



OUR VISION:
“families committed to families”

Durham Family Network brings families together, not as recipients of a service but as active participants in moving forward with our sons and daughters to a good life for them, now and in the future. The Network offers an opportunity to bring families together for mutual support, learning and a shared purpose.

FUND RAISER FOR DFN

Progressive Euchre Evenings

February 14,
Royal Canadian Legion,
1555 Bayly Street, Pickering

April 4,
Royal Canadian Legion,
1251 Simcoe Street North, Oshawa

Prizes -50/50 Draw- Silent Auction
*Come out for an evening of card playing,
fun and meeting people.*

Anyone wanting to help or donate for either evening or to purchase tickets, please call Helen at (905) 436-2500 ext 2222

**THANK YOU
FOR SHARING YOUR
TIME AND EXPERIENCE
WITH US**

We wish to thank parents Elaine Palmer, Kauser Zaheer and Debbie Sloan the Coordinator for Passports into Community program, for their well-done presentations in November. There were lots of questions, good information and sharing of stories between families.

We have not heard as of yet when the next round of funding from the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) will be announced for Passports.

We will inform you as soon as we hear any new information.

RDSP

Registered Disability Savings Plan

The government of Canada has extended the deadline for establishing a plan and applying for the 2008 Grant and Bond to March 2nd 2009 for 2008 contributions.

Linda smith will present detailed information for Families in Durham interested in learning how to pursue this Plan for their child. The evening will be in the Gathering Place, 850 King Street West, 6:30, February 2. Handouts with clear information as to

PROTECTORS

The Durham Family Network in conjunction with DAFRS and Deohaeko Support Network are convening times for discussions regarding Keeping Vulnerable People Safe While They are in the Hospital or Undergoing Intrusive Tests.

We plan to meet for ongoing discussion on 4th Thursday of each month at 2:30 pm at the Durham Association for Family Respite Services, 850 King St. West Unit 20, Oshawa. If you would like to join us, please

WORKSHOP OPPORTUNITIES

Free training workshops covering a variety of topics designed specifically for respite workers, parents, agency staff, family and friends. For more information go to www.kerrysplaceautismservices.org/RespiteTraining



INCOME TAX TIME AGAIN

Sue Talmey of the Durham Association for Family Respite Services - Collaborative Administrative Department is again offering to complete *Income* Tax Returns for families connected with DAFRS and DFN. Please call Joanne Partridge at (905)436-2500 ext. 2304 for further information on how to proceed.

RESPITESERVICES.COM

Navigating the respiteservices.com Website

Monday, March 9th 2009
1 to 3pm and 7 to 9pm

Durham Association for Family Respite Services
850 King St. West Unit 20
Oshawa, Ontario

Please come and join us for an afternoon or evening to learn more about respiteservices.com and how to navigate our website.

We look forward to sharing information on what we have to offer with you. Families have expressed an interest in learning more about how the website works and how to look for Support Workers. Come ask questions and meet other families.

You do not need to be a registered family to attend. Respiteservices.com Durham is a new resource for families and support workers. We look forward to meeting you.

BILL 77 Now Known as The Social Inclusion Act

The Regulations regarding the Social Inclusion Act are now being addressed with ongoing input from families across Ontario. Please go to Community Living Ontario for the most recent updates.

There will be a Social Inclusion Act - Policy and Regulation Forum on February 6, 2009 at the Harbour Front from 10am to 4pm.
Hosted by Community Living Ontario - call Arlene 416 447-4348

DURHAM SPECIAL NEEDS ALLOCATION PROGRAM

FOR ADULTS WITH A DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY CRITERIA FOR FUNDING

The purpose of this fund is to provide assistance to adults with developmental disabilities and their families. The focus is on extraordinary situations that require critical supports during a crisis or transitional situation that is short-term in nature and existing services are not able to respond expediently to the situation.

To apply for this fund you must fill out a Durham Special Needs Allocation Program (DSNAP) request form. Request forms are often filled out in conjunction with an agency. The completed request needs to be presented to the DSNAP committee for approval. The average amount of a proposal is \$3,000. This funding comes from the Ministry of Community and Social Services and is a small ongoing fund. If you would like more information or a request form, please contact Helen Dionne at (905)436-2500 ext. 2222 or hdionne@dafrs.com.

