2020

This small group (up to 10 person) workshop will provide a foundation to learn and practice how to facilitate and plan with people to live everyday lives of their choosing, to explore their gifts and strengths, and how they can use these to participate in community life. **Niki Stevenson of Facilitation Leadership Group**, will guide you through topics such as New Story* values and principles, self-determination, discovering gifts and contributions, building relationships, creating support networks, community exploration and connecting, capacity building, and planning for an everyday life

*John Lord and Charlotte Dingwall

Cost: \$400 (light lunch and refreshments included)

Location: Newmarket Public Library, 438 Park Ave, Newmarket, ON L3Y 1W1

Registration and Information: Niki Stevenson, email: facilitationlg@gmail.com; phone: 519 581 7853

Website: www.facilitationleadership.com

WRDSS Evening Speaker Series Presents:

Date: November 7, 2019

Educational Advocacy, the IEP and the IPRC with Ed Mahony

DATE: Thursday November 7, 2019

TIME: 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

WHERE: Zehrs - Imperial (1045 Paisley Rd, Guelph), Second Floor - PC Cooking School

COST: Members \$5 each, Non-Members \$15 each

After his presentation there will be a Q&A, as well as refreshments and socializing.

*Please note childcare is not provided for this event!

For More Information please click [here](#)

Upcoming Events

Strategies for Understanding FASD Behaviour with Karmen Krahn

November 9, 2019

9 A.M.-5 PM (registration begins at 8:15 am).

Register at <http://bit.ly/peelfasd>

Cost: \$14

Description: An opportunity for parents, caregivers and others who work with people with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder to gain a deeper understanding of the physiological roots of challenging behavior. Participants will leave with a comprehensive framework into which your best practices already fit, and some wildly practical strategies for bringing your hunches and assessments to life.

Programs Offered at DSRC

Cyber Bullying and Internet Safety

November 8, 2019

10:00 A. M. 12 P. M.

Register for this event [here](#).

Anxiety and Autism Spectrum Disorder

Presenter: Jessica Gambacort, B.A., BCaBA

Tuesday, November 12, 1:00 PM-3:00 PM, Developmental Services Centre, Training Room

Many individuals with ASD struggle with some level of anxiety. This workshop will help participants gain a better understanding of anxiety, how it presents in individuals with ASD, common triggers as well as prevention and intervention techniques.

Register by November 8, for this event and get more information [here](#).

Parenting Individuals with Autism

Presenter: Stuart Lamont, B.S.D., RSSW

Thursday, December 12, 2019 – Part One and Thursday, December 19, 2019 – Part Two

9:30 AM to 1:30 PM.

9:30 AM- 1:30 PM

The objectives of Helping Children with Autism Navigate the Social World reflect the premise that parents and caregivers need information resources and educational materials to help them develop social skills programming for children and adults who have autism. Topics covered include:

Developing an Action Plan

Identifying Core Skills

Developing a Social Skills Profile

Generating useful Strategies

Exploring ways to Observe Behaviour & Identify Alternative Behaviour

Understanding Behaviour within the context of Social Skills

A model of Skill Learning will be presented. This is a two part course. You must take Part One to understand Part Two

Register By December 10, 2019 for this event and get more information [here](#).

Upcoming Events

Speech-Language Pathology Clinics at DSRC

For DSRC clients, living in Waterloo Region,

with an Intellectual Disability and/or Autism Spectrum Disorder, over the age of 6 years.

Please call the Information Resource Assistant at DSRC (519 741 1121) to make an appointment:

One and half an (1.5) hour appointment times are available on the following dates:

Tuesday, Nov 26, 2019

The Speech-Language Clinic is an individualized one hour appointment for a caregiver and client to meet with a Speech-

Language Pathologist and address the following areas:.

