

Where exceptional families thrive.

Issue 137
September 2021

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Just like that, Summer is over and we're transitioning back into the Fall! There are a variety of new and exciting opportunities starting, so make sure you check out the Community Information, Resources and Opportunities section!

We also have news to share about our Family Resource Coach support. Exciting things are happening at WRFN so we can support you and your family better!



Support WRFN Today

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

SEAC Updates

Waterloo Region District School Board Special Education Advisory Committee Update

The WRDSB SEAC does not meet over the summer. The next meeting will be held on September 8, 2021.

Waterloo Catholic District School Board Special Education Advisory Committee Update

The WCDSB does not meet over the summer. The next meeting will be held virtually on September 8, 2021.

Who We Put on a Wheaties Box...

By Carmen Sutherland, Coffee Club Facilitator, WRFN

The Paralympics end on September 5, 2021. I didn't know that off the top of my head, I had to look it up, and the only reason I know much about the Paralympics at all is because I am part of the disability community, as you or your loved ones are. This got me thinking: what if I didn't have to look up Parlympic dates because they were all over social media? Or better yet, what if we had been counting down to them, just like we count down to the Olympics?

Let me take this a step further, what if we counted down to national and international Special Olympics events in the same way? What if those athletes promoted things like Gatorade and Wheaties? (Is on a Wheaties box a real thing, by the way, or is that a thing that people just say? :))

Or, let me turn this on its head again, what if we put one of our staff member's pictures on a Wheaties box? My point is, what if we think outside the box about who we celebrate...not just athletes....not just people who look and think in the typical way. I personally think celebrations would be a lot more fun, then, don't you?

The WRFN Team is Growing!

We are excited to expand and enhance our Family Resource Coach support! In August, Erin Sutherland came back from her maternity leave. She has returned full time as a Family Resource Coach and will be responsible for supporting families who have children with exceptional needs up to age 16. Additionally, Erin has taken on the responsibility of school navigation support. We are thrilled to have Erin re-join the team!

And, that's not all...Sue Furey, who did a fantastic job covering Erin's leave, will be staying on in a part-time Family Resource Coach role to support families with children 16 years and over and self-advocates.

Individually, Erin and Sue bring tremendous experience to their roles. Together, they will make a great resource team providing personal guidance and support to exceptional families in our community.

Thank you, Sue, for your amazing commitment to families while Erin was off. We are delighted that you wanted to remain as part of the WRFN team. Welcome back, Erin! It's great to have you back and to see you again!

If you would like to connect with either Erin or Sue, please reach out in the following ways.

Erin Sutherland – Family Resource Coach

erin.sutherland@wrfn.info

Cell: 226-808-5460

Sue Furey – Family Resource Coach

sue.furey@wrfn.info

Cell: 226-898-9301

WRFN provides support in all life stages – **NO diagnosis needed**

What's Happening at WRFN

All WRFN programs will be offered in virtual format or through phone and email connections until further notice.

At WRFN, we're here to listen. Please reach out and let us know how we can help you and your family during these challenging times.

Ask A Self-Advocate

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

For more information on Ask A Self-Advocate please contact Cristina Stanger at Cristina.Stanger@wrfn.info. To request a booking please complete the [request form](#).

Coffee Club

Greetings from Coffee Club! We currently meet on Zoom, usually on Thursdays from 3:00-4:00 PM.

Generally, we are just catching up and chatting, mixed with a little bit of watching YouTube.

If you would like to join us, please send me an email at carmen.sutherland@wrfn.info. I will make sure to keep you on the email list so that you receive a Zoom invite and I will also keep you aware if we ever change or add a meeting date.

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.

If you would like to learn more please contact Sue Simpson at Sue.Simpson@wrfn.info.

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.

