



World Autism Awareness Day and Autism Acceptance Month

April 2 is Autism Awareness Day and April is Autism Acceptance Month. This celebration aims to raise awareness for everything related to autism, especially inclusion and accessibility for people with ASD.

Check this newsletter for services, programs and resources related to autism and visit our website www.sdrc.ca to learn about our professional and support services available to individuals of all ages with a developmental disability and/or an autism spectrum disorder.

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Who We Are

Sunbeam Developmental Resource Centre (SDRC) is a division of Sunbeam Community and Developmental Services (SCDS). We offer a wide range of services for people with disabilities including Clinical Services, Service Coordination, Ontario Autism Program (OAP), Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Coordination, and Coordinated Service Planning. We act as a single point of access for children living in Waterloo Region with an intellectual disability and/or autism spectrum disorder for a wide range of services. For more information visit our website at www.sdrc.ca.

Consider Joining Sunbeam's Board of Directors

Sunbeam has several upcoming openings for individuals to join our talented and dedicated volunteer Board of Directors. The ideal candidate will possess professional and/or lived experience in various sectors and disciplines, interest in/experience in board governance/policy governance model, and a passion for supporting people with disabilities.

To learn more about this opportunity, please visit

www.sunbeamcommunity.ca/2025/02/27/consider-joining-sunbeams-board-of-directors

Snoezelen Room Transformation



Sunbeam continues to raise funds to support the transformation and modernization of our Snoezelen Room at Sunbeam's Kingsway Campus in Kitchener.

A Snoezelen Room is a multi-sensory environment that promotes comfort and relaxation, helping to reduce agitation and anxiety while also engaging and delighting users by stimulating visual, audio and tactile (sight, sound and feel) responses and encouraging verbal and non-verbal communication.

A Snoezelen multi-sensory space is beneficial and meaningful to children, youth, adults and older adults, and can be experienced alone, or more often as a shared experience with a family member, other caregivers, support staff or therapist. Through thoughtful, evidence-based design, the new space will nurture therapeutic and emotional needs while also ensuring accessibility, safety and comfort.

To learn more about this transformative initiative, please visit **www.sunbeamcommunity.ca/sunbeam-holiday-appeal-2024**

To show your support to this innovative, person-centred project please scan the QR code, visit us at: **www.sunbeamcommunity.ca/donate** or, Call 519-893-6200.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT SDRC - CLINICS

Clinics at SDRC

Sunbeam Developmental Resource Centre (SDRC) hosts a variety of clinics. All clinics are 1 hour in length via Zoom, limited to a maximum of 10 participants (except the SLP clinic which is one-on-one) and include an opportunity for questions and discussion. Different eligibility criterias apply. For specific information on each clinic and dates please visit: www.sdrc.ca/clinics or scan the QR code. Call Rehana Khanam at 519-741-1121, ext. 2201 to register.

Intake Financial Clinic Virtual

Intake Financial Clinics provide information on the various financial supports available to families who have children with higher support needs. These clinics are offered virtually on a monthly basis and are small group in nature. If your child has been confirmed eligible for SDRC services, you are welcome to attend.



Ask A Speech Language Pathologist Clinic - Virtual

As part of our foundational family services supports, SDRC provides "Ask a Speech-Language Pathologist" consultation. This support is available to parents/caregivers of children with autism up to 6 years who are enrolled in the Ontario Autism Program (OAP). Each session will have a short presentation and then will be open to your questions about how to help your child's speech and language skills.



Speech-Language Pathology Clinic

We offer a free individual family-focused consultation for SDRC clients over the age of 6 years with a intellectual disability and/or autism spectrum disorder, living in Waterloo Region. At the clinic you will be expected to identify one or two concerns/goals and consultation/resources will be provided to address the goal.



Ask A Behaviour Consultant Virtual Clinic Series

SDRC is offering these clinics for parents and caregivers of individuals with a developmental disability and/or autism spectrum disorder.

New dates are available now on our website. The topics covered are: Supporting Healthy Sleep in Children, Emotional Regulation Executive Functioning, Picky Eating, Hygiene, Transitions and School Refusal.



Virtual Speaker Series



May 13, 2025
12 pm to 1:30 pm

Via Zoom



VULNERABLE PERSONS REGISTRY AND GRT



Vulnerable Persons Registry

Presented by: Sue Simpson

From 12:00-12:45 pm

The Vulnerable Persons Registry (VPR) is a community based policing initiative in partnership with the local Police Services and local community agencies.

Our speaker Sue Simpson will explain: The purpose of the Registry, Who can register, How to register, When to Renew, And much more.



Grand River Transit (GRT) From 12:45-1:30 pm

Presented by: Christine Strong

Learn about the roles of community partners as they support youth with autism and/or intellectual disabilities to participate and promote safety in the community.

Grand River Transit (GRT) staff will share information on training they offer to learn how to use the bus and specialized transportation options available

Please register by May 9, 2023 at this link:
<https://www.sdrc.ca/workshops-and-training/>



Applying For and Understanding ODSP Virtual Speaker Series

Speaker: Jacqueline Fagan

**Audience: Family and community members
who want to learn more about ODSP**

**Tuesday
May 27, 2025
6 pm to 7:30 pm**

**OR,
Thursday
May 29, 2025
10:00 am to 11:30 am**

**Cost: Free
Virtual via zoom
Live presentation only**

Topics:

- Changes in the application process
- What benefits does ODSP provide
- Board and Lodging vs. Basic Needs and Shelter allowance
- Asset limits and gifts
- ODSP and employment
- Disputing ODSP decisions
- When and where to get help
- And more ...

Register for any of the sessions online:

www.sdrc.ca/workshops-and-training

Call 519-741-1121 ext. 2201 or

email: r.khanam@sunbeamcommunity.ca



Emotional Regulation - Virtual

Date: April 15, 2025 Time: 12 pm to 1 pm

Register By: April 11, 2025

Date: May 14, 2025 Time: 6 pm to 7 pm

Register By: May 9, 2025

Date: June 17, 2025 Time: 1 pm to 2 pm

Register By: June 13, 2025

Presenter: Jennifer Jacobs

Appropriate For: Parents and caregivers of individuals with developmental disabilities.

This workshop will look at myths about emotions, explaining strategies to promote emotional regulation. This workshop would be suitable for caregivers who are struggling to help those that they care for cope with emotions. The idea that 'all behaviour is communication' will be explored along with ways to interpret the behaviour of nonverbal individuals.

An Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Virtual

Date: Tuesday, March 18, 2025

Time: 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Register By: March 14, 2025

Date: Tuesday, June 10, 2025

Time: 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Register By: June 6, 2025

Presenter: Chloe Riddell

Appropriate for: Individuals, families and professionals.

This workshop offers an introduction to the diverse spectrum of autism spectrum disorder (ASD). We will discuss the unique strengths and challenges individuals with ASD navigate daily, while exploring strategies to create supportive environments.

Discussing Puberty and Sexuality with Your Child - Virtual

Date: Tuesday, March 25, 2025

Time: 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

Register By: March 21, 2025

Presenters: Denise Burke and Chloe Riddell

Appropriate for: Parents and caregivers of children with developmental disabilities.

This workshop will address body and behavioural changes that occur during puberty. We will give you resources and strategies to help you guide your child through this next step in their development and give them the knowledge and skills to keep them safe.

To Register for any of these clinical workshops please email: r.khanam@sunbeamcommunity.ca, call 519-741-1121 ext. 2201 or register online on our website at: www.sdrc.ca/workshops-and-training.