Communication skills

Speech

Language

Comprehension

Social skills

Conversational skills

Apps for communication and learning

Augmentative and alternative forms of communication

Visual cues for comprehension or communication

At the clinic you will be expected to identify one or two goals and consultation/resources will be provided to address those goals

Information Session on Early Communication & Development

A free information session on early communication and child development. Presented by Monarch House with a Speech-Language Pathologist and Behavioural Analyst.

No registration necessary.

Contact Monarch House for more information at 519-514-5770 or waterloo@monarchhouse.ca

Upcoming Events

Rise Up Family Conference

More than 20 leading experts from Canada, the United States, and other countries (such as Kenya) are coming to see you! With their wealth of knowledge from research, teaching and personal experiences, they will provide insightful, culturally meaningful knowledge for parents, parents-to-be, caregivers, and service providers to be effective leaders in their own homes and communities.

Saturday, November 9, University of Guelph

[Learn more about this event.](#)

Upcoming Workshops at Bridges to Belonging

Enhancing Belonging

Two half-day workshops on how we can build welcoming communities for ourselves, neighbours and our wider community. Featuring Dr. John Lord

NOV 19, 2019 - 6:30 to 9:00 pm

Registration at 6:00pm

For more information or to register click [here](#) for November 19.

Location: 99 Regina Street S. Waterloo

Upcoming Events

RESOURCES

Clinics at KidsAbility

Starting in October, we will be offering new clinics for KidsAbility families with children ages 4-5 (born in 2014 or 2015). These clinics will include:

- **School Years Sensory Clinic:** Occupational Therapists will provide parents/caregivers with strategies so that they can support their child, who has sensory processing difficulties, participate in their daily activities at home and in the community. If your child has significant behaviours or emotional responses to sensory input by becoming overwhelmed, distressed, or difficult to engage in daily activities, this may be the right service for you. Clinics will be offered in November at our Waterloo, Kitchener, Cambridge and Guelph sites.
- **School Years Check-In Clinic:** An opportunity to “check-in” with an Occupational Therapist (OT), Physiotherapist (PT) or both regarding concerns you may have about your child’s physical functioning. This clinic is for clients who have met with an OT or PT at KidsAbility in the past regarding a physical concern. Clinics will offered starting in October at our Waterloo, Kitchener, Cambridge and Guelph sites.
- **School Years Funding Clinic:** An opportunity to meet with a Social Worker for a brief appointment for guidance on accessing funding and community supports related to your child's special needs.
- **School Years Adapted Bike Day:** For families who have tried an adapted bike through our equipment loan program or are interested in exploring whether an adapted bike will meet your child's needs. This is an opportunity to meet with a Physiotherapist and bike vendors to try out an adapted bike and to begin the process of purchasing your own bike.

School Years Recreation Consults: For parents/caregivers who would like information on community-based recreation, sport, and camp programs as well as specialized supports that will help your child to participate. You will receive an email or phone call from a Recreation Therapist with information and tips on helping your child to participate.

Clinics Eligibility Criteria:

Specific eligibility criteria apply for all of these clinics. To find out if your child is eligible:

- If you are connected to a KidsAbility Therapist and receiving services, speak to your Therapist
If you are new to KidsAbility or not currently receiving services, call our intake line: 1-888-372-2259 ext 1214.

Upcoming Events

ADHD Speaks

Help Build ADHD Awareness Across Canada

If you or someone you love has ADHD, you know that most other people still do not understand the full impact this disorder can have.

To help change this, CADDAC has developed several awareness and educational tools. We have also added an ADHD Speaks Kid's campaign!

For more information on all of this, go to this [website](#).

FREE Monthly Developmental Screening Clinic offered by Monarch House

This monthly clinic is a free of charge service for parents to address questions and/or concerns regarding their child's development. The screenings include information on a child's speech and language skills, motor skills, problem solving skills and personal/social skills.

For children age 1 to 5.5 years old.

No referrals needed. Drop ins are also welcomed.

Upcoming Date(s):

November 28

All screenings are at Monarch House, 630 Weber St. N Suite 204, Waterloo.