WRFN's Family Resource Coach

During this current COVID-19 health crisis, personal support has become paramount for many families. Erin Sutherland and Sue Furey, our Family Resource Coaches, are available by phone, email, or virtual call to lend a helping hand and personal guidance to families and to connect you to updated information, resources, and virtual opportunities. We encourage you to reach out. Call Erin at 519-886-9150 ext 4 or 226-808-5460 or email Erin.Sutherland@wrfn.info. Call Sue at 226-898-9301 or email Sue.Furey@wrfn.info.

What's Happening at WRFN



A NEW CHAPTER

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

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

SEPTEMBER 7, 2021

Life after High School: A panel shares stories about post high school experiences.

OCTOBER 5, 2021

Individualized Funding

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

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



Information, Opportunities & Resources

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

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

EVENTS

Anishinabek G7 FASD Conference

Understanding the impacts of intergenerational and prenatal trauma to help build success. For parents, caregivers, individuals with FASD, front line workers, educators, mental health workers, health care and justice.

September 28 & 29 via Zoom.

For more information contact koreskovich@skhc.ca.

CADDAC's 13th Annual ADHD Conference

This conference is geared to adults with ADHD, parents/caregivers of a child with ADHD and their families.

Topics include but are not limited to:

Lived Experiences of women | Medication Management | ADHD and the Workplace

ADHD and Sensory Issues | ADHD and Addiction

Oppositional Defiant Disorder | ADHD and Self-Regulation

This event will be held virtually October 16 & 17. [Early Bird Registration](#) is now open.

Health Nexus FASD Mix & Mingle

Join or a fun networking event for individuals with FASD and their families.

Come make new friends, connect with other folks, and win cool prizes!

September 10, 6:00-8:00pm

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

PROGRAMS/RECREATION

Adults in Motion

Life Skills Workshop — An intensive life skills focused day. Four week sessions.

Programs — Adults in Motion offers a number of in-person programs and virtual activities throughout the day. Enjoy personal connections, making new friendships and participating in entertaining activities.

To learn more about Adults in Motion and what they are offering visit their [website](#).

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Opportunities from Bridges to Belonging

BE-Connected — A place to virtually hangout, meet new people and talk about what's happening in your world.

Wednesday from 7:00-8:00pm | Use the following Zoom link to join: <https://bit.ly/3iHFwdm>

BE-Friends Program — BE-Friends is a volunteer matching program that connects people with any disability 17 years or older (Friend) with a community volunteer "Buddy" (19 years or older). The pair gets together as often as they want, enjoy fun activities they choose and become part of each other's world. BE-Friends a bridge to meaningful reciprocal relationships and lifelong friendships.

To be matched with a Community Buddy register here: <https://bit.ly/3eWlrzh>

To Volunteer as Community Buddy register here: <https://bit.ly/3i1v69G>

LINKS — Looking to jumpstart your dreams this fall? Join one of the Bridges to Belonging workshops Saturday September 25 and October 2, 10am-4pm in person OR Tuesday September 28-October 24, 6-8pm. Come and bring a trusted loved one as your "Planning Partner" and discover your unique gifts and strengths, connect them with your unique interests, the people you know, and community resources to create the life of BELONGING you deserve. Learn more and register at: <https://bit.ly/3sLz9uH>.

LEG Up! Fall 2021 Classes

LEG Up! is a skill enhancement and learning experience you can enjoy from the comfort of your home or in-person!

Motivational Mondays, 11-12pm — Learn ways to take care of yourself as we motivate each other, one step at a time.

Speaking Up For You! Monday, 1-2pm — Learn to use your voice to speak up for yourself.

Get Crackin' in the Kitchen, Tuesday, 11-12pm — Cook some delicious fall recipes.

Financial Fitness, Tuesday, 1-2pm — Exercise your money skills in this 8-week course.

Discover your Word, Wednesday, 11-12pm — Explore various topics and leave each other class with a new perspective and knowledge.

World of Science, Wednesday, 1-2pm — Explore the world of science in this 8-week course.

Photography, Wednesday, 2:30-4pm — In-person program where you will head outside with your camera and explore the LEG Up! Neighbourhood.

Fall Baking, Thursday, 10:30-11:30am — Bake yummy fall treats!