Collaborating With Schools Virtual

Date: Thursday, May 1, 2025
Time: 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm
Register By: April 25, 2025

Presenters: Lori Hoelscher, Wendy King, and Jeannie Chaves
Appropriate for: Parents and caregivers of children with developmental disabilities.

This workshop is designed to provide a general overview of school to help guide you on your child's school journey.

To Register for any of these clinical workshops please email: r.khanam@sunbeamcommunity.ca, call 519-741-1121 ext. 2201 or register online on our website at: www.sdrc.ca/workshops-and-training.

Social Communication Skills for People with Autism &/or Developmental Disabilities

Date: Tuesday, April 8, 2025
Time: 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm
Register By: April 4, 2025

Presenter: Lorraine Otto, M.Sc., CCC, Speech Language Pathologist (Reg. CASLPO)
Appropriate for: Individuals, families and professionals

This workshop will provide an overview of practical strategies to support communication development for individuals with autism spectrum disorder and will cover social communication skills including theory of mind, hidden curriculum, read the room, comic strip conversations and using scripts to support social skills.

iPad Loaner Program at SDRC

Clients and their families can borrow an iPad to use through a Library Loaner Program of SDRC. This will help them attend virtual appointments and to trial various programs such as communication apps online.

Please call 519-741-1121 for further details on how to borrow a device.



Sibling Support

Supporting siblings of children with autism is just as crucial as supporting the child with autism themselves. While much attention is often focused on the child with autism, the emotional well-being of their siblings deserves equal consideration. These siblings can face unique challenges, such as feeling overlooked, confused, or uncertain about how to navigate their family relationships. By providing them with the resources, understanding, and opportunities to express their feelings, we can ensure they feel valued and supported. One key part of this support is asking your child, What is something I/we can do that would help you? or What is something you wish I/we did more?. These conversations allow siblings to voice their needs and ensure they feel heard. Additionally, it's important to ask, What are some things I/we can try to make you feel special?



Helping siblings build empathy, resilience, and a deeper understanding of autism not only strengthens family bonds but also promotes a sense of inclusion and emotional health for everyone involved. When the entire family receives the care and attention they need, it fosters a more balanced and positive environment for all members.



Please keep an eye out for upcoming sibling groups run by the Brightside ABA team on our website: (www.brightsideabaservices.com), newsletters and flyers!



INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP SERVICE PACKAGES

Offering both in-centre and home services (individual) to meet the needs of families in our community!

**Service is an eligible expense
for Access OAP**



SERVICE INFORMATION

- All services begin with an initial service consultation with our Clinical Intake (30 min in length and free of charge)
- Service delivery is supervised by our onsite Registered Behaviour Analyst (ONT.).
- Examples of goals:
 - Daily Living Skills
 - Independent Living Skills
 - Responding Appropriately to Situations
 - Engaging in new activities
 - Dating and relationships
 - Tolerating No
 - Job Readiness
 - Early conversation skills
 - Communication skills (e.g. augmentative communication)
 - Social Skills

To schedule an initial service planning meeting please reach out to our Senior Therapist/Clinical Intake at brightside@sunbeamcommunity.ca

OR

519-741-1121 ext. 2904

Free Income Tax Clinics for Community Services Clients

Through the Community Volunteer Income Tax Program, community organizations host free tax clinics where volunteers file tax for returns for eligible people with low income.

For support with your tax return, walk in during business hours, complete a few forms, and drop off your documents. A volunteer will prepare and e-file your tax return. Then, you pick up your documents. You will have to show proof of your identity when you drop-off and pick-up your documents.

For more information visit:

www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/tax/individuals/community-volunteer-income-tax-program.html

Free Income Tax Clinic Locations in Waterloo Region:

March 3, 2025 – April 30, 2025

Come to any of the locations listed below from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday to Friday (closed holidays).

- Cambridge Welcome Space, 150 Main Street, Cambridge
- Kitchener Welcome Space, 20 Weber Street E., Kitchener
- Waterloo Welcome Space, 99 Regina Street S., Waterloo



Some Links and Income Tax Forms You May Need

Links:

RC4064 Disability-Related Information

<https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/forms-publications/publications/rc4064.html>

RC4065 Medical Expenses Information

<https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/forms-publications/publications/rc4065.html>

RC4460 Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP)

<https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/forms-publications/publications/rc4460.html>

Forms:

T2201 Disability Tax Credit Certificate

<https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/forms-publications/forms/t2201.html>

T929 Disability Supports Deduction

<https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/forms-publications/forms/t929.html>

GST518 GST/HST Specially Equipped Motor Vehicle Rebate Application

<https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/forms-publications/forms/gst518.html>

XE8 Application for Refund of Federal Excise Tax on Gasoline

<https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/forms-publications/forms/xe8.html>

Starting Together

A Parent and Student Information Evening.

Transition to Highschool for Students with Individual Education Plans.

WRFN is hosting a panel discussion with board personnel on how to help the transition of your Grade 8 student into high school.

March 25, 2025 at 6:30 pm to 8 pm

35 weber St W., Unit A, Kitchener On
To register please email: info@wrfn.info

WRFN's School Navigation Workshop Series -Transitions

This session will feature:

Teaching parents/caregivers the various transitions within the school for students with exceptional needs (activity changes, school transitions and social challenges).

March 19, 2025 6:30 pm to 8 pm

The Family Centre (65 Hanson Avenue, Kitchener).

To register please email: info@wrfn.info

Know Your Rights! Webinar on Ontario's Special Education System

Community Living Ontario has enlisted an expert in educational law from PooranLaw to illustrate your rights as a parent, your child's rights as a student, and to answer some of your burning questions. Join in this webinar via zoom at the link below on:

March 27, at 12 pm

www.us02web.zoom.us/join/joinme?meetingref=UmlsvCPtQWWszf-ntvOjuA#/registration

Passport Funding Virtual Drop In

CWSDS is hosting Passport End of Year Virtual Drop In.

Have questions about the end of the passport year? Join for an end of year themed virtual drop-in! A member of their team will be happy to answer your questions.

April 2, 2025 at 12 pm to 1 pm

For more information please contact Ashlyn at anorthfield@cwdsds.ca

Click Here to Join.

Ask a Nurse at the Welcome Spaces

Public Health Family Nursing services are available at three Welcome Space locations, offering one-to-one, drop-in support from Public Health Nurses. This service is provided from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm on the following days:

Waterloo: Mondays at 99 Regina St S

Kitchener: Tuesdays at 20 Weber St E

Cambridge: Thursdays at 150 Main St

Nurses can assist with questions on pregnancy, growth and development, feeding, child health, and local health services.

Workplace Inclusion for Human Services Workers with Autism Study

This study seeks to understand the barriers and facilitators of workplace inclusion and wellbeing for human services workers with autism in Canada and the United States.

This online survey will take approximately 30 minutes to complete, and eligible participants will receive a \$10 gift card.

Please click the link below to learn more about the study and access the screening questionnaire.

Learn More

Research Study Designed to Support Women Recently Diagnosed with Autism

Participate in a new research study designed to support women recently diagnosed with autism.

Study title: Co-design and evaluation of peer-led program for and with women with autism.

What does participation involve?

- Take part in a group virtual peer support program once/week for 1.5 hours over 8 weeks.
- Complete surveys.
- Participate in an individual interview about your experience in the program.

Interested ontarian women who have received a formal diagnosis of autism in the last 8 months can contact:

Princess Owusu, Research Analyst, at:
AWPeerSupport@camh.ca

Neurodiversity Celebration Week Webinars Online March 17 - 23

Neurodiversity Celebration Week is hosting free webinars from March 17 to 23. Everyone is invited to join for this incredible line-up.