For more information email waterloo@monarchhouse.ca or call 519-514-5770.

Upcoming Events

A Message from Ontario Independent Facilitation Network

Dear OIFN community,

We know it's been a while since you've heard from us. We remain passionate about raising the voice of people with developmental disabilities and their families, loved ones and friends, in pursuit of an everyday ordinary life in community, where everyone's contributions are needed, welcomed and valued.

Since our last newsletter, we have been hearing stories from people and families through a family-led initiative called the [Independent Facilitation Matters Coalition](#), highlighting the difference and contribution Independent Facilitation has made in living the life of their choosing.

We have learned over time that adults with developmental disabilities, their families and loved ones know how powerful it is to build a meaningful life in their neighbourhoods and communities. People and families have shared stories about what it takes to stay together and build their resilience and courage. OIFN is committed to learning together with people and families and others who care about what true belonging is and what it takes to hold a vision of a more just and inclusive Ontario.

We continue to hear from people and families who want something different – a full life in their neighbourhood or community. The Ontario Independent Facilitation Network (OIFN) distributes [weekly social media posts](#) to share stories, experiences and connections to ideas about what more is possible and to delight, inspire and start conversations that matter.

We invite you to continue to engage with us on social media and [share our newsletter signup](#) with your friends and family to help us grow, change, and promote ways for shifting our cultural understanding of how ordinary everyday lives can be made possible for all.

Ontario Developmental Services Housing Task Force Final Report 2018

The Housing Task Force is pleased to release their final report, GENERATING IDEAS AND ENABLING ACTION: Addressing the Housing Crisis Confronting Ontario Adults with Developmental Disabilities

Find the English Version [here](#).

Upcoming Events

KidsAbility Fall Resource Guide!

The KidsAbility Program and Activity Guide is a great resource for local fall programming.

[Program and Activity Guide - Fall 2019](#)

The guide can also be found on the KidsAbility website at www.kidsability.ca

Eye See...Eye Learn

Children born in 2015 and starting JK in September qualify for a pair of complimentary glasses from July 1, 2019 through to June 30, 2020.

Find a participating optometrist near you at EyeSeeEyeLearn.ca

Partners for Planning Action Guide - Thriving After High School

This Action Guide gives advice on topics such as how to prepare for life after high school at home and at school, life after graduations, and other important issues such as friendship. Find the guide [here](#).

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

Upcoming Events

Check out FamilyCompassWR.ca

Find and connect to local services for children, youth and families. The website offers three doors to help you find the resources you need.

1. Search for services: a self-search database for local health, social and recreational services for children and youth.
2. I Have a Concern: Do you have a concern about your child's development? Answer a few short, confidential questions to get connected to a local organization that can help.
3. Resources for Parents: connect to Parenting Now to learn, find support and connect with other parents.

SUPPORT GROUPS

There are a number of support groups that run throughout the community on a variety of different topics. Visit the Events Calendar on our website to learn more about these opportunities: <https://wrfn.info/events/>.

Groups include, but are not limited to:

- Parents for Children's Mental Health (PCMH) Support Groups (includes ADHD and general groups)
- APSGO—for parents of acting-out youth
- Community Mental Health Support Groups for Family & Friends (includes general and addiction groups and mental health groups)
- Fathers Group—for Fathers of a child with an intellectual disability and/or autism
- The A-Team Waterloo Region— run by individuals with Asperger's Syndrome, for individuals with Asperger's Syndrome

Strategies for Adult ADHD/Asperger's Group

Learn some hands-on techniques for managing and harnessing your ADHD/Asperger's superpowers while getting to know people similar to yourself.

This group usually involves a discussion around a voted topic, a relevant technique or exercise, and setting a goal/intention for the week.

Feel free to come alone or bring people from your life who you would like to understand your condition better. People who just want to understand ADHD/ASD better (such as parents) can also come on their own.

This group is typically led by a practitioner with ADHD and/or ASD themselves.