Interactive Thursdays, 1-2pm — Add some fun to your week!

Arts and Crafts, Friday, 10:30-11:30am — Use your creativity to make fall projects.

Learn more or register at <https://www.kwhab.ca/services/leg-up/>

Get Set Learn

Get Set Learn is a fun, free program for families with children 0-4 years of age.

It helps families get ready for school. The fall program will be online and starts October 5.

Contact info@projectread.ca or call 519-570-3054

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Recreational Respite Virtual Services

Virtual services offer unique experiences in small group, 1:1 and 'Build It' workshop sessions that aim to provide independent skill mastery for children, youth and adults with disabilities. These person-centred programs and workshops will cultivate life skills, promote self-care, encourage engagement, inclusion and social connectivity. Back to school tutoring is also available.

Check out information about their virtual services at <https://bit.ly/2KHe2la>.

March of Dimes Connect & Share

Wouldn't it be wonderful to visit with someone regularly who shares your interests?

March of Dimes virtual Connect & Share program was designed to make that happen.

You will be matched with a volunteer who shares your interests and your buddy will visit with you (as often as you like) – just for the fun of it.

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

<https://bit.ly/3906Lfl>

Extend-A-Family Waterloo Region: Virtual Open Space

Looking to connect to folks on a weekly basis?

Join one of the virtual Open Spaces on Monday evenings! Both begin at 6:30pm.

Email Kim Sproul for more details at kim.sproul@eafwr.on.ca

Artshine Virtual Accessible Art For Kids, Teens & Adults

Social distancing need not rob you of the joy that comes from expanding your art skills!

We've got live video lessons via Zoom for all ages, with art supplies mailed to you in advance!

Maximum 20 participants for personalized attention.

Click [here](#) for more information!

Torchlight Service: Connect Virtual Adult Programming

Torchlight's Connect Program offers a variety of fun interactive activities for a small membership fee.

The Virtual Program team assists and supports participants in resolving technical issues, basic education on how to access online programs, program schedules and reminders via email.

Learn more about the Connect Membership at <https://bit.ly/3x0Sd9A>.

CNIB's Virtual Program Offerings

Whether it's children and youth groups, employment workshops, tech sessions or book clubs,

CNIB's innovative programs are designed to educate, entertain and engage!

CNIB's free programs are available to Canadians who are blind or partially sighted as well as their families, friends and caregivers.

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

Information, Opportunities & Resources

KidsAbility Recreation and Social Programs Update

KidsAbility is very excited to start up Social and Recreation programs Fall!

All programs will provide safe, small group experience for families looking to reintegrate into recreation activities and will focus on building skills and confidence in group settings. For the first season back from COVID cancellations, all activities will be offered at our Waterloo site starting October; with the goal of expanding to other sites in the winter session.

Programs include:

Active Start (ages 3.5-7) | FUNdamentals (ages 8-12) | Playtime Academy (ages 3-7)
Social Explorers (ages 8-12) | Eat, Cook, Mingle - Junior (grade 6,7,8)
Eat, Cook, Mingle - Highschool | Drum Club (ages 8-16)

Further details and links to registration can be found on the website:

<https://www.kidsability.ca/recreation-social-programs>

Strong Moms, Safe Kids

A free program, offered virtually this fall, starting September 22 and running for 10 weeks.

This group program is for mothers and children healing from domestic violence. Multicultural facilitators are there to meet the needs of those from diverse ethno-cultural groups. Interpreters are available for women and children who do not speak English.

For more information contact Janet at jdegazon@kwcounselling.com OR 519-884-0000 x 252

Our Place KW - Family Resource and Early Years Centre

Our Place continues to offer a variety of programming opportunities.

Stork Secrets—Pregnancy and postpartum adjustment peer support. Learn more [here](#).

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

EarlyON Waterloo Region

EarlyON provides a variety of developmentally appropriate, fun, and interactive learning opportunities for you and your child to explore together.

