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March 2022

*Durham Family Resources*

# FAMILYfocus

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

## Recruitment Worries: What's a Family To Do?

Even as the world is returning to a more open and connected place once again, some families are encountering unprecedented challenges in finding and hiring the contract workers that they had once found quite easily. At Durham Family Resources, we have always been involved with helping families to recruit supports for their family members. Lately, we are hearing through facilitators and directly from families that they are finding recruitment harder and harder. Both families and facilitators are spending more time at this effort and yet, we are still not as helpful in recruitment with some families as we would hope.

As with any big problem, it is helpful for a small group of people with practical experience to sit down and think this through together. Durham Family Resources' team members are doing just that. We are asking: how big is the problem of recruitment and hiring, how many families are affected, are there some groups of families who are *not* experiencing the same level of challenge, are some areas of the Region more affected than others, does this affect the search for part-time contract workers and full-time support alike, what are we hearing from families and from self-employed contract workers themselves?

Through this process we are finding new ways to tackle some problems within recruitment, while also finding new approaches to recruitment and hiring. We want to be clear about which aspects of recruitment we, as an organization, have influence over, where do families have control, and which issues are out of anyone's hands. How can we work together on new ideas, try new things, and collectively see if our outcomes are any different.

If recruitment is something which has frustrated you, you are not alone! In fact, the second thing about a big problem is to gather with like-minded others with similar experiences – for support, for understanding, and for energy! This is beginning to be a rich conversation and we want to widen it by inviting and hearing from families. In order to tackle these important challenges together and benefit from any opportunities that arise, we are inviting you to get involved! There are several ways that you can do this over the next couple of months:



**Share your recruitment challenges and tips through this survey!**

Your thoughts and ideas will add to our larger discussions and we will be more assured that we are addressing the greatest concerns and sharing the best ideas. If you are in paid support to a family, we'd love to hear from you too!

Finally, save the date and plan to attend the second of our 3-part learning series on *The Support Role* which will focus on Recruitment –

**Join us on the evening of April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022!**



# Creative Maneuvering During Unexpected Times the Theme of March's Imagining Home Meeting

With March upon us and Spring just around the corner (so says Wiarton Willie!), it's the perfect time to reaffirm the possibilities that abound when we stay the course, even in times of challenge. This month at Imagining Home we'll pick up from earlier conversations around imagining differently in times of unexpected challenges. What are ways that families have been able to pause with intentionality, pivot, and/or reimagine their vision for home, when things got in the way? What are the actions families can take to help navigate unexpected challenges? And how can family members continue to hold the vision strong? This month with stories shared by two local families, possibly a video, and some discussion, we'll explore what families are doing - or can do - to put these ideas into action and keep forward motion.

And let's not forget the provincial election coming up! Can we consider how this election might matter to us and/or might touch our lives around housing and support? What are 2-3 main asks that we can each put forward to the provincial candidates in our own ridings? What about putting these ideas into a structured letter that people can use and adapt as they see fit? Help us draft a letter of top priorities that each of you may carry to your own candidates!

Come join the conversation! Long time and new families alike, everyone has something to gain and something to offer. 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](mailto:eoreilly@dafers.com) to arrange an introductory call.

**IMAGINING HOME MEETING • WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9, 2022 • 6:30PM**

**ONLINE, VIA ZOOM!**

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



## March Break Opportunities - Let's Think it Through Together!



Thinking it Through: March Break is here! Things are opening up and the upcoming break brings opportunity for new interests, creativity and imagination! Lets get together to explore what's available and happening in the community for my child based on interests and age group! We'll look at where children can discover new interests, gain skills while having fun! Children are nature exploders and local neighbourhoods provide many opportunities for young curious minds to explore and discover.