Over 80 inspiring speakers will share their unique perspectives on neurodiversity. You will hear from experts with lived experience, top professionals, and passionate advocates.

Check at this **link** to learn about the topics, speakers and how to register.

Some of the Topics of the Neurodiversity Week Celebration Week Webinars

Building the Neuroinclusive Classroom of Tomorrow...Today!, Breaking the Barrier - The Power of Language in Neurodiversity, Parents and Carers - Supporting Children Through Times of Transition, Perspective of Young People on Neurodiversity.

Caregiver Nonviolent Crisis Intervention by Kerry's Place

Build your skills in managing and de-escalating crisis situations to better care for and support those in your life who have autism.

This skill-building workshop is open to parents, caregivers, and family members of individuals with autism of any age. Participants will get an overview of the verbal and non-verbal communication concepts and strategies in the Nonviolent Crisis Intervention® (NVCI) training program. These skills and strategies can be used at home and in the community.

Please note: Participants will not receive a certificate of completion, or become NVCI certified. For more information, and to register, click on this link:

Caregiver Nonviolent Crisis Intervention by Kerry's Place.

Reach For It! Pancake Breakfast

Reach For It! hosts a variety of recreation and nature based events throughout the year. Their next event will be on:

March 22, 2025, Time: 10 am – 12 pm

Location: Mill Courtland Community Centre
216 Mill St, Kitchener ON N2M 3R2

Youth aged 6 and up are invited to join!

Register at this link.

Reach For It! is a collaborative community project. The Mission of REACH For It! is to provide recreational programming for children, youth and their families living with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). It is an adapted program, providing a high level of supervision, safety and learning for the participants. This program is inclusive and provides a positive environment for children where they can assist to mitigate the adverse effects of FASD.

Virtual Urgent Care (VUC) UrgentCareOntario.ca

VUC is a program that provides virtual, same day/next day appointments for children and adults across Ontario with a Nurse Practitioner (NP). These are applicable for non-emergent care that is applicable for a virtual visit.

Patients can book an appointment through **www.urgentcareontario.ca**

Or call 1-844-CARE-844 (1-844-227-3844) and an appointment can be made for you.

Mindfulness Program for Family Caregivers by CAMH

These free mindfulness sessions led by mindfulness expert Sue Hutton, MSW are open for registration. Audio links and resources to support your practice will be provided.

Dates:

Fridays May 9 to June 13, 2025

(1pm to 2pm)

Tuesdays Oct 7 to Nov 11, 2025

(1pm to 2pm)

Tuesdays Jan 27 to Mar 3, 2026

(1pm to 2pm).

To register, email: hcardd@camh.ca

Disability Planning Helpline

The Plan Institute is thrilled to announce the expansion of their Disability Planning Helpline.

They are offering additional one-on-one support to guide you through every step of the DTC application process. This includes support with "Part A" and "Part B" of the DTC application form, such as providing sample language, reviewing paperwork, and preparing a letter to take to a medical practitioner. For more information please check their website:

www.planinstitute.ca/rdsp-disability-planning-helpline

Honest Conversations Podcast Series of Autism Alliance

Honest Conversations Podcast series features discussions on screening, diagnosis, enhancing public awareness and acceptance. It also highlights how Canada's first Autism Strategy aims to support people with autism, their families, and caregivers across the country.

All five episodes of the Honest Conversations podcast series are now available to stream. This series dives into the key pillars of Canada's Autism Strategy, featuring insightful discussions with experts, advocates, and community leaders on topics such as screening and diagnosis, economic inclusion, and public awareness.

To listen, visit their website:

www.autismalliance.ca/resource/podcast-autism-strategy

Smile Canada

Smile Canada has culturally responsive programs for children and young adults with disabilities (upto age age 30) They are designed to support newcomers and refugees through financial support, education, mentorship, and more such as:

Service Navigation - Languages supported include English, Arabic, Urdu, Somali, Farsi and more.

Helps with identifying and connecting families with the right resources, this includes accessing medical specialists, educational programs, therapy services, and community organizations.

Hospital Support Program - Parent and Caregiver Wellness Packages and Services, Food Deliveries and Parking Allowances, Resource/advocacy support.

Financial Assistance - families will have access to **SMILE's Scholarship** rounds, where families can receive funding towards mental health therapy services, respite services, therapeutic tools, wheelchairs, walkers, hearing aids and more.

Newcomer Support - Provides immediate aid to refugees and newcomer families with children with developmental disabilities, physical ailments, and long-term medical conditions, including cancer. Provides ABA, speech and language, occupational, physiotherapy, and psychotherapy.

For more information on their services, please visit their website:

www.smilecan.org/programs.

Intake form: **www.smilecan.org/become-a-smile-family**.

Our Resource Support

SDRC offers Resource Support to families of children under the age of 18 years, who have an intellectual disability and/or autism spectrum disorder. It provides quick access to short-term support for as long as the client is eligible for developmental services. Resource Support is mainly through telephone contact, email, or scheduled appointments.

Resource Support offers a variety of services to eligible clients and includes:

- Providing information on a variety of supports and services (developmental services, community services, funding options, leisure/recreation, etc.)
- Assisting with problem solving
- Facilitating referrals to other organizations/services
- Answering general questions regarding services and supports
- Helping assess strengths and needs
- Helping identify barriers to accessing services and supports
- Providing short-term emotional support
- Liaising with other service providers

The Resource Support Worker is not able to:

- Attend school meetings or medical appointments
- Assist with application forms
- Organize case conferences
- Develop service plans
- Provide ongoing, intensive support
- Act as a case manager
- Provide mediation/group facilitation

**For Resource Support please call:
519-741-1121**

Adult Resource Guide: Community Supports and Services

This Guide, developed by SDRC and updated twice yearly, includes key resources for youth on the autism spectrum transitioning into adulthood who may not be eligible for adult services from Developmental Services Ontario (DSO). It could also be helpful for adults of any age who have been diagnosed with autism and/or an intellectual disability.

You can access the most recent version of the Guide (under "Resources") through our website: www.sdrc.ca.

Below are some of the contents featured in this guide:

- Help To Find Supports And Services
- Income Assistance
- Employment, Training and Volunteer Supports
- Housing Supports
- Transportation Supports
- Adult Education Information
- Legal Information And Supports
- Mental Health And Crisis Supports
- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Information
- Cultural Supports
- LGBTQ2S+ Services
- Vulnerable Persons Registry
- Social/Recreational Activities & Cards
- Support And Social Groups
- Online Resources
- Long Term Planning

The Weekly Mothers' Support Group at SDRC

The Mothers' Support Group is a 6-week group, providing the opportunity for mothers to discuss a range of topics related to parenting a child with an intellectual disability and/or autism. Topics include: understanding and sharing the diagnosis, grief and resilience, community resources, behavioural challenges and self-care. Guest speakers from the community and SDRC also contribute their expertise.

The group is a great way to connect with other mothers who understand your daily experience. It is a small group, for 6 – 10 members, and runs for 6 consecutive weeks. Two times are offered: Wednesday evenings from 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm or Thursday mornings from 10:00 am - 11:30 am.

Groups are offered 2 – 3 times per year. Please call 519-741-1121 for more information about how to join. Hope to see you soon!



The Monthly Mothers' Group

Did you know that SDRC also has Monthly Mothers' groups?

Monthly groups are offered at two different times:

**Daytime: The last Friday of the month
from 10:00 am to 11:30 am**

**Evening: The last Tuesday of the month
from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm**



The purpose of the group is to connect with other mothers, share ideas, learn more about community resources and get support. Speakers are often invited to share information on topics of interest to group members. Some of the topics discussed in the past year were: anxiety, school issues and grief.