Respite funds are available for families with children up to 18 years old with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

If you would like help filling out the form or would like more information about the application, the process and eligibility, you are welcome to attend this information session.

Feb 12th 2009

Durham Association for Family Respite Services
20 - 850 King Street West
Oshawa
6:30pm-8:30pm

After the application presentation, please stay for the opportunity to meet with other parents in Durham Region who are figuring out what it takes to make the best possible things happen for their children in their own neighbourhood regardless of their amount of funding supports.

Please register online at
<http://www.kerrysplaceautismservices.org/RespiteTraining/>

Or call Laura Pitoscia at 905-713-6808 Ext.360

Education Corner

School Meeting Tips

When headed out to any school meeting it is always good to try to take another person along with you. There is often so much information being shared and discussed it is hard to keep up. Your support person could take notes for you so you will have a written account of the meeting after the fact. It makes it easier to know your next steps or the areas needing further clarification, so you will be able to make an informed decision. It is advisable to wait before signing any consent presented to you at school until you have a full understanding of your options and the reasoning for the consent. If you feel uncomfortable refusing to sign "on the spot," just explain you want to talk it over with your family first. You may want to ask if they have any supporting documentation for you to read to assist you with your decision.

Identification Placement Review Committee (IPRC)

Most of our families need to attend an IPRC through their child's school years. During an IPRC, a decision upon classroom placement is made. These definitions of placement are taken straight from the Ministry of Education. This and more information can be found in the Ministry document "Special Education; A Guide for Educators." This is also available online at www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/guide

IPRC Placement Options:

- Regular Class with Indirect Support:
- the student spends 100% of their day in a Regular Class. Support is provided to the teacher.
- Regular Class with Resource Assistance: the student spends 100% of their day in a Regular Class. Support is provided within the class for the student for part or all of the day.
- Regular Class with Withdrawal: the student spends the majority of their day in a Regular Class, but is scheduled to go elsewhere (i.e. Special Education Class or Resource Room) for intensive support up to 50% of the day.
- Special Class with Partial Integration: the student spends the majority of their day in a Special Education Class, but is integrated into a Regular Class on a scheduled basis up to 50% of their day.
- Special Education Class: the student spends 100% of their time in a Special Education Class.

IPRC Decision: Did you know?

- You have 30 days to sign the IPRC, which will indicate you agree with the decision?
- If you do not sign the IPRC within 30 days, the Board will implement the decision without your signature and if you have not indicated you will appeal the decision.
- If you do not agree with the decision, you may request (in writing) an additional meeting within 15 days of the IPRC.
- If you still do not agree, you may appeal the decision in writing within 30 days from the IPRC.
- IPRC reviews are offered once a year. If you are satisfied with the current placement, you are given the option of waiving the IPRC for that given year.

IEP Individual Education Plans

The IEP is to be finished by the 30th school day of each new school year. Expect to receive an invitation to contribute to your child's IEP. As parents, it is very important to focus on your child's strengths and needs. You may want to share with the school successful strategies used at home or in the community. You should also share what your goals are for your child so the school may incorporate this into the IEP. An IEP is a living document, which means it should be evaluated regularly through the school year and adjusted as needed. Students who are 14 years of age should begin a transition plan to plan for their transition from high school. It is up to the parent to initiate this with the school in writing.

Tip!

When meeting with your child's teachers or consultants, make sure the focus is on your child not their diagnosis. A strategy to bring the focus on your child is to write the vision you, your family and your child hold for your child's future. This will help the teachers understand the path you are choosing and the doors (options) you would like to keep open. Do not be afraid to dream big!

Education for All

Remember the document Education for All, grades kindergarten to grade six. This research based document aimed to provide a framework to support a teacher's efforts while improving the quality of instruction for all of their students from kindergarten to grade six. Due to the positive reception of this document and an acknowledged need for a similar document for grades 7 to 12, expect to see a new version of Education for All for grades 7 to 12 soon.

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/reports/speced/paanel/index.html



EDUCATION CORNER CONTINUED.

Advocacy

Have a question about education? Visit Lindsay Moir's column "Ask Lindsay" www.oacrs.com. You will find a variety of scenarios to learn from as Lindsay fields questions from parents across Ontario. His columns are archived as well. It makes for an educational read.

