

March 2021

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Durham Family Resources

FAMILYfocus

SO THAT ALL PEOPLE ENJOY A FULL AND MEANINGFUL LIFE WITHIN THE COMMUNITY.

Creative Housing Solutions Through Community Conversations.

Let's Talk is a project co-designed with families, community members and partners and is rooted in the power of sharing – sharing space, sharing real stories, and sharing vision. At the heart of it is a series of facilitated community conversations, where we'll come together to imagine all of the ways in which we are personally and collectively strengthened, when we listen deeply and open our hearts and minds to one another. As we share and explore our understanding of the housing issues within Durham Region, we'll uncover the many assets and resources that people contribute within their lives and their communities, and together we'll create a vibrant and inclusive vision for how we would like our communities to be. These conversations will largely take place between two groups of people for whom housing is vitally important and often at risk - families that include an adult family member with a disability and newcomers to Canada within Durham Region. Our aim is to imagine, build upon and bring about opportunities for immediate or short-term action in housing. We'll also be creating a road map for other like-minded groups who would like to develop their own collaborative conversations around issues of housing, home and community.

In many informal ways already, families have been sharing what draws them to join in this conversation and what they feel they might achieve for themselves by being involved. One family has expressed “We’ve been in Canada and Durham Region for awhile now and have fairly steady housing but would love to have a conversation about how to discover and bring about real community and connections from where we live. We have housing but don’t feel a part of a neighbourhood yet”. For another mother who continues to manage the revolving door of roommates with her son who has a disability, it’s about “getting beyond the student roommate staying for just a year and find a more committed person or couple who want to make this a longer lifestyle decision.” Beyond simply sorting out a roof over one’s head, what people are seeking is a pathway to deeper roots and connection with others and community, which can then lead to more achievable and sustainable living arrangements.

Work has been well under way these past months as we’ve been planning and preparing with a mighty group of partners and Advisory members - community leaders who help to broaden and deepen our understanding of the issues across different populations and within different contexts. Together we’ve been

developing a set of principles that will guide and anchor us, that are deeply steeped in the values of DFR and our partners, who are each vested in having real and meaningful, grassroots approaches to building capacity within our communities. As our conversations evolve, so too will these principles to reflect the real and lived experiences of individuals and families within our communities, related to housing and home.

This March we are getting ready to host our first community conversation event and we’re excited to be welcoming roughly 10 families to join the conversations. Over these next months we’ll also continue to meet with our Design Team and Advisory Group. This project will culminate in early 2021 in a final showcase of sorts, where we’ll have an opportunity to celebrate and share our learnings and outcomes. In the meantime, stay tuned here for more updates! This initiative is funded by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)’s Solutions Lab program under the National Housing Strategy.



Thinking it Through: Supporting Families through the “Temporary Wage Enhancement” applications for children’s funding programs!

Recently families who receive funding from a children’s direct funding program received a letter and/or notice from the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS). The letter is to inform families that MCCSS is offering temporary financial support to cover a wage increase for people and families who pay for services from eligible direct support workers from funds from a children’s direct funding program. The following four funding programs are eligible for this Temporary Wage Enhancement:

- Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities
- Enhanced Respite
- Special Services at Home
- Ontario Autism Program Childhood Budgets and Interim One-time Funding



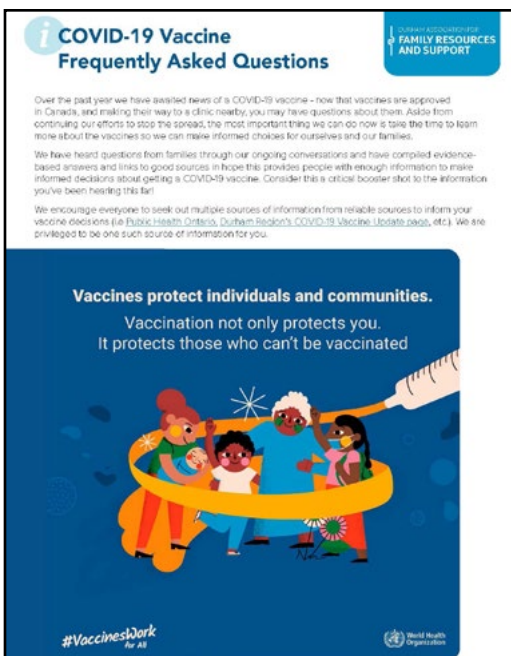
Do you want to learn more about this? Do you want to learn about how this could be important to your family? Do you want to see how to complete an application? Let us work through this together! Please join us together with other families on **Thursday, March 11th, 2021** from 7pm-8:00pm to ‘work it through TOGETHER’

Register Here to Receive the Zoom Link Details!

Durham Region’s Vaccinations Begin to Broaden

The Region of Durham has [recently announced](#) that it will soon begin vaccinating residents aged 80 or older, signaling a move to attend to new priority groups such as those adults whom receive chronic home care. Durham Region Health Departments is in the process of finalizing their online booking system and community-wide call centre to begin to take registrations for a COVID-19 vaccine. Appointments will be made starting Monday, March 8 - [see more information here!](#) Keep an eye on the Region’s [COVID-19 Vaccine page](#) for updates as they are announced.