Please call 519-741-1121 for more information about how to join. Hope to see you soon!

Autism Social Skills Groups

Autism Social Skills Group

SDRC offers a 6-week Social Skills Group to children/youth with an autism spectrum disorder between the ages of 11 and 17 years. A referral is required as this is not a drop-in group. **The Six-Week Group** runs on **Tuesday evenings from 5:00 pm-6:30 pm.**

Autism Monthly Social Group

SDRC offers a **Monthly Social Group** for youth between the ages of 14 and 17 years with an autism spectrum disorder with no intellectual disability. Individuals must be able to be independent. The purpose of the group is to help individuals develop social skills. A referral is required as this is not a drop-in group.

The Monthly Social Group is offered every **2nd Wednesday** of the month at **5:00 pm-6:30 pm** with every other month to include a community outing.

Please call 519-741-1121 for more information about how to join.

The Monthly Fathers' Support Group

The Fathers' Support Group is open to fathers in Waterloo Region who have a child (of any age) with an intellectual disability and/or autism. The group meets monthly.

It is a great opportunity for dads to discuss a wide range of topics related to parenting a child with an intellectual disability and/or autism. Fathers learn from guest speakers as well as from each other, sharing wisdom, understanding and a chance to talk to other dads who "get it".

Some of the topics discussed in the past year were: mindfulness, sharing the diagnosis and advocating for your child.

The Fathers Support Group meets on the **3rd Tuesday of the month from 6:30 – 8:00 pm.**

Please call 519-741-1121 for more information about how to join.



Autism Career Connections

Autism Career Connections is a collaborative effort of Autism Ontario with Apex Academy, a leading educational platform providing equitable access to knowledge in the digital space.

Using a modular approach, employers and HR professionals will learn how to design inclusive working environments, adopt unbiased hiring practices, and foster success within the autistic community. Job seekers can look forward to employment preparedness programs. You will learn about your strengths, writing a resume, interview skills, and where to find work. Check at this link for more information:

www.autismontario.com/autism-career-connections

Kerry's Place Brave Space

Brave Space is a collection of resources, services and supports from 2SLGBTQ+ Youth and their families. It's a step to honour, empower, and support everyone who lives at the intersection of autism and the 2SLGBTQ+ spectrums with information and evidence-informed resources and services. Kerry's Place aims to support those in our community who are navigating, or supporting a loved one who is navigating, their journey of discovering their identity within the spectrums of gender and sexuality. They are collaborating with subject matter experts to help ensure that the supports developed are evidence-informed and in line with current best practices for the 2SLGBTQ+ community.

www.kerrysplace.org/brave-space-at-kerrys-place

Specialisterne North America

Specialisterne North America works with businesses in Canada and the US to hire neurodivergent employees. They connect qualified neurodivergent candidates to employment opportunities in numerous industries and sectors.

For more information please visit their website:

www.specialisterne.applytojob.com

Connecting, Interests and Activities

This group in Waterloo Region is for adults (18+) diagnosed with asperger's / autism spectrum disorder 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. You can help make this group what you want. Join if you're looking for a positive place of belonging!
- Held on the second Thursday of the month, from 5 - 7 pm at the Downtown Community Centre, 35 B Weber Street West, Kitchener
- Drop-in group, so folks are welcome to join anytime between 5:00 and 7:00 pm.
- Questions? Please reach out to Kelly Groh at 519-731-3923 or email: grohstech@explornet.com

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE COMMUNITY

AccessOAP

AccessOAP is the Independent Intake Organization to connect you with autism programs and services available to your family through the Ontario Autism Program.

If you have questions about the New Access-OAP, how to create an account or the Ontario Autism Program visit these websites:

www.autismontario.com/AccessOAP

www.accessoap.ca

CAMH - Azrieli Adult Neurodevelopmental Centre

The **All About Autism & Mental Health Webpage** of CAMH (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health) has autism-related information, webinar recordings, and mindfulness resources. This page offers resources and videos related to mental health for people who have autism, developed with and for people who have autism and their families.

Autism Research Institute (ARI)

Autism Research Institute (ARI) hosts free online webinars to provide education for individuals, parents and professionals. For information on their webinars please check at this link: autism.org/webinars.

Research Updates: Bringing Sleep & Autism into Community Settings

March 19, 2025, **1 pm Eastern Time**

Dr. Beth Malow, Vanderbilt University

Register here for this webinar.

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;

www.ateamwaterlooregion.wordpress.com

for more information on registering and attending the upcoming virtual meetings!

Skills Corner

Skills Corner is a new program for young adults, located in Kitchener-Waterloo at Forest Hill United Church (121 Westmount Rd E). This program is designed to provide participants with a safe space to learn new skills, socialize and grow while having fun. Team includes staff trained and experienced in working with special needs adults and kids on the spectrum.

Register by calling 519-589-4022.

Mental Health Literacy Guide for Autism

The Mental Health Literacy Guide for Autism published by York University and Centre for Addiction and Mental Health is available at this link:

www.yorku.ca/Mental-Health-Literacy-Guide-for-Autism.pdf

Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work

CCRW Employment Services helps job seekers with disabilities connect 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. Visit their website:

www.ccrw.org

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.

Autism Ontario

Calendar of Upcoming Events

Autism Ontario helps all individuals with autism and families in their communities have access to meaningful supports, information, and connections so they are equitably and seamlessly supported across their life course.

www.autismontario.com/events

Toronto Pearson Airport's Neurodiversity Supports

Toronto Pearson has partnered with Autism Ontario and Magnusmode to provide some resources to assist individuals with autism and neurodiversity and their caregivers.

- **Step-by-step guide for travelling at Toronto Pearson, Magnuscards** - The Toronto Pearson Card Decks of MagnusCards® walk people with autism and other cognitive special needs through common airport processes.
- **Sunflower Lanyards** - Lanyards are available for passengers with invisible disabilities to help identify that they may need extra help or additional time while travelling.
- **My Toronto Pearson activity book** - The activity book assists autistic and neurodiverse children and their caregivers to prepare for their upcoming trip, from arriving at the airport to boarding a plane.



Counselling Collaborative

Counselling Collaborative of Waterloo Region: Autism Mental Health Support includes five Community Mental Health Agencies in the region, with over 50 therapists offering professional autism-informed therapy. Locations throughout Waterloo Region include Kitchener, Cambridge, Waterloo, Elmira, and New Hamburg. Virtual and telephone appointments are also offered. The central intake can connect individuals with the CCWR agency of choice. Flexible payment options include a sliding scale based on income, insurance benefits, or OAP core funding. Eligibility for other funding may also be discussed during intake. To register for counselling, visit www.counsellingwr.ca or call 519-884-0000.

Autism in High School Web-based Guide

This resource guide is to help students with autism and their families navigate the transitions and challenges of high school. The guide is divided into common transition periods. In each section, you will find descriptions of common challenges, suggested questions to help you plan for supports, and external resources for further investigation. This is the website address: www.autisminhighschool.ca



AO Employment Solution's Developmental Disabilities and Home Care

AO Employment Solution provides individuals living with a developmental disability with professional personalized care including respite care, personal care, overnight care, and care management services.

Learn more at

www.aoemploymentsolution.ca.

Autism Speaks Canada

Autism Speaks Canada is committed to ensuring access to reliable information and services throughout the life span of an individual. Their Autism Response Team (ART) is an information line for the autism community. Their team members are specially trained to provide personalized information to people with autism, their families and care-takers.

www.autismspeaks.ca/autism-response-team-art

Student Links

Funded by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, Student Links is an opportunity for students (ages 14 to 21) who have an intellectual disability to explore ideas for their future after high school. The goal is to enhance their capacity to make informed decisions about their future prior to leaving school.