Cost is \$15/session, but the first session is FREE. Just Drop In! No diagnosis or registration necessary.

Every Thursday, 7:00pm—8:00pm at [The ADHD & Asperger's Centre](#),
55 Cork St. E, unit 305, Guelph.

Upcoming Events

ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Better Nights Better Days

Development, implementation, and evaluation of an internet-based behavioural sleep intervention study for children, ages 4-10, with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Cerebral Palsy (CP), and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).

Learn more about this opportunity [here](#)

Secret Agent Society: Operation Regulation – Trasdiagnostic Trial

Do you have a child between 8-13 years of age with Neurodevelopmental Disorders?

York University invites you to participate in a research study: Secret Agent Society: Operation Regulation – Trasdiagnostic Trial. This study is about a new program aimed at helping youth with neurodevelopmental disorders cope with their emotions and handle the day-to-day stressors in their lives using a variety of activities and tools, like an emotion-focused computer game, cue cards, and parent and teacher handouts.

Learn more about this opportunity [here](#). They are currently recruiting children and teens with ADHD, Cerebral Palsy, FASD and learning disabilities.

Technokids: Exploring Daily Electronic Media Use of Children With and Without Autism

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY: The present study is being conducted to learn more about the patterns of daily media behaviours, different media devices used, types of content accessed, and types of media activities engaged in by children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder and children without any mental health diagnoses to understand how their electronic media use might be similar or different.

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact Eric Gilliland at technokidstudy@gmail.com or Dr. Babb at kbabb@uwindsor.ca.

Upcoming Events

Study for children aged 6-12, with ADHD and ASD

The Centre for Pediatric Excellence is conducting a research study for children aged 6-12, with ADHD and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Your child may be eligible to participate in a research study using a drug already approved by Health Canada.

Your child may qualify if they have been diagnosed with high functioning autism and ADHD.

Learn more about this opportunity [here](#).

Creative Housing Options for Adults with Developmental Disability and High, Complex Needs

PhD student Elizabeth Guthrie and Dr. David DeVidi of the Philosophy Department at the University of Waterloo are looking for people to participate in their survey regarding housing and the needs that surround that for individuals with developmental disabilities and complex needs. This study is for those living in the Central West Region of Ontario (Waterloo Region, Wellington, Dufferin, Peel, Halton) of Ontario and people who care for them.

Participation in this study involves completing one of two online surveys. One survey is for individuals with developmental disabilities and high, complex needs to complete (with the help from assistive technology or a caregiver, if needed). One survey is for caregivers of individuals with development disabilities and high, complex needs to complete. These surveys will take approximately 45 minutes to one hour to complete, depending on your responses.

Survey participants will be asked some general questions about themselves (gender, location within this region, first language, etc) followed by research questions (for example, what is your current living situation? What types of supports do you need)?

They will also be conducting interviews with a select number of individuals based on their survey responses. At the end of the survey, you will have the option to indicate if you are interested in learning more about the interviews by providing an email address. **Please note**, due to the time constraints of the study, not everyone will be invited to complete an interview.

Once you click on the survey links below, the survey will open with a more detailed information letter about the survey and the option to agree or disagree to participate in the survey. If you disagree to participate, the survey will close. If you agree to participate, you will be asked two eligibility questions (whether you are over 18 years of age and if you live in the Central West region of Ontario).

Aside from the initial eligibility questions, you may choose “prefer not to answer” or leave any question blank. If you close out of the survey prior to completing it, your responses will not be saved.

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through a University of Waterloo Research Ethics Committee. Participation in this survey is voluntary and it is up to you whether you want to participate or not.

(Continued on next page)

Upcoming Events

An individual who has developmental disabilities and high, complex needs:

https://uwaterloo.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3rWL85wQcd0ezul

Caregiver of an individual with developmental disabilities and high, complex needs:

https://uwaterloo.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eWC1ahUQRNbP7z7

If you know someone who might be eligible for this survey and would be interested in participating, please forward this email to them.