The Region has also recently released [a list of vaccine clinic locations](#) in all municipalities in Durham Region. Currently, priority populations are being served in Oshawa at Durham College and Ontario Tech University, and in Pickering at Chestnut Hills Development Complex.



“As we’ve concluded with the previous priority groups, we are now ramping up to begin vaccinating those in the 80 and over population. It is important to understand that our vaccine supply is still limited, as we currently only have access to the Pfizer vaccine in Durham Region. As soon as we receive updated information regarding our vaccine supply, we will start to expand our clinic operations to begin vaccination of other priority populations based on the province’s three-phase vaccine distribution implementation plan.”

- Dr. Robert Kyle, Durham Region Medical Officer of Health

We had a great turnout to our recent Everything Vaccine night with Dr. Ricciuto. With questions and feedback from families, we created a [Frequently Asked Questions booklet](#) regarding the COVID-19 vaccine. Take a look to learn more about the vaccines and further reading!

Family Alliance Ontario - Join The Conversation and Learning!

Durham Family Resources has invited FAO to take a regular corner in our Family Focus newsletter. It is clear to us that FAO covers and represents many of our shared concerns – theirs from a family advocacy perspective and ours from a family partnership for a better community perspective. We expect this is a win-win for us all!

Who is Family Alliance Ontario?

Family Alliance Ontario (FAO) is one of the oldest and most respected Provincial autonomous family networks in Ontario. The FAO board is volunteer run comprised on family members, siblings, self advocates and caregivers spread across the province. Thirty-three (33) family networks across the province are affiliated with FAO. FAO has been a pioneer working with government in the Developmental Service Transformation movement to transform it from a ‘placement and care model’ (one that relied on service providers) to one relying on family support and community-based connections. Our goal has been to help other families to assist their loved ones with disabilities to live full regular lives in their community, together with family and friends, where their gifts and talents can be fully understood, respected, appreciated, and included.



Family Alliance Ontario

Check out the upcoming events below and get to know FAO!

Family Engagement Meeting: Thursday March 11, 2021 from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

This quarterly meeting is for family groups/networks to meet to hear what has been happening at FAO and to share with other networks what is happening in their area and what they are doing. **RSVP here by Tuesday March 9, 2021.**

Social Hour: Sunday March 14, 2021 from 8:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Let's Celebrate being Irish! Wear Green. Drink Green Beer or your favorite beverage. (Shamrock Shakes are in at McDonalds LOL). Join us for Trivia, some music and tales about St. Patrick's Day. **RSVP here by Friday March 13, 2021.**

Family Knowledge Share: Wednesday March 31, 2021 from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Carla O'Neill & Cindy Mitchell will share the presentation of “The Power of Family Networks”, that FAO presented at the Community Living Conference in September 2020. **RSVP here by Monday March 29, 2021.**

Learn more about FAO by [visiting their website](#) or [Facebook page](#)!

Inclusive Education Canada Webinar: Perspectives on Inclusive Education

Supporting Families with Inclusion:

Strategies for Associations & Parent Groups

Meet Our Speakers

- Marilyn Dolmage
Inclusion Advocate, Toronto
Moderator
- Danny Soucy
New Brunswick Association
for Community Living
- Aqeeta Khalid
Inclusion Alberta
- Andy Willemssen
Brampton Caledon
Community Living

We invite you to join our panel for this important discussion.
Tuesday, March 9th, 2021
From 6 pm to 7:15 pm EST
Live on Zoom

In many Canadian communities, families are struggling to make inclusive education a reality for their child. Those who do need support – from – other families; parent associations both local and provincial; rights and advocacy groups.

Among the issues: placement; individual plans; curriculum choices; accommodations; attendance; school and classroom culture; teacher attitude; parental participation and partnership; and more ...

Inclusive Education Canada has invited a panel experienced in helping parents and families with these issues

How might this support best be provided? What strategies are effective. Are there – do's and don'ts? Are we doing enough? What more could be done?

Register through this [LINK](#)

Inclusive Education Canada presents Supporting Families with Inclusion

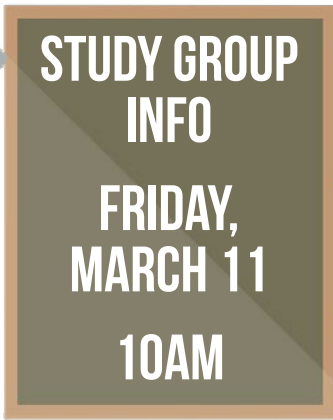
In many Canadian communities, families are working at making inclusive education a reality for their children. Among the issues: placement, individual plans, curriculum choices, attendance, school and classroom culture, teacher attitude, parental participation and partnership, and more.