If you want to learn more about Student Links, contact: Eric Humphreys, at ehumphreys@communitylivingontario.ca or Dana LaBrash at dlabrash@communitylivingontario.ca

Creating Your Individualized Housing and Support Plan - DSO Webinars

Online

Tuesdays, March 11, 18 and 25, 2025

10:00 am - 12:15 pm

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

Register at this link.

Questions about this event can be sent to:

Bambi Pepe b.pepe@lccare.ca

Tanner Stranges housing@dsohnr.ca.

Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County: Resource Page

Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County (LDAWC) is excited to announce that their resource page is now live! This page has valuable information on learning disabilities, IEPs, other supportive resources in the community and community programs for students, parents, educators and caregivers. The page is designed to support you with the information and connections needed to navigate learning disabilities and ADHD. For more information visit their website: www.ldawc.ca/support

Integrated Crisis Centre

Integrated Crisis Centre is operated by the Canadian Mental Health Association Waterloo-Wellington and Thresholds Homes and Supports.

This service is intended for individuals aged 18 years or older who are experiencing a mental health or substance-use crisis who cannot safely wait for community mental health or substance-use support.

Their services include:

Walk-In Support: Individuals can visit the centre without an appointment, receiving immediate assistance from their caring staff.

Crisis Intervention: Trained peer support workers and service navigators provide crisis intervention, de-escalation, emotional support and brief follow-up.

Referrals: They connect individuals to appropriate community resources, including respite beds, mental health services, substance use health support, and other community referrals.

298 Laurence Ave., Kitchener

2 pm to 8 pm, Tuesday to Saturday

Email: icc@cmhaww.ca

If you are in crisis contact HERE 24/7 at 1844-437-3247

Region of Waterloo's Resources on Children with Exceptional or Special Needs

Some children are born with exceptional needs or an exceptional need is identified later as the child grows. Region of Waterloo's website is a great resource for parents and caregivers of Children with Exceptional or Special Needs. You can find information on the following programs/services on the 'Children with Exceptional or Special Needs' page on their website at the link below:

www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/health-and-wellness/children-with-special-needs

Infant and Child Development

Infant and Child Development offers services, assistance, and support to families of young children who may be experiencing developmental concerns, delays or disabilities.

A range of services are available to children up to age five who are not attending licensed child care or kindergarten.

Finding Licensed Services for Children with Special Needs

The Special Needs Access Point (SNAP) is a single access point for children up to 12 years who are currently attending or seeking to enroll in a licensed child care program in Waterloo Region. SNAP accepts referrals from child care programs, parents, and community agencies.

Please visit the **Special Needs Resourcing Collaborative** website where you can find more information about referrals, what supports are available, and resources for both parents and early learning child care centres.

Community Supports

**Extend-A-Family Waterloo Region
KidsAbility
Waterloo Region Family Network**

Financial Assistance: Help Paying for Child Care

Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities: If you are a parent or guardian who is caring for a child with a severe disability you may be able to get financial support through the **Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities (ACSD) Program**. This program provides financial support for low-income and moderate-income families to cover some of the extra costs of caring for a child who has a severe disability.

Special Services at Home: Families who are caring for a child with a developmental and/or physical disability can apply to the **Special Services at Home (SSAH) program** to get funding.

Online Application for ACSD and SSAH

ACSD and SSAH applications can be completed online. Below are the links for these two applications:

ACSD: www.ontario.ca/page/assistance-children-severe-disabilities-program

SSAH:
www.ontario.ca/page/special-services-home

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE COMMUNITY

School Issue Parent Support Group by WRFN

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.

For more information and next meeting date please contact Sue Simpson at Sue.simpson@wrfn.info.

Family Resource Coach of WRFN

The Family Resource Coaches of Waterloo Region Family Network (WRFN) 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 within our community.

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

Call Lisa Cook at 226-338-7274 or by email at lisa.cook@wrfn.info.

Resilience Project

The Resilience Project from FACS Waterloo has some new programming for children, youth, and caregivers. Learn more and register for programs at this link: resiliencecollective.ca/programs-offered.

The Anonymous Bullying Reporting Tool of WRDSB

The Anonymous Bullying Reporting Tool is available to WRDSB students to report safety concerns related to bullying for themselves, or on behalf of another student.

The Anonymous Bullying Reporting Tool is not meant to replace school supports available, but rather to provide an option for students. Students are encouraged to continue to reach out to their teachers, principal or other school staff when in need of assistance. For more information go to the website and search "The Anonymous Bullying Reporting Tool."

www.wrdsb.ca



Family Support Network for Employment

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.

EarlyON Team

Early Learning, Child Care Navigators and Partners

Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Navigators seek opportunities to assist families in accessing Child Care, EarlyON programming, and other services that support the healthy development of children aged 0 – 6. They focus on supporting families who experience barriers accessing these services.

To meet with an Early Learning & Child Care Navigator you can send a request **online** or via email:

at earlyyearsinfo@ytr.ymca.ca

You can also call 519-741-8585 ext. 3008 and ask to speak with an Early Learning and Child Care Navigator.

For more info please visit ELCC Navigators at this **link**:

www.earlyyearsinfo.ca/earlyon-programs-and-calendar/services

Waterloo Wellington Down Syndrome Society Support Group

Mothers Connection is a group supporting Moms with young children with Down syndrome with childcare provided. Go to **WWDSS.ca** or email info@wwdss.ca for more information.

EarlyON

Waterloo Region Locations

EarlyON Child and Family Centres offer free, high-quality programs for families and children from birth to 6 years old.

Along with seven (7) EarlyON locations across Waterloo Region there are five (5) mobile sites where Drop-in Playtime is offered in the mornings:

- Wellesley Community Centre
Monday
- Stork Family YMCA - Tuesday
- New Dundee Community Centre
Tuesday
- Wilmot Family Resource Centre
Wednesday
- Victoria Hills Community Centre - Friday

Drop-in Playtime: drop in any time the center is open.

Families are required to set up a KeyON account through **www.KeyON.ca** before participating in programs.

www.earlyyearsinfo.ca

Drop-Ins at EarlyON

Family Resource Coach of WRFN hosts in-person drop-in meetings to answer your questions about community resources and child development. They take place at various EarlyON locations. Meetings do not require an appointment but are offered on a first come first serve basis.

Visit: **www.wrfn.info/events** for drop-in dates and locations.

Or call: 226-808-5460

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE COMMUNITY

9-8-8 Help Line

9-8-8 is a new national helpline in Canada that gives people access to suicide prevention services via call or text. It's available in all provinces and territories, 24/7 and free of charge. Its goal is to prevent suicide. Calls and texts will be directed to a network of partners in communities across the country. People can call or text 9-8-8 toll-free, anytime for support in English and French.

The Ontario Caregiver Organization

The Ontario Caregiver Organization is full of resources for caregivers. Click on each title to go to the specific webpage.

- **Ontario Caregiver Helpline:**
1-833-416-2273

A single point of access for 24/7 caregiver information, supports, and services in both English and French. Live chat is also available Mon-Fri, 7am-9pm at

ontariocaregiver.ca

- **The SCALE Program (Supporting Caregiver Awareness, Learning and Empowerment): Caregiver Needs and Well-Being**
- **Online Support Groups**
Peer Support Program that connects caregivers with trained peer mentors for 1:1 phone or virtual support.
For caregivers seeking to become a peer mentor - **[click here](#)**
For caregivers who need the support of a peer mentor - **[click here](#)**
- **Educational Webinars**
- **Toolkits and Resources for Caregivers**
- **Time to Talk Podcast**

APSGO

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.