JOIN US! For this session of 'Thinking it Through' where we will start planning for March Break 2022 and discuss the possibilities with our families! Join together with families on **Thursday, March 10<sup>th</sup> 2022** from 6:30pm-7:30pm to "think it through TOGETHER"

**Register Here to Receive the Zoom Link Details!**


# Spring is on the Minds of the Biomedical Approaches Study Group with a Focus on Cleaning!

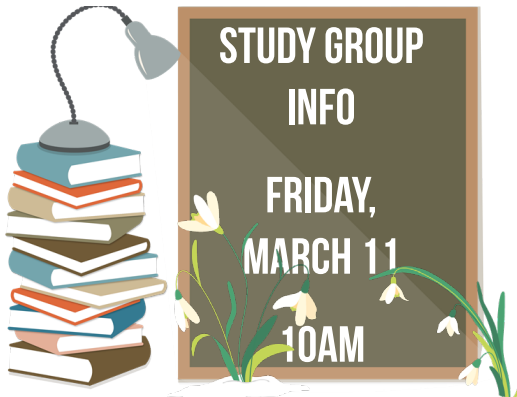
March is here and the countdown to Spring is on! At our Biomedical Approaches Study Group this month, we are going to talk about cleaning with care. There are so many new products available to us, and yet lots of 'tried and true' methods which have stood the test of time. Bring along your top tips, clean and green DIY tricks, and let's delve into our efforts to stay healthy while keeping it clean!



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. Reach out to Janet  if you'd like to get a Zoom link to the next meeting!



## Keeping Safe as Ontario Sees Lifted Restrictions in March

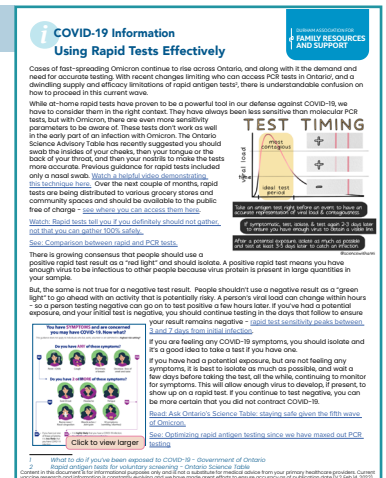
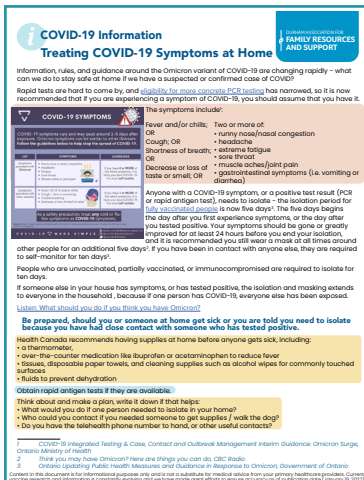
This Winter, we created [a few helpful information sheets to help families](#) stay informed of solid, science-based guidance regarding this stage of the pandemic and how to stay safe here in Durham Region. As new information has rolled in, we've updated our info sheets. See what's new

### Using Rapid Tests Effectively

We have updated our *Using Rapid Tests Effectively* info sheet to include new guidance on how to administer these tests - including [a helpful video](#) about including a cheek/throat swab for more accurate results. Additionally, we have added [this link which can help you locate free Rapid Antigen testing kits](#) during the Ontario Government's eight-week program.

### Treating COVID-19 Symptoms at Home

Our updated *Treating COVID-19 Symptoms at Home* document provides additional information on how to access new COVID-19 treatments within Durham Region, by way of the COVID-19 Therapeutic Clinic which provides specialized treatment that will help eligible adults with mild to moderate COVID-19 who are at risk of progressing to serious illness.





## The 'Next Generation' Finishes its Learning Series this Month!

The *Next Generation Meetup* group was established in February 2019 and has served to be a connection to those family members and friends who are looking to continue the vision and planning for their loved ones as parents age. Over the past couple of months, they have been coming together, and inviting other interested people along, for a unique Learning Series with a specific focus for those who would identify as the next in line in the support of a loved one with a disability as parents age.