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

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

Province-Wide Monthly Virtual Groups for Adults with FASD

The Fetal Alcohol Resource Program at ABLE2 is happy to announce the first two Province-wide virtual groups for adults living with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD):

- FASD Educational Group
- 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

WORKSHOPS/TRAINING

Shifting Mindsets: How Communication Can Shape Early Childhood Outcomes

This free webinar will explore how changing the way we talk and think about early childhood can promote child safety, development and wellbeing.

September 7, 2021

Learn more or register: <https://bit.ly/2WI3IAJ>

Your Rights and Responsibilities as a Tenant

Renting a place to live is a big step toward independent living. To ensure your tenancy is successful it's important to know your rights and responsibilities as a tenant.

Presenters will discuss the difference between a tenant and an occupant, renting a room vs. renting an apartment, what to do if you receive an eviction notice and understanding your rights in accommodation.

September 14, 2:00-3:30pm

<https://conta.cc/2WdPPPI>

Groups from Muslim Social Services

Resilient Girls — Building young girls' resilience, self-esteem, networking skills and know how about family dynamics during COVID-19 related uncertain times. Ages 13-18.

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

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Fundamentals For Caregivers

A four-part online training for individuals with FASD.

October 7, 14, 21, 28 at 9:30am via Zoom.

For more information or to register contact Michelle at m.hughes@sunbeamcommunity.ca.

Opportunities from Carizon

Growing Healthy Two-gether — Join a Program Coordinator, Register Dietician, other pregnant individuals, and their support people, to talk about your healthy pregnancy.

Starts September 14, 2021.

First Time Parents Group — This is a 10-week, parenting support and educational program for first times parents and caregivers. Talk about breastfeeding, introduction to solids, infant safety, sleep, and much more. For parents with babies age 0-6months. Starts September 15, 2021

Home Visiting Program — Get personalized 1-1 support for you and your family.

For families with children 0-6.

Parenting Support for Dads — Get personalized 1-1 support for you and your family.

Contact capc@carizone.ca for more information or to register for any of these programs.

Creating Your Individualized Housing and Support Plan

This 3 session workshop series is designed to help you begin creating an individualized housing and support plan for you or a family member with a developmental disability.

September 16, 23 and 30 from 6:00-8:30pm via Zoom.

<https://conta.cc/3Bazyty>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Health Nexus Webinar: FASD, COVID-19 and Aggression

Maude and Lauri will present current initiatives aimed at responding to childhood aggression towards family members in the context of FASD.

September 29 at 7:00pm

Learn more or register at: <https://bit.ly/3sLc0IG>

CADDAC Opportunities

Building Your Child's ADHD Profile — This five-part interactive course has been designed for parents starting the ADHD journey with their child and for those striving to better understand their child's impairments and needs. It will cover the things you need to know about ADHD: what it really is; how it impacts learning, behaviour and emotional regulation; and how to implement home and parenting strategies.

Starts: September 21, 2021 for 5 weeks Time: 6:30pm—8pm Cost: \$50

Learn more: <https://bit.ly/2W8zEmL>

Parenting Program: Supporting Your Child's Executive Functioning — This group program will provide parents and caregivers with important information about executive functioning and how it impacts children and teens with ADHD. Group members will learn tools and strategies to help them support their children with the areas of executive functioning that are challenging for them, and practice applying them in their homes.

Starts: September 20, 2021 for 10 weeks Time: 6:30pm – 8pm EST

Cost: \$100 (1 parent) and \$150 (2 parents) + HST

Instructor: Dr. Megan Smith, Ph.D., C. Psych

Learn more: <https://bit.ly/3x3pYGt>

Halton Sexual Confidence Workshop

This workshop provides opportunities to discuss sexuality in an open, light hearted way using visual, tactile and interactive learning strategies. It will foster communication about sexuality and relationships between adults with a developmental disability and the people who support them, all while providing tangible skills and materials to promote healthy sexuality.