If you are interested please email APSGO-KW at: apsgo.kw@gmail.com. You can also visit their website for more information: **www.apsgo.ca**.

Camino Wellbeing + Mental Health offers Groups and Workshops

Camino wellbeing + Mental Health is offering several online and in-person child/youth, caregiver, and family groups. These groups are FREE and open to families of the Waterloo Region.

Check their website for all groups and workshops:

www.caminowellbeing.ca/groups-workshops

To register call 519-743-6333 X 3250 or email: groups@caminowellbeing.ca

Region-wide Tutoring

Camino Wellbeing+ Mental Health provides tutoring and homework spaces that are accessible and free of cost to families and students. For more information, visit **www.caminowellbeing.ca/tutoring**.

Passport Program of Ontario

The Passport Program, funded by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS), helps adults with a developmental disability be involved in their communities and live as independently as possible by providing funding for community participation services and supports, activities of daily living and person-directed planning. The program also provides funding for caregiver respite services and supports for primary caregivers of an adult with a developmental disability.

www.passportfunding.ca

Vulnerable Person's Registry

The Vulnerable Persons Registry (VPR) is a community-based initiative that promotes communication between vulnerable persons, the people who support them, and the police. This information will assist officers when responding to an emergency involving a vulnerable person. The registry provides police with quick access to critical information. Access to this information is controlled. The police dispatcher has access to the Vulnerable Persons Registry (VPR). They will forward the registrant's information to the relevant police officer involved in the emergency. The information you provide the VPR remains safe and secure.

Individuals, their parent/legal guardian, or other legal authorities may register a vulnerable person. The VPR is voluntary and free to register.

www.vulnerablepersonsregistry.ca

Housing Toolkit by DSO

Learn how the DSO housing toolkit can help you create a housing vision for adults with developmental disabilities.

This toolkit is a library of housing resources put together by DSO staff, with input from people in similar situations, to help you create a housing plan. If you choose to use the **My housing and support plan** form, Step 1 will provide you with tools to complete it. Additional steps within the toolkit will help you to fill in any gaps in your housing plan. For example, Step 2 "Reviewing housing options and locations" will help if you are not sure where you want to live, and Step 3 "Financing the Plan" will help you explore funding opportunities. There are 6 Steps, click on each step to access information, resources, tools and expert advice from our staff, families, partner agencies and organizations.

Check out this link for more information:

www.dsontario.ca/resources/housing

In recognition of **National Housing Day** on November 22, a special video has been created in collaboration with self-advocates, their support teams, the DSO Communications team, and DSO Housing Navigators. You can watch the video at this link:

National Housing Day DSO and Self Advocate Campaign

To connect with DSOCWR Housing Navigator, call or email at: 1-888-941-1121, c.hall@sunbeamcommunity.ca



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE COMMUNITY

March of Dimes - Hi, Tech! and Paving the Path

March of Dimes Hi, Tech! program empowers adults with disabilities to build their digital skillset and bridge online connections with their communities.

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:

www.marchofdimes.ca/en-ca/programs/atech/hitech

Paving the Path for Work is a 6-week program aimed at helping people who has limited exposure to employment but want to learn more. Offered virtually and in person. Contact **Miriam Braithwaite** at mbraithwaite@marchofdimes.ca or **905-687-7467 ext. 227**.

Benefits Wayfinder

Prosper Canada's new Benefits Wayfinder tool can help you and your sibling with a disability navigate federal and provincial benefits to improve your sibling's financial security. You can access their services from their website at this link:

www.benefitswayfinder.org

Learn more about how to use this tool and improve financial security by enrolling into this free online course:

Savvy Siblings: Strengthening the Financial Security of Your Sibling with a Disability. This course is for adults who want to play a role in improving the financial security of their siblings with disabilities.

Programs for Parents, Children and Youth by Woolwich Counselling Centre

Woolwich Counselling Centre provides various counselling programs and services to support the needs of the people of our community. Learn more about these on their website:

www.wchc.on.ca/community-programs/all-programs-and-services
Email: info@woolwichcounselling.org

Strengthening Children's Emotion- Regulation Skills

Virtual parenting workshop

Wednesday, Mar. 19 2025, 6:30-7:30 pm

Learning how to recognize and manage strong emotions is an important life skill. Benefits include improved communication, independence, self-confidence, and interpersonal skills.

Building Better Boundaries

In-person small group therapy for adults

Thursdays, May 1-Jun. 12 2025, 6-7:30 pm

This psychoeducational therapy group explores the importance of healthy boundaries in relationships, and provides concrete information and strategies to develop and maintain them.

Glad To Be Me

In Person Workshop (Ages 4 - 7)

Monday, May 5 and Wednesday June 4 2025, 4 to 5 pm

This fun-filled children's workshop promotes self-esteem and self-worth.

Financial Literacy for People with Disabilities in Canada by Connect 4 Life

Financial Literacy for People With Disabilities in Canada is a 8-week virtual program that will educate individuals with disabilities about their financial rights. It's one of many programs offered by Connect 4 Life.

Please visit their website: www.connect4life to know all programs.

Email: info@connect4life.ca

Phone: 437-345-1336

Strong Minds Through Active Bodies

Strong Minds Through Active Bodies is a free online course for physical activity for students, professionals, and people supporting youth and adults with autism to access physical activity programs and spaces. Participants who access this free course will learn about autism, neurodiversity, ableism, and mental health related with autism. They will have opportunities to contribute to a community of practice through discussion board posts and a written assignment.

www.apexacademyonline.instructure.com/enroll

Resources for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities

Community Living Ontario has made some online resources available related to topics such as legal capacity and intellectual disability, supported decision making, guardianship, banking with disability etc. These are available at this link:

www.communitylivingontario.ca/right-to-decide

Support for Mental Health

The **Mental Health Commission of Canada's website** is updated with credible information and resources about maintaining mental health during times of crisis, and supporting people managing a mental illness in a challenging context. Please click on this link to check their website: www.mentalhealthcommission.ca

Please see below for some more resources for emergency mental health services in the event you need to connect with someone.

Here247

1-844-4373247 or

TTY: 1-877-688-5501

www.here247.ca

Camino Wellbeing+Mental Health

519-743-6333

www.caminowellbeing.ca

Grand River Hospital

519-742-3611

www.grhosp.on.ca

Cambridge Memorial Hospital

519-621-2330

www.cmh.org

If you or someone you are providing support to is in crisis and needs emergency mental health services, go directly to Grand River Hospital or Cambridge Memorial Hospital ER for Crisis Services. Primary health care providers can make referrals to **Adult Outpatient Mental Health Services**.

Extend-A-Family WR

Community Groups

This Community Group is to support members to participate in their community by encouraging them to make connections to places and people. This is accomplished through:

- Group facilitation to develop group norms and safety in community
- Developing relationships in community
- Becoming more confident and independent
- Leadership development

Eligible participants are 18 years and older, eligible for passport funding, and do not require one-to-one support or assistance with personal care.

Open Space

Extend-A-Family in partnership with Kitchener Public Library hosts **Open Space** - a weekly gathering program that promotes inclusion within the community by getting people together for food, fun, and conversation.

Mondays - 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm
Kitchener Public Library, 85 Queen St N

Wednesdays - 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm
Cambridge Mall Food Court
355 Hespeler Rd, Cambridge

Thursdays - 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm
Fairview Park Mall
2960 Kingsway Drive, Kitchener

For more information contact at:
519-741-0190 or info@eafwr.on.ca

Friendly Connections

Friendly Connections is an interactive social service for individuals of all ages with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities run by ConnectABILITY.