So far the group has invited mental health professionals to chat about managing competing priorities, and identifying and addressing issues and life's complexities. They welcomed financial and legal professionals to chat about legacy planning, including wills, estates, trusts, and financial planning. Most recently they heard

from our own Janet Klees, who spoke about re-imagining possibilities, and had a conversation with a Sister-in-law who shared her journey and what was helpful along the way.

**Mark your calendars for the last two sessions, which will take place on Thursday, March 17 at 6:30pm and Thursday, March 31 at 6:30pm!**

Keep an eye on your email for more details on this upcoming learning! Contact Rosanne at [rpurnwasie@dafrs.com](mailto:rpurnwasie@dafrs.com) or by phone at (905)436-2500 ext. 2289 for more information.



## Recently Completed Formative Evaluation Gives Us Lots to Reflect Upon

Durham Family Resources is an organization that prides ourselves on being thoughtful and working within values and principles that offer many options along a pathway leading to the good things in life for and with whole families. Part of what has helped us along for many, many years is to ensure some external evaluation of our organization.

In late 2021, it was the turn of Family Support to be evaluated in meaningful and relevant ways by an outside consultant and in conversation with families, board and staff members. While a fully engaged evaluation process involving a wide range of families and staff was not possible during the pandemic, rather than having no evaluation at all, we decided to go for a smaller, more achievable Formative Evaluation. This is an evaluation approach that catches the sense of things as they are underway, and offers feedback to the organization that gives a sense of whether there are any urgent red flags or areas to attend to right away before a longer, deeper evaluation is possible. Peg Jenner, our external consultant for this evaluation met with families and the team over the summer, delivered a verbal report to the Board in December and submitted her final report to the Board at the end of January.

The Report, in its limited but relevant way, addresses three important questions: what really is the work of family support, are we doing this work in accordance with our values and principles (as laid out in the [Nature of Family Support document](#)), and what can we say about the outcomes of our work over the past 5 + years. The results are clarifying, fascinating, and provide much food for thought. Overall, we are extremely pleased with and proud of our joint work with families that led to the results of the evaluation.

Please note if you are a family who thinks they might have loved to be involved in the interviews leading to the Evaluation, given the pandemic restrictions, there was only a random and confidential sampling of a very few families invited to the interviews. However the time and opportunity for reflection is open to all, and is yet another way to have your voice heard!

So, keep your eyes open for a Family Event in the near future for families and team to hear about and reflect on the Report together with us!

# 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.



## MAKING THE MOST STUDY GROUP

The meeting is open to anyone who has attended a MTM series before and wishes to join the conversation. Contact Laura [lpowell@dafrs.com](mailto:lpowell@dafrs.com) for more information.

Next meeting **Monday, March 28<sup>th</sup> from 6.30-7.30pm** via Zoom. Members are sent a link to join shortly before.

MARCH 28, 2022  
6:30PM TO 7:30PM

[respiteservices.com](http://respiteservices.com)

**CHAP**  
COMMUNITY HELPERS  
FOR ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

[RespiteServices.com](http://RespiteServices.com) 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](http://respiteservices.com/durham). Contact Sandy at (905)436-3404 or [sciarlariello@dafrs.com](mailto:sciarlariello@dafrs.com). New supporters are continuing to be added. Contact Sandy for more information!

## Important Dates At-A-Glance!

### **Bio Medical Study Group**

March 11@10am

### **Imagining Home**

March 9@6:30pm

### **Thinking it Through**

March 10 @6:30pm

### **MTM Study Group**

March 28 @6:30pm

### **Next Gen Learning Series**

Mar 17@6:30pm

Mar 31@6:30pm

For more information on our organization or any of our events, please visit our website at [www.dafrs.com](http://www.dafrs.com)

For more information, please visit our website, [www.dafrs.com](http://www.dafrs.com), and see the "Upcoming Events" tab.

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