Upcoming Dates:

Wednesday's: September 8 to October 20, 2021; 11:00am — 12:00pm

Thursday's: November 4 to December 9, 2021; 6:30 — 7:30pm

Tuesday's: January 11 to February 15, 2022; 2:30 — 3:30pm

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

Safety for Independent Living

Passport Community Developers are hosting a number of virtual Safety for Independent Living sessions. This is a personal safety course where people learn lifeskills that empower them to make safe choices and caring and respectful decisions in their everyday lives both online and offline.

September 21-24, 6:00-8:00pm

October 18-22, 1:00-3:00pm

November 8-12, 3:00-5:00pm

December 6-10, 10:00-12:00pm

Location: Virtually (Zoom) Cost: \$55 — Passport funding admissible

Contact Amanda Paradis, Waterloo Passport Community Developer to register aparadis@cwsds.ca.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Super Dads Super Kids

This is an online group for dads with children ages 0-6. Join the group to talk about what you think it means to be a dad. Learn ways to connect with your child.

Participate in fun activities with your child(ren)

This group is being offered online and in-person.

Contact Roberto at capc@carizon.ca to register or for more information.

How to Be a Good Roommate Workshops

Interactive virtual sessions with activities, discussions and videos.

Full Workshops (\$150: Four Sessions) 1st option: Sept. 8, 15, 22 & 29, 1-2:30pm

2nd option: Oct. 13, 20, 27 & Nov. 3, 1-2:30pm

For more information contact Liana Arnold, larnold@christian-horizons.org or 647-354-5034.

Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County (LDAWC)

Upcoming Events & Workshops

Overcoming Challenges to Become Your Self with Colby Sharma — Learn how Colby turned adversity into abundant opportunity. September 22 at 7pm.

Is it Dyslexia? - Learn more about what dyslexia is, what some of the signs and symptoms are, and how you can support and help your child both at home and in the classroom. September 30.

Reading Rocks — A literacy program for children aged 6-12 who require support with their literacy skills. Begins September 27.

Social Skills — For students age 11-14 with a learning disability or ADHD diagnosis to develop social skills, build self-esteem and confidence in social interactions. Begins September 28.

Mastering Mathematics — This numeracy program is designed to help children in grades 1-10 gain confidence and shift their mindset towards mathematics so that they can achieve academic success. Begins October 4.

Typing Skills — For students age 7-13 to learn and improve on typing skills. Begins October 7.

SOAR — Some Assembly Required Transition Planning — For children in grades 7-9 with a LD or ADHD. Begins October 18.

SOAR — Some Assembly Required Transition Planning SR — For individuals in grade 11 or 12 looking to prepare for the transition to college or university. Begins October 19.

Executive Skills Program — To help children with learning disabilities and ADHD learn executive functioning skills. Begins October 20.

To learn more about any of these programs visit <https://ldawc.ca/events.html>.

Keeping Yourself Safe Online

Who: Anyone 18 and over with an intellectual disability and/or autism

When: October 7, 2021 – October 28, 2021 *time to be determined

What: An online group to learn more about staying safe online

Cost: \$295.00

To register contact Lauren Harris at 519-894-6156 x 2904 or email Brightside@sunbeamcommunity.ca.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

J.O.E. Job Training

Have fun, make friends and gain job skills!

Learn about staying safe at work, food handling, and customer service.

This training program is 7 week sessions offered via Zoom. The cost is \$145 for seven sessions.

Session Options:

Monday Sessions, 10-11am, September 13 - October 25 OR November 1 - December 13

Tuesday Sessions, 1:30-2:30pm, September 14 – October 26 OR November 2 - December 14

Learn more or register at: <https://bit.ly/38eLAWw>

RESOURCES

Shared Connections

Inclusive and Accessible Tech Support

Shared Connections can help you get connected, finding & adapting technologies to meet your unique needs. Shared Connections is a non-profit committed to inclusion for people with multiple disabilities.