Focused on helping their community overcome isolation, Friendly Connections 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. We mail letters, postcards, colouring sheets, activity sheets, stickers, and other fun goodies!

www.connectability.ca/friendly-connections

Planning Network's Action Guide

Imagine being denied access to money in your own bank account; not being permitted to get your own cell phone; not being consulted about an important health decision; or being turned away when trying to open an RDSP because you have an intellectual disability. These are some of the scenarios families regularly face.

The Planning Network's Action Guide and the webcast at the link below are excellent resources families can use to help outline what their options are in these and other situations.

www.planningnetwork.ca/resources/legal-capacity

Also check their website for many other useful resources and free webinars:

www.planningnetwork.ca/#freeonlinewebcasts

Canadian Dental Care Plan

Canadian residents with an adjusted family net income below \$90,000, who do not have dental insurance can apply for the Canadian Dental Care Plan (CDCP).

To check the eligibility criteria and application dates please check the website:

www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/dental/dental-care-plan

Waterloo Region Community Legal Services

Waterloo Region Community Legal Services provide legal advice and help for low income people residing in Waterloo Region with the following type of problems:

Housing Law (tenants)

Income Maintenance Law (ODSP, OW and CPP-D)

Employment Insurance

Name Change and Gender Marker Change

Consumer Protection

Sexual Harassment in Workplace

For more information please contact their office by phone or by using their online contact form located under the Contact Us section of their website if you require legal assistance.

Website: www.wrcls.ca

Phone: 519-743-0254



Ontario Electricity Board (OESP) Helps Low-Income Families

Check the website of **Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP)**. If you are a customer of an electricity utility and in a lower-income home, you may qualify for a reduction on your electricity bill. **Click here** to learn more about it. The OESP will reduce the cost of your household electricity by applying a monthly credit directly to your bill. The credit amount will depend on how many people live in your home and your combined household income.

New Application

ontarioelectricitysupport.ca/SelfAssessment

Renew Application

ontarioelectricitysupport.ca/Renew

Emergency Low Cost Food Program

There are many sources in the Region of Waterloo which provide emergency food hampers and meal programs. Please call the hamper or meal program first as the information, including hours of operation and services offered, is subject to change. Most churches also provide food hampers for their geographical area only.

Please contact the **Food Bank of Waterloo Region** at 519-743-5576, or the **Cambridge Food Bank**, 519-622-6550 for more information about specific programs in your neighbourhood.

Summer 2025 Camp Fairs - Virtual Summer camp opportunities for children and youth with special needs

This series of fairs feature camps from Waterloo Region, Guelph-Wellington and beyond providing programming and support for campers with special needs. Various camp options and information available in these recorded webinars and camp videos.

SUMMER CAMP WEBINAR VIDEOS BY KIDSABILITY

Kidsability has all Camp Fair Videos on their website. Please check at this link:

Camp Fair Videos

Topics include:

- Steps needed to successfully plan for summer camp
- Where to find camp and funding information
- How to access inclusion support (1:1)
- Camp support offered by KidsAbility
- Plus more

To learn more contact:

rectherapy@kidsability.ca

or 1-888-372-2259



REGISTRATION OPENS

City of Kitchener

Spring programs: Tuesday, March 11

Summer camp: Tuesday, March 18

City of Waterloo

Spring program: Thursday, March 6 (active living)
and March 20 (swim)

Summer camp: Tuesday, March 4

City of Cambridge

Spring: Wednesday, March 19

REGISTER WITH KIDSABILITY

Visit: kidsability.ca/events

To learn more contact:

rectherapy@kidsability.ca

or 1-888-372-2259

RECREATION & LEISURE

Programs for those with Disabilities

Sunbeam Community and Developmental Services

Recreation and Wellness Calendar of Events

Through the delivery of specialized programming and activities designed to promote physical, emotional, and social wellness, Sunbeam's Recreation and Wellness team strives to enhance the quality of life and sense of community and belonging in the people they support.

The team introduces the monthly Recreation and Wellness Calendar of Events, which contains information and details for all group activities at Sunbeam. It can be found on the Sunbeam

Community website here:

www.sunbeamcommunity.ca/recreation-wellness-program

These programs qualify for the use of Passport Funds by eligible adults 18 years and older and are offered as a fee-for-service option for children 12 years and up.

For more information and registration, please contact the Recreation & Wellness department via phone: 519 893-6200 (ext. 1211) or email: recreation@sunbeamcommunity.ca

City of Kitchener

All-Access Hangout: Sundays from 1:15 - 2:45 p.m. at Country Hills Community Centre.

MoveMeant For All:

Inclusive fitness training for all individuals with special needs, mental health, trauma and more. Contact Courtney Hughes at 519-503-4489 or email: move.meantforall@gmail.com

Inclusive Bocchia: Mondays from 6:45 - 8:00 p.m. at Bridgeport Community Centre.

Inclusive Art: Tuesdays from 7:15 - 8:15 p.m. at Doon Pioneer Park Community Centre.

Artshine - Inclusive Adult Art Class: Fridays from 12:30 - 1:30 p.m. at Country Hills Community Centre

For full program details please go to

www.kitchener.ca/activenet.

Please click on the links for more information and dates, contact Marina Dotzert at

Marina.Dotzert@kitchener.ca or by calling

519-741-2200 ext. 7228. Inclusion

Membership required.

City of Cambridge

Integrated and Adapted Programs

Adaptive Sport Fundamentals

In this registered adapted program, participants have the opportunity to learn the fundamental movement skills such as catching, running, throwing, and jumping through a series of structured sporting activities. Classes will be modified for all abilities, and are open to participants ages 6-12 and 13-20.

Adapted Leisure Swim

An open swim opportunity for children, youth, and adults with diverse abilities to participate in a fun, supportive and supervised water environment. See their **Swim Schedules page** for more details and new dates when they are posted.

www.cambridge.ca/support-and-accommodations

A Few More Recreational Programs in the Community for Individuals with Special Needs

City of Waterloo and Kitchener Adapted Aquatics – To register visit the respective website pages:

www.ca.apm.activecommunities.com/activewaterloo and www.kitchener.ca/en/pools-and-swimming/swimming-lessons.aspx and scroll down to find the adapted Aquatics buttons .

DARE - The Dance Adventure Rhythm Experience program provides active and social engagement adapted for all developmental and physical abilities. For more information email dare@danceadventure.ca.

Feel the Beat - A dance class for young adults with developmental disabilities run through Athletics at WLU. Check this link for their Spring schedule when they update it. For more information visit: www.secure.laurierathletics.com/ecommerce

Arts for All – This class offered through Arts Abound is designed for children living with disabilities and includes a variety of art experiences (including dance, music, and visual art) that are adapted to the unique needs of each student to provide them an opportunity to express themselves. Please check this link for their Spring schedule when they update it. www.artsabound.ca

Kitchener Kicks Dragon Hearts program for Martial Arts continues to practice on Saturday mornings at 9am for individuals with special needs. Both virtual and in-person options are available. New participants are welcome to try the program for free before signing up. Visit www.kitchenerkicks.ca/WP for more information.

Adaptive Gymnastics program at KW Gymnastics will offer in-person 1:1 coaching for individuals with special needs. www.kwgymnastics.ca/adaptive-program. Contact Asifa at adaptive@kwgymnastics.ca for more information.

Programs at YMCA

Membership is not required to access the free online workout programs of YMCA. At this link you will have free access to many different kinds of workouts from your home.