Education resources - www.oacrs.com
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/>

Inclusive education resources:

www.inclusiveeducation.ca
www.uni.edu/coe/inclusion/strategies/types_adaptation.html
www.projectparticipate.org/handoutsforms.asp
www.ascd.org/Publications/
www.Lexicon_of_Learning.aspx

This online dictionary, A Lexicon of Learning, provides clear definitions of educational terms in everyday language. By Kim Southern-Paulsen (Extend-A-Family Coordinator)

This includes our relationships with friends, family and within our communities; our relationship with nature and a Higher Power; and our relationship with ourselves (which is very important and which is strongly influenced by the quantity and quality of our other relationships). Relationships matter. So, what is a Meaningful Day? A meaningful day is one where relationships are present. Let us celebrate what makes our own lives meaningful and work together to support relationship building within our communities and within our world.

Jocelyne Tranquilla (Extend-A-Family Coordinator)

Canadian Association for Community Living 50th Anniversary Conference in Conjunction with The Global Forum for Inclusion

On November 18th through to the 21st, my daughter Karen & I attended the 50th Anniversary Conference and Inclusion International's global forum for inclusion. We were very excited to participate in the international gathering of families and self-advocates. Through good conversation and the sharing of stories both of us made new friends from around the world.

We took part in workshops that focused on four main Articles/Provisions of the UN Convention, legal capacity and supported decision-making, right to live in the community, inclusive education and support to families. I was able to participate in a focused discussion on support to families. The session revealed for me that no matter what side of the earth we come from families concerns & issues are very similar and we were all simply trying to create a good life for our children.

The conference screened two movies that in my opinion will have a very significant impact in terms of raising awareness nationally about what can and did happen to people with intellectual disabilities because of their profound devaluation within society. The movies are *The R Word but Names will Always Hurt You*, and the second movie is the *People First Freedom Tour Film*. These films are extremely powerful I don't think there was a dry eye in the house when they were screened. Keep your eyes and ears open and look for them in the near future.

Cindy Mitchell & Karen Inwood

WHAT MAKES YOUR LIFE MEANINGFUL?

The theme of this newsletter is Meaningful Day. Perhaps you have heard people talk about doing "meaningful activities" and leading "meaningful lives." But what is it that makes one's life meaningful? And how can we work on giving meaning to our lives and helping others recognize the meaning in their own? With these questions in mind, I asked three hundred people the following question: using a word or a sentence, what do you think makes your life meaningful. What surprised me was how happy & willing people were to answer the question. It would seem that everybody in the human family wants their life to be meaningful & wants others to view them as being such. From the answers that I received, here are some common themes about what makes a life meaningful:

to love & be love, to give & to receive, to create & to learn, to cherish & to be valued, to make a difference & to participate, to dream & to have choice, to believe & to be believed in.

When it comes down to it, what gives people meaning in their lives are relationships.



Family Alliance Ontario
2008 Conference Oct. 3rd to 5th
Engaging Families Building Bridges

On October 3rd, my daughter Karen and I drove to Ottawa to attend the Family Alliance Ontario (FAO) 2008 Conference. We car pooled with two other mothers from Durham, Jadwiga Dell and Maureen Emmons. It was a four and a half hour long drive that was made short by deep personal conversations of lived experience, shared realities and mutual support between three moms and an insightful 23-year-old young woman.

The conference opened with a lovely buffet dinner followed by a presentation from David Carter-Whitney, ADM Social Policy Development MCSS. David gave us an update on the MCSS Transformation Plan, Bill 77, and the Passport and Special Services at Home direct funding programs. As a parent, I was extremely pleased to see key senior staff from the Developmental Services sector of the Ministry of Community and Social Services attend the conference for the duration.

On Saturday John Lord was the keynote speaker for the 'Engaging Families – Pathways to Inclusion' session, John described how families are writing a new story that sticks with values and doesn't give up on a vision for a good life for their sons and daughters. Three families presented their story, the Quellte's presented Solutions of Choice, the Adam family presented My Home on Kirby Lane and the Beayni family presented A Good Life. All three families had a vision for a meaningful life for their sons and daughter that involved a home of their own, self-determination and building valued social roles for each of them.

The Saturday afternoon session 'Challenges Living the New Story – School and Beyond' involved a panel presentation and discussion.