www.sharedconnections.ca

The Vulnerable Persons Registry

The Vulnerable Persons Registry promotes communication between vulnerable persons, the people who support them and the police. This information will assist officers when responding to an emergency involving the vulnerable individual. The registry provides quick access to critical information about a registered person, such as who to call in an emergency, a detailed physical description, and any particular sensitivities that the person may experience.

www.vulnerablepersonsregistry.ca

KidsAbility Resources

Foundational Family Supports — KidsAbility provides Foundational Family Services to anyone in the community — no diagnosis needed. Staff will work with you to find workshops, resources, groups, support and more to help you be successful. You do not need to be a KidsAbility family to access these services. Learn more about this support at <https://kidsability.ca/foundational-services>.

Transition to Adulthood Clinic (for KidsAbility clients 15+) — Have you started to think about your life after high school? Do you have questions about services for adults with disabilities in the community? The Transition to Adulthood Clinic is an opportunity to meet with the Transitions Lead who will help to guide you in the right direction with planning for your future. Find information about the Transition to Adulthood Clinic at <https://kidsability.ca/transition-adulthood-clinic>.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Take5

Take5 is an online space for children and youth in foster care, in group homes, or living away from their parents in Ontario. On Take5 you can find information for your age on things like: coping with stress, stuff about your identity and culture, relationships, and who to ask for help. You can also find activities, podcasts, videos and online events. Take5 is for children 6 to 12 and youth 13 and above.

<http://www.ontarioyouthcan.org/>

The Ontario Caregiver Organization

Resources and Education Opportunities to Help Caregivers When They Need it Most.

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

ConnectAbility.ca COVID-19 Resources

Supporting individuals, families and caregivers

Find answers to your COVID-19 questions, share experiences and discover events to stay active and connected. Visit <https://connectability.ca/covid-19/>

Health Care Access Research and Developmental Disabilities — How to Stay Safe, Well and Connected

There is lots of talk right now about COVID-19 or the Coronavirus. We may come across lots of information out there, but it is not always easy to understand and it can be confusing. This page has resources from around the world and information to support people with developmental disabilities and their families during this time. <https://bit.ly/3hWruX8>

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 get you set up.

To learn more visit shorturl.at/yEGK3.

Family Compass Waterloo Region

Family Compass Waterloo Region is a central website to guide families to services for children, youth, and families in our community. The website offers the option to find information about general services for children and youth as well as specialized services that can help to address developmental concerns.

Family Compass has added a page specifically pertaining COVID-19 resources for children, youth, and families. It can be reached at <https://bit.ly/3t0lkar>.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

CNIB Scholarships & Awards

Every year, CNIB's scholarship program awards multiple scholarships, bursaries and other awards to people who are blind or partially sighted in recognition of their educational aspirations and achievements.

Click here to learn more about these opportunities and to apply: <https://bit.ly/3wZ6jYN>

Safe Voluntary Isolation Site

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

To learn more visit: regionofwaterloo.ca/IsolationSite

Email: safeisolation@regionofwaterloo.ca

Resources from Inclusion Canada

Federal Election September 20, 2021 — Inclusion Canada has developed a number of resources to help you make an informed choice this election about priorities for people with intellectual disabilities and their families. Find the resources here: <https://bit.ly/3B9R2X1>.

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

Learn more here: <https://bit.ly/3B4n0E2>.

Canada Disability Benefit Design Recommendations — The government of Canada is seeking feedback from disability organizations about how to design the newly announced Canada Disability Benefit. Inclusion Canada has developed a [two pager](#) that explains their recommendations for the benefit design, including the monthly benefit amount. You can use these documents to get informed and influence the design of the benefit by starting a conversation with your local candidates for the federal election.

Ontario Further Extending Temporary Wage Increase for Personal Support Workers

The Ontario government is investing an additional \$169 million to extend the temporary wage increase for personal support workers and direct support workers for the third time since its initial investment last year. This increase will continue until October 31, 2021 and will help stabilize staffing levels and support our frontline health care workers to ensure the province is prepared to respond to any scenario as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve.

