

**Durham Association for Family Respite Services**  
**Strategic Plan *April 2008***

**Vision**

That all people enjoy a full and meaningful life within the community.

**Mission**

DAFRS works in partnership with families with a member who has an intellectual disability or a child with a physical disability, providing Family Support (services, resources, and other types of assistance) that enhance the capacity of the whole family to care for one another and to sustain and/or enhance their valued social roles as family members and as members of the community.

**Values**

**DAFRS believes**

- ❖ in the essential importance of good family life.
- ❖ that communities have a fundamental responsibility to welcome and support people with disabilities.
- ❖ that, when provided with adequate support, families provide the safest, most consistent and loving environment for family members.
- ❖ in the importance of promoting valued social roles for people with disabilities.

We do all this by:

- respecting the primary decision-making role of families
- supporting people with disabilities to have valued and typical choices and significant and supported control over the direction of their lives
- promoting the importance of valued social roles for people with disabilities
- encouraging and supporting the capacity of the community to be responsive to people with disabilities
- seeking to provide paid support that is of excellent quality and of sufficient intensity to maintain or enhance family functioning
- engaging in ongoing reflection and evaluation to ensure that our work continues to take into account existing pressures and trends within the community and province and is true to our principles
- replacing existing services and service practices only when an equal or better alternative can be provided

**Principles of Family Support:**

- Family support reflects the right and the responsibility of parents to make decisions regarding all their children including their child with an intellectual disability
- Family support enhances the competency of family members to make informed decisions
- Family support reflects the power of small personal responses by family, friends and members of the community.

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- Family support enables the family, and individual family members, to fulfill, sustain and/or enhance relevant and valued social roles
- Family support is flexible enough to accommodate unique needs of different families.
- Family support is a role model of positive interpretations of people with intellectual disabilities and their families and thus teaches parents and the community to do so as well.
- Family support communicates to families and to involved community members that their loyalty and responsibility are to family, not to the organization.
- Family support programs provide a diverse range of supports to families with diverse characteristics and needs (including age, crisis, short/long term, etc.)

Family support services should:

- (1) fit into normative family life as smoothly as possible,
- (2) intrude upon family life as little as possible, and
- (3) enable and support the family to carry out its normative familial processes as much and as well as possible
- (4) assist families to promote valued social roles for their disabled family member
- (5) be founded, where possible, on unpaid, community connections
- (6) where required, provide excellent paid support (trained, reliable, etc.)

**Goals and Objectives:**

**DAFRS will complete its transition from an agency that provides “respite” to one that provides family support.**

1. DAFRS will work with Facilitators to develop greater focus and clarity of the Facilitator’s role, taking into account the complexity of the role and the need to maintain flexibility.
2. DAFRS will continue to work with families to develop and/or sustain individual funding arrangements to ensure that the family member with an intellectual disability continues to be an integral part of their family and are supported in valued roles at home and in the community.
3. In families where an individual funding arrangement is in place and the pivotal person (i.e. the relative or friend with primary responsibility for maintaining the arrangement) ceases to be able to continue in this role, DAFRS will explore alternative approaches to ensuring that the family member with an intellectual disability continues to be supported. DAFRS will act in an advisory/consultative role but will not be the primary decision maker for the person with an intellectual disability.
4. DAFRS will explore and develop alternate approaches to ensuring that family members have regular opportunities for relaxation and renewal, at the same time as the person with an intellectual disability is supported in ways that promote valued social roles.
5. DAFRS will develop opportunities for greater inclusion and involvement of young families.
6. DAFRS will establish principles for dealing with contingencies.
7. DAFRS will evaluate its services and supports against the Values and Principles on a regular basis.

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in Board membership with Durham Association for Family Respite Services.

Our Association has supported families with children and adults with developmental disabilities and children with physical disabilities in Durham region since 1978. We support about 500 families each year.

Our regular programs include in and out of home respite, day support and independent living. All of our services aim to augment a family's natural capacity and commitment to support their child of any age to live well within the community. We understand that it is families who make the difference for their child on a day to day basis and who hold the vision for their child's future.

The Association is governed by a Board of between 8 and 12 Directors. Meetings are held on a regular monthly basis, usually in the early evening. At times, ad hoc committees are struck to deal with specific issues, and Director participation is determined individually for these. We also support regular Board training through in-house and community workshops and events, and there is an expectation for some level of participation in these. A job description is attached.