Join Inclusive Education Canada as they welcome a group of speakers to discuss effective strategies and support for parents and families with these issues. Click the poster to the left for more information and to register!

Tuesday, March 9, 2021
6:00pm to 7:15pm

Bio-Medical Approaches Study Discusses Lingering Vaccine Questions

For our March Bio Medical Approaches Study Group and Vaccines on the horizon, we thought we would take stock of our remaining questions, concerns and even decisions around vaccination – for our loved one, ourselves, our paid supports, and those who come into our home. There are no right answers. We only want to offer a chance to clarify, seek information, question what others are thinking of doing, and make one's own best plans. It is through hearing from each other that we develop our own best ideas. What are our thoughts about whether we will require supporters to have vaccination or not? What are our thoughts about attending meetings and wanting to feel safe? What are we thinking about sharing our own information and decisions?



Everyone is welcome to attend and participate in the Bio-Medical Approaches Study Group when we meet on the second Friday morning of each month. Regulars, those who drop in when they can, occasional drop in for various topics, and curious on-lookers all join for morning discussion, learning, sharing and a good laugh that accompanies fellow learners who respect each other!

We usually engage with anything “Bio – Medical” and so families talk about all of the approaches, alternatives, strategies that we have found, are being pushed into, have discovered online and more! We have a wide circle of families who are ready to share their vast experience and together we sometimes are able to help each member make better sense of the options and choices that surround them.

The group meets monthly and is open and welcoming to new and past participants! We usually meet by Zoom invite on the second Friday of each month at 10am for about an hour to an hour and a half.. Please RSVP your attendance to jklees@dafers.com so that we can plan a successful morning.

Hidden Costs and Risks of Grouped-Living Environments - Talking Points for Advocacy at March's Imagining Home Meeting

Join us this month at Imagining Home as we remind ourselves of the hidden costs and inherent disadvantages of large-group living environments compared to smaller more typical community based options. We had done some of our own number crunching and lost-opportunity identification a couple of years ago. Time to pull that out again, put it together with recent research out of the States that reaches the same conclusions, and make sure we are able to communicate this to builders, politicians and housing bureaucrats!

Each month at Imagining Home, we engage with anything “housing, home and community” and enjoy critical discussion, sharing stories, learning and often having a good laugh among respectful and supportive people! Families bring a wealth of experience and knowledge and are ready to share and support others along their journey. All are welcome to attend and participate in Imagining Home when we meet on the second Wednesday of each month. If you are new to the group and would like to attend Imagining Home for the first time, we'd ask that you first contact Erin at (905) 436-2500 ext. 2511 or eoreilly@dafers.com to arrange an introductory call.

Our next Imagining Home meeting is on **Wednesday, March 10th at 6:30pm** via Zoom meeting. Please contact Erin to RSVP or for more information about connecting to the Zoom call. Looking forward to our time together!

IMAGINING HOME MEETING • WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10TH, 2020 • 6:30PM

ONLINE, VIA ZOOM!

CONTACT ERIN FOR DETAILS ([EOREILLY@DAFRS.COM](mailto:eoreilly@dafers.com))



Have You Attended Making the Most Family Series? Come Together to Discuss and Continue Learning!

The Making the Most Study Group is a fantastic opportunity for those who have completed the series to continue their learning and take some next steps in developing valued roles and relationships with a loved one.

Each month graduates of past Making the Most learning series are invited to come together and think more deeply about crafting and sharing a vision, designing and planning days full of contributions and possibilities, focusing on roles rather than activities, seeking and developing good support, making positive introductions, and finding strength, comfort, energy and hope through building circles of support. We continue to use the MTM Principles to guide our conversations and help figure out, one person at a time, how to take steps forward towards more of the Good Things of Life.

The meeting is open to anyone who has attended a MTM series before and wishes to join the conversation. Contact Laura.Ipowell@dafrs.com for more information.

This group will meet via Zoom from 6.30-7.30pm on **Monday, March 22nd** and members will be sent a link to join a few days before.



**MAKING THE MOST
STUDY GROUP**

MARCH 22, 2021
6:30PM TO 7:30PM

Online via Zoom Meetings

respiteservices.com



Respiteservices.com is continues connecting families to supporters! Contact Sandy for details!

Respiteservices.com is continuing to operate remotely to connect families and support workers. We know people continue to need good support during this time and are working diligently to continue to provide this service to residents of Durham Region.

To be matched with support workers, you must be registered with respiteservices.com/durham. Contact Sandy at (905)436-3404 or sciarlariello@dafrs.com. New supporters are continuing to be added. Contact Sandy for more information!

Want more information?

Durham Association for Family Resources and Support

For more information on our organization or any of our events, please visit our website at www.dafrs.com or contact Heather by phone or email: (905)436-2500 ext.2314 hminors@dafrs.com

For more information, please visit our website, www.dafrs.com, and see the "Upcoming Events" tab.

Durham Association For Family Resources and Support
850 King St. W, Unit 20, Oshawa, Ontario L1J 8N5
(905)436-2500 www.dafrs.com