Learn more here: <https://bit.ly/2UMF0TN>

SUPPORT GROUPS

Chronic Pain Monthly Support Group

This group is focused on discussing chronic pain coping strategies and how you can apply them in your life. Short mindfulness exercises will be included. Led by a facilitator who has experience with chronic pain. People can register anytime.

Contact intaketeam@carizon.ca for more information or to register.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Ontario-Wide Virtual Support Group for Black parents and caregivers

Support, isolation, funding, resources, friends....These are the things that many families who care for someone with special needs think and worry about. For many of these families, their circle of support is quite small. This is often the case for racialized communities who have a child with special needs. The Black Parents of Children and Adults with a Disability Support Group (BPSG) was created to provide a safe space for families of African descent to come together to meet and connect, share resources, expertise and needs, inspire and support one another through our unique and often challenging and isolating journey of raising Black children or supporting a sibling, of any age, with a disability.

Location/Meetings: This is a volunteer run group that meets on the 2nd & 4th Tuesday of each month from 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. via ZOOM. There will be guest speakers, resource sharing, support and mentorship opportunities for attendees.

Contact: For more details or to register, please contact us at bpsgroup2020@gmail.com. You can also find them on Facebook @ BPSG: Black Parents of Children and Adults with a Disability Support Group.

Transgender Partners and Friends Peer Support Group

The Partners, Family and Friends of Transgender Folks Peer Support Group is a support group for non-transgender folks in the orbit of transgender folks where they can discuss their challenges and build community and solutions.

Participants are welcome to share or simply listen and learn from the experiences and perspectives of others.

The group meets on the second Wednesday of each month.
Please request access information by emailing trans@ourspectrum.com.

Parents for Children's Mental Health Virtual Peer Support Group

Family/Caregiver Support Group — The fourth Tuesday of each month from 7-8:30pm

ADHD Caregiver Support Group — The third Wednesday of each month from 7-9pm

Group information is available by emailing waterloo@pcmh.ca.

Busy Babies...Nobody's Perfect

For parents with children ages 0-6

This is an 8-week support group for parents and caregivers with children ages 0-6. There is a group being held in English and in Arabic. There is also a group for parents 25 and under.
Starts September 23

Contact capc@carizon.ca to register or for more information.

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/>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

The A-Team of Waterloo Region

The A-Team of Waterloo Region is primarily run by individuals with Asperger's Syndrome, for individuals with Asperger's Syndrome, with some assistance from Bridges to Belonging. Their goal is to create a safe and welcoming environment to meet fellow adults (age 18+) with Asperger's Syndrome (ASD – level 1), discuss topics of interest, share experiences, and embrace their neurological diversity.

Please go to <https://ateamwaterlooregion.wordpress.com/about/> for more information on how to register and attend the upcoming virtual meetings!

Preemie Parents of Waterloo-Wellington

Preemie Parents of Waterloo-Wellington remains available online through a private Facebook group: <https://bit.ly/3iJL9rx>.

They look forward to returning to the Cambridge Family Early Years Centre and Our Place Family Resource and Early Years Centre as soon as it is deemed safe to do so. In the meantime, they suggest you review the Canadian Premature Babies Foundation's website to see the supports and resources available to you during this pandemic.

Visit: <https://www.cpbf-fbpc.org/covid19>

Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County Virtual Peer Support Network

Are your kids staying engaged with online learning? Are you looking for ideas to keep them (and yourself) motivated?

Join the Peer Support Network and meet other parents on a similar journey to yours. LDAWC peer support network's goal is to provide an informal setting to share experiences, challenges, successes and resources.

This group takes place the second Monday of the month from 7:00-8:30pm

Learn more at <https://ldawc.ca/events.html>.

The Association of Parent Support Groups in Ontario

The Association of Parent Support Groups in Ontario (APSGO) is for parents struggling with the behavior of a child, youth or young adult.

APSGO support groups help parents/guardians develop effective strategies, set limits and boundaries, and build better relationships with their children.

The group currently meets via Zoom on Wednesday at 7:15pm.