Board membership involves the following process:

- Completed application form (enclosed) is submitted by the applicant
- Informal meeting with one or more Board members. The purpose of this meeting is to share information and mutually determine suitability
- Submission of name of proposed applicant to the Board for approval

We look forward to receiving your completed application form. If, in the meantime, you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. I would be happy to provide any additional information needed.

Sincerely,

Peter Dill  
Executive Director  
[pdill@dafrs.com](mailto:pdill@dafrs.com)  
905 436 2500 ext 2324

## **Job Description: Board Member<sup>1</sup>**

### **Authority and Responsibility**

The Board of Directors is the Legal authority for DAFRS. As a member of the board, a Director acts in a position of trust for the community and is responsible for the effective governance of the organization. The board operates consistent with a "Policy Governance Model" (description attached).

### **General Duties**

A Director is fully informed on organizational matters, and participates in the Board's deliberations and decisions in matters of policy, finance, programs and advocacy. The Director must:

1. Governance Policy
  - Approve, where appropriate, policy and other recommendations received from the board, its standing committees and senior staff.
  - Recommend policy to the Board.
  - Govern DAFRS by the broad policies developed by the Board.
2. By-laws and Board Policies
  - Monitor all board policies.
  - Review the bylaws and policy manual, and recommend bylaw changes to the membership.
  - Review the board's structure, approve changes, and prepare necessary bylaw amendments.
3. Planning and Monitoring
  - Establish overall long and short term goals, objectives and priorities for DAFRS in meeting the needs of the community.
  - Participate in the development of DAFRS organizational plan and annual review.
  - Approve DAFRS budget.
  - Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of DAFRS through a regular review of programs and services.
  - Be accountable to funding bodies for the services provided and funds expended.
4. Monitor Executive Director
  - Approve the hiring and release of the Executive Director's employment contract.
  - Support and participate in evaluating the Executive Director.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from: *United Way of Ajax-Pickering-Uxbridge, Handout: Understanding Board Roles and Responsibilities, Nov 3, 2003*

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**Board of Directors** *(Jan 2004)*

5. Internal/External Relations

- Assist in developing and maintaining positive relations among the board, committees, staff members and community to enhance DAFRS' mission.
- Promote DAFRS membership through community networking, etc.
- Seek nominations for election to the Board when appropriate.

**Position Requirements:**

Requirements of Board Members include:

- Commitment to the work of the organization, including being informed of, and publicly supporting, the services provided by DAFRS.
- Knowledge and skills in one or more area of Board governance policy, finance, programs, personnel and advocacy.
- A time commitment of 5 hours per month ( includes preparation, Board meeting and committee meeting time).
- Preparation for, attendance at and participation in the discussions and deliberations of the Board, including monthly Board meetings, meetings of assigned committees and task groups and the Annual General Meeting.
- Demonstrated awareness of, and ability to, keep Board discussions confidential.
- Demonstrated awareness of, and abstention from, any conflict of interest.
- Attendance at required in-house education sessions.

**Term**

Directors are installed in accordance with the by-laws. (They are elected by the membership at the Annual General Meeting. Interim vacancies may be filled by the Directors from among qualified members of the Association.) Directors serve for a two year term and may be re-elected for one additional term. Directors may be released at the end of the elected term, by resigning, or otherwise, in accordance with the by-laws.

**Evaluation**

A Director's performance is evaluated annually based on the performance of assigned board requirements and duties.

**Review Date and Approval Date**

The Board Development Committee annually reviews the Board Member Job Description. Recommended changes are presented to the Board

Approval Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Administrative Volunteer Application/Request for Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone No: \_\_\_\_\_  
Business Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

1. I am interested in serving on:
  - the Board of Directors
  - a Board Committee
  
2. I have an interest in and /or experience in the following:
  - Finance
  - Legal
  - Community Involvement
  - Health Care
  - Public Relations
  - Advocacy
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. My current activities (employment, volunteer, hobbies) include:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
4. My previous experience on a Board or Committee or supporting the Association includes:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
5. I would like information about the Association:
  - In general
  - Specifically (please indicate what type of information you require)\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please return to:  
Board Membership  
Durham Association for Family Respite Services  
20-850 King St. W.  
Oshawa, ON L1J 8N5