YMCA programming online: www.ymcahome.ca

Fee assistance at the YMCA is available for eligible families. Please visit at this link: www.feeassist.ca

Special Olympics

Special Olympics Ontario offers a variety of impactful programs, including health initiatives, school-based programs, and Hometown Games, each contributing to the overall mission of promoting inclusion and well-being. www1.specialolympicsontario.com

Adaptive baseball for children and adults with special needs in Waterloo Region

Registration for the **2025 Buddy League Challenger Baseball** season opens at the end of March!

This Learn-to-Play, Junior, and Senior Divisions will be on the field at Riverside Park (Kin 1) from 5:30 - 8:30 p.m. on Monday and Thursday evenings from mid-May through mid-August. Stay tuned for specific details!

Please check their website for more information:

www.buddyleaguecanada.com

Sports for Special Athletes

Sports for Special Athletes (SSA) is a grass-roots, community-based sport and recreation organization. Locally based in Waterloo, their programs are designed for people with special needs, ages 5 years and up. They offer programs throughout the spring/summer and fall/winter seasons and include a wide variety of activities such as, 5 & 10 pin bowling, non-contact martial arts, adapted swimming, adapted yoga, floor hockey, boccia ball, mini-golf, softball (3 ability levels), soccer (2 ability levels), basketball, lawn bowling, power lifting, speed skating, curling and the annual Christmas party. They use city and school facilities and sport fields. **Check their website** see their latest schedule when they update and register.

Move by Goodlife Kids

MOVE is designed exclusively to get youth with special needs active, and is offered FREE to families. Registered participants get access to three live online small-group sessions each week led by one of MOVE's passionate coaches.

Learn more at: goodlifekids.com/MOVE

Fitness Class

Movin' & Groovin' fitness class is designed for children ages 4-12 with special needs. For registration and other information please visit their website or email the program coordinator: Nicole Vandermade SunlifeCPA@wlu.ca

519-884-0710 x3209

www.researchcentres.wlu.ca/sun-life-financial-centre-for-physically-active-communities

Online Sensory Workout Project

On behalf of Aptus Treatment Centre, the Sensory Workout Project is pleased to share the following training videos. Here are topic-specific video playlists:

Module 1: Intro to Sensory Workout, Fitness Goals, Outcomes & Safety

www.youtube.com/playlist?module 1

Module 2: Intro to Sensory Processing 1 Training video & 3 dance-focused activity videos for people supported:

www.youtube.com/playlist?module 2

Module 3: Intro to Sensory Processing & Physical Activity

www.youtube.com/playlist?module 3

Module 4: The Sensory Environment

www.youtube.com/playlist?module 4

RECREATION & LEISURE

Click on the links below for further information on each program

City programming in Kitchener–Waterloo offers recreation programs in various ways. Some of these are listed below:

Before and After School Programs

Extended day programs through the school board (ages 4-12 years)

Waterloo Regional District School Board -WRDSB
Waterloo Catholic District School Board - WCDSB
YMCA/YWCA

Kindergarten Extended Day Care (4-5 years)
School Age Youth Development (6-12 years)

City of Waterloo Camps-and-pre-school
City of Kitchener Children-and-youth Kitchener
City of Cambridge Children's recreation

Access 2 Card

The Access 2 Card program helps to ensure that entertainment, cultural, and recreational opportunities are more available and accessible to all. The Access 2 card is for people of all ages who live with a permanent disability and require the assistance of a support person at participating entertainment, cultural, and recreational venues across Canada.

A support person is an adult who accompanies a person with a permanent disability to assist with services that are not provided by the employees at the participating venue, such as assistance with eating, administering medication, communication and use of the facilities.

www.access2Card.ca

Check your local Community Centres for PD Day, March Break, Summer Camps and activities at the link below:

Kitchener: www.kitchener.ca/community-centres

Waterloo: www.waterloo.ca/community-and-rec-centres

Cambridge: www.facilities.cambridge.ca

Workshops and Activity Guides
City of Waterloo Program and Activities Guide

City of Kitchener Active Kitchener

City of Cambridge: Inclusive activities for children can be found at this [link](#)

These are some of the places who accept an Access 2 Card in the Region of Waterloo:

Cambridge: Butterfly Conservatory, Fashion History Museum

Kitchener: Bingemans, Chicopee Tube Park, THEMUSEUM, Centre in the Square, The Registry Theatre

Waterloo: Third Age Learning, Waterloo Region Museum

Inclusion Services

If you or someone you know has a disability and needs support to join any City of Kitchener or City of Waterloo programs, Inclusion Services is here to help! They offer 1:1 support for people with disabilities wanting to participate in any in-person City programs. Support may be provided by program staff, training volunteers, or support workers. All inclusion support is free of charge. Inclusion Services also provides up to two weeks of summer camp inclusion support in any City of Kitchener or City of Waterloo camp programs. Visit www.kitchener.ca/leisuresupport for more information on how to request support and to complete an inclusion membership form.

For any other accommodation needs or requests, please contact the **Inclusion Services Coordinator at 519-741-2200 ext. 7229**

Helpful Links To Workshops and Newsletters

www.kidsability.ca/Community-Rec-Directory
www.eafwr.on.ca/events
wrfn.info/blog/tag/wrfn-newsletter
wrfn.info/CommunityNewsAndUpdates
www.caminowellbeing.ca
autism-ontario-adult-e-newsletter

Fee Assistance for Leisure and Recreational Activities

Fee Assistance for Leisure and Recreational Activities is available from different sources in the Region of Waterloo. More information on eligibility criteria and how to apply, can be found at these links:

The City of Waterloo:

Fee-assistance-application Waterloo

The City of Kitchener:

Fee-assistance Kitchener

The City of Cambridge:

Activities for Less Fee Assistance application Cambridge

YMCA of Three Rivers:

Fee-Assistance YMCA

Online PAL Card Application

The PAL (Personal Assistance for Leisure Activities) card program allows individuals with a disability to be accompanied by a personal attendant so that they may have the help they need to participate in recreation and leisure programs and services offered by the municipality and PAL card partners. The personal attendant is not charged the program fee and is present for the sole purpose of assisting the person with the disability. The regular program/registration fee is charged to the person with the disability.

People can apply for the PAL card with the City on line here:

PAL-card-application-process Kitchener

Waterloo's PAL form is found here:

PAL-Card Application Waterloo

Cambridge's PAL form can be found here:

PAL-Card Application Cambridge

ABOUT US

MAIN OFFICE

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sdrc@sunbeamcommunity.ca

Website: www.sdrc.ca

Hours:

9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Monday to Friday

(Visits by appointment only)



SDRC Connection publishes four times a year. If you would like to receive notification when new issues are available on our website, please contact us at sdrc@sunbeamcommunity.ca providing your name and email address. If you have a family member currently receiving services from SDRC, please provide their name as well.

You can also sign up for newsletter notification online at our website: www.sdrc.ca

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Disclaimer

We want to provide an informative resource that will be a useful guide for you. **Sunbeam Developmental Resource Centre does not necessarily endorse the information contained in this newsletter.** The purpose is to provide information to the community. It is up to the reader to decide what is useful for them. We make every effort to ensure that our information is accurate and relevant. We apologize for any errors or omissions that occur.

Code of Conduct

Sunbeam's "Code of Conduct For Persons Served and Family Members" can be found at www.sunbeamcommunity.ca/news

Privacy, Consent, Collection & Disclosure

Sunbeam's "Privacy, Consent, Collection & Disclosure of Personal/Health Information 2024 Policy Bulletin" can be found at www.sunbeamcommunity.ca/privacy-policy