Contact Steve Keczem at 519-888-1053 or go to apsgo.ca for more information.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Holland Bloorview Seeking Community Feedback

This is an opportunity for you to provide input on the creation of a new learning resource for educators and school board staff across Ontario, Kindergarten to Grade 12, in English and French. This work is being led by Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital, together with The Bloorview School Authority, and has been provided with funding by the Ontario Ministry of Education.

The resource, consisting of five online learning modules and a facilitator's guide, is intended to expand on existing knowledge about accessibility, inclusion, and how to ensure that students with disabilities experience full participation in school settings. Read more about the project and individual modules [here](#).

Engagement with stakeholders throughout the province is key to the success of the project. Holland Bloorview has prepared a brief survey for educators, students, and parents of children living with a disability. If you are interested in completing the survey, click on this link to launch the [survey](#).

Women with ADHD CADDAC wants to hear from you!

CADDAC is very interested in learning more about the experiences of girls and women with ADHD in Canada. They will be publishing a policy paper on the topic this fall and would like to include some Canadian survey data, as well as personal comments, to the existing research data. Comments will be anonymous, but will help to add depth to the paper.

<https://bit.ly/3B3DAnu>

COVID-19 and Down syndrome: Vaccine Response Survey

The Canadian Down Syndrome Society needs your help! More needs to be learned about COVID-19 and the related vaccine among people with Down syndrome. The Trisomy 21 Research Society (T21RS) has organized an international online survey to collect this information. You are invited to complete this survey if you are a caregiver of a person with Down syndrome who has received the COVID-19 vaccine or who is eligible but does not plan to receive the vaccine.

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

Advocacy Kit for Increasing Special Services at Home

People for Personalized Funding (PFPF) has created an advocacy kit for increasing Special Services at Home.

[Bulletin from PFPF about Special Services at Home](#) [How to Take Action](#)

CAMH Virtual Healthcare Study for Patients with Developmental Disabilities

During COVID-19 there has been a huge increase in the delivery of virtual primary care. CAMH is conducting interviews (online or by phone) to learn what is working well and what needs to be improved to support high quality care for patients with developmental disabilities.

Interested or want to learn more?

Contact Avra Selick at avra.selick@camh.ca or 416-535-8501x30127

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Survey: Use of Services for 0-6 Children by Families During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Infant Mental Health Promotion (IMHP) at the Hospital for Sick Children, in collaboration with the Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health (The Centre), Kids Brain Health Network (KBHN) and Children First would like to hear your thoughts about how our child and youth mental health system can improve the quality of services for children under 6 throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Learn more at <https://bit.ly/39fKVFe>.

The Sibling Collaborative Survey

The Sibling Collaborative is doing a survey of siblings to discover what kinds of information they would like to receive as to help their role in planning.

Take the survey at: <https://bit.ly/3dd4VtZ>.

Consultation: Initial recommendations for the development of proposed Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) Education Accessibility Standards

Submit your feedback on the recommendations for proposed standards to help make K-12 education more accessible for students with disabilities. Closing September 2, 2021.

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

Participate in Online Emotion Research

This online study is looking at the emotional life of adolescents 12-18 with ASD, ADHD, or neurotypical controls. Participants and their caregiver will complete a few questionnaires and will receive a \$20 and a \$10 Amazon gift card for their time.

If you are interested contact asd@queensu.ca.

Students with ADHD Need You!

An advisory committee, the K-12 Education Standards Development Committee was assigned to develop recommendations on what the Education Accessibility Standard should include. Currently ADHD is not recognized as a significant learning risk, which is one of the reasons why your feedback is critical! Learn more CADDAC website: <http://ow.ly/tfzc50FCR1r>.

Research Volunteers Needed: Young Black Women with Mental Health Concerns

Are you a Young Black Woman aged 18-25 years living in Toronto? Do you sometimes feel depressed, anxious, experience mood variance, or feel overwhelmed by daily life demands?

Learn more [here](#).