Karen presented a powerful lived experience narrative from the perspective of a young woman who has left the school system. Karen described her experiences of her years at high school as wonderfully full of meaningful activity from taking the town bus with her friends in the neighborhood to attending all her classes with the same friends. When asked to describe her life since school ended Karen burst into tears and told the audience of her deep sadness that her mom had to go to work each day and that she was lonesome staying at home alone, sitting on the couch.

On Sunday morning, Michael Kendrick presented 'Building Bridges and Working Together'. This session outlined what good partnerships should look like for the optimum potential for families and organizations to create a good future for our sons and daughters. I left to come home feeling a little hopeful that some of our key partners just might have heard something important to guide them in their future actions through spending three days with a vibrant group of Ontario families. The conversations and solidarity that shortened the four and a half hour drive home with Jadwiga, Maureen and Karen, left me thinking that the direct actions of activist mothers and self-advocates would probably have a more significant impact on the day to day lives of people.

Cindy Mitchell & Karen Inwood

**YOU DON'T WANT TO
MISS OUR NIGHT OF
Big Dreams...Small Steps**

March 2nd, 2009

at the

Durham Association for Family Respite Services
The Gathering Place

850 King Street West, Unit 20

Oshawa, Ontario

6:30 pm

Stories from Our Children

Hearing how our adult sons and daughters are moving forward towards their dreams.

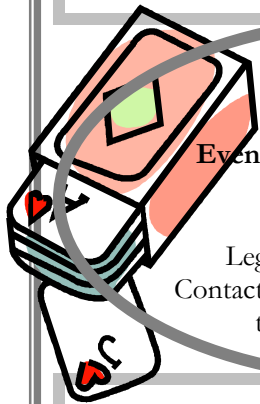
UP COMING EVENTS 2009

Feb 12th - Respite funds are available for families with children up to 18 years old with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Information Evening for Parents

Location: Durham Family Respite Services
In the Gathering Place
from 6:30pm to 8:30pm

Please register online at
<http://www.kerrysplaceautismservices.org/RespiteTraining/>
or call Laura Pitoscia at 905-713-6808 Ext.360
(Article in newsletter giving more detail of event)



Progressive Euchre Fun Raiser Event for Durham Family Network

April 4th – Royal Canadian
Legion 1251 Simcoe St. N. Oshawa
Contact: Helen for more information &
tickets 905 436-2500 x 2222.

February 17

Building a Context for Relationships presented by Janet Klees

RSVP through the training website
<http://www.kerryplaceautismservices.org/respitetraining/>
or call Resources for Exceptional Children & Youth
at 905 427-8862.

March 2, 2009

Big Dreams.... Small Steps

Stories from Our Children
Location: Durham Family Respite Services
at the Gathering Place from 6:30 pm to 8:45 pm
Contact: JoAnne at 905 436-2500 x 2304 to register.

March 9, 2009

Navigating the respiteservices.com Website

Location: Durham Family Respite Services
At the Gathering Place 7 to 9 pm
Contact: JoAnne at 905 436-2500 x 2304 to register

April 23, 2009

“What is a Home” presenter Darcy Elks

Location: Durham Family Respite Services
At the Gathering Place
Contact: JoAnne at 905 436-2500 x 2304 to register.

June 24, 2009

Durham Family Network Annual PICNIC

Location: Rotary Park Ajax - 4:30 pm to dark
Contact: Helen for more information at

905 436-2500 x 2222

WHEN EVERYTHING IS SAID AND DONE, TO HAVE A GREAT NEIGHBOUR YOU MUST BE ONE!

To get started on bringing this idea home, call:
Family Leadership Initiative of Durham
Association for Family Respite Services at 905-436-2500
Linda Dawe at ext. 2306 Cindy Mitchell at ext. 2310

SOCIAL ROLE VALORIZATION

Related Workshops

April 25 & 26 SRV Study Group

Location: Durham Family Respite Services,
The Gathering Place

May 11 to 14 SRV 10 - 4 day workshop covering

the 10 themes of Social Role Valorization
Location: Durham Family Respite Services, The
Gathering Place 8:30 to 4:30 each day
Contact: JoAnne at 905 436-2500 x 2304 to register

June 2 to 6

Community Living Ontario Conference

Location: Kingston
Check www.communitylivingontario.ca for more
information.

June 8 to 12 Passing – tentative

Location: to be determined

June 2009 Sanctity of Life

Location: Alberta

For More Information about any of these workshops
please contact Helen Dionne at (905)436-2500 ext.
2222