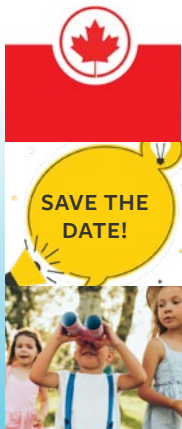


April 2023

*Durham Family Resources*

# FAMILYfocus



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

## Making the Most Retreats to Rice Lake for a Weekend of Learning!



A few times a year we invite families throughout the Region of Durham to participate in our Making the Most Family Learning Series. The heart of this series is to support re-imagining opportunities and real options, moving beyond traditional uses for funding to plan for a life that reflects each person's unique interests, hopes, and dreams.

Led in partnership with mentoring parents that share their experiences in planning and creating opportunities, we are offering this Spring's series in a new format! This innovative and interactive workshop will be held over two full days at Elmhirst Resort, south of Peterborough on Rice Lake. This will be a condensed, intense, immersive weekend for families to think things through together!



Beginning Friday evening and running through Sunday afternoon - this special retreat edition of Making the Most will enhance the conversation-style learning which happens in abundance during this series. Conversations between mentoring families and participants will highlight simple choices that families can make to discover ordinary, yet significant ways for family members to be involved in their neighbourhood and community.

Accommodation is included for Friday and Saturday nights, along with meals and refreshments. The course fee is \$100, and subsidies are available if funding is a barrier. Reach out to Laura through the link below if you'd like to learn more!



## Making the Most - Weekend Retreat

**Weekend of May 5 - 7**

**Elmhirst Resort in Keene, Ontario**

**Course fee \$100**

**Contact Laura here for more information!**

## Strategic Directions Taking Shape at DFR!

Late last year we began work on a new Strategic Plan. Many families, community members, and DFR allies will have participated in our strategic plan process by sharing ideas with their facilitator or coordinator, through filling in our survey last November, or by taking part in one of focus groups for discussion.

At this point, a draft strategic plan full of feedback and future direction has gone before the Board of Directors for their input. The next step will be to share a general overview of the ideas contained in the draft plan to our families and allies. Keep an eye out in May for an invitation to hear and chat about the draft!

The plan will go back to the Board for its final nod before being presented to the Membership for final approval at our Annual General Meeting in June. Thank you to all those who have helped us get to this point!

## Become a Member of DFR and Save the Date for our AGM

We hope you will join us this year's Annual General Meeting, mark you calendar from Monday, June 26th! In order to vote at this year's Annual General Meeting, we must receive your completed membership application by **May 17th, 2022.**

Becoming a member is free and easy to do! You can apply online in just a few minutes by filling out the online form below. If you'd prefer to print and fill out an application, [you can access a printable copy here!](#)

We encourage anyone interested in our work to consider becoming a member of our organization. **Becoming a member not only shows your support for the mission and values of Durham Family Resources, but also demonstrates to funders, policy makers, and the public that you think our work is important and beneficial to our community.**

### Your Membership Matters!


**Fill out a membership form here today!**



## BioMedical Approaches Study Group Plans Spring-Time Road Trips!

This month during our in-person gathering (with hybrid availability) we will be discussing our top three survey results of "road trips" to undertake! Of great interest to BioMedical participants were: visiting and discovering the benefits of local salt room locations, taking part in a (gentle) aerial yoga class, or visiting a local regenerative farm! We might take on all three over the next season or so, and invite you to join in the discussion of why, where and when!

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. 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!



**STUDY GROUP  
INFO**

**FRIDAY,  
MARCH 10**

**10 AM**

# Canada's 2023 Budget Extends Qualifying Family Member Provision for the RDSP and Advocates for Supported Decision Making Legislation



## Canada's 2023 Budget

Last Fall we encouraged families to look into changes happening in the Registered Disability Savings Plan. Specifically, the temporary Qualifying Family Member provision was due to end in 2023 - without this provision, many Ontarians with developmental disabilities wouldn't be able to open RDSPs or potentially access funds saved on their behalf unless they first give up their legal rights through a guardianship order.

The recent 2023 Federal Budget extends the Qualifying Family Member provision until December 31, 2026. In addition, it broadens the definition of Qualifying Family Member to include siblings who are 18 years old.

Other provinces, including British Columbia and Manitoba, already have in place legal processes so people can receive decision-making support without having to go to court or be declared incapable. We call this supported decision making, and it is a topic that DFR has been invested in pursuing and advocating for over the past several years. These provincial measures mean the Qualifying Family Member provision is not as necessary in those provinces.

The Supplementary Information on Tax Measures accompanying this budget included a call to action for provinces and territories to “examine how they can better accommodate the needs of potential RDSP beneficiaries by developing appropriate, inclusive, and long-term solutions to address RDSP legal representation issues.”

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## Ontario Ombudsman Announces New Investigation Into Inappropriately Housed Individuals in Hospital

At the end of March, the Ontario Ombudsman announced a new investigation which will examine how Ontario is ensuring adults with developmental disabilities are appropriately transitioned out of hospital. The investigation will look into whether the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) and the Ministry of Health are taking adequate steps to ensure that these inappropriately hospitalized individuals are transitioned to appropriate community placements. It will be led by the Special Ombudsman Response Team, which specializes in systemic investigations. The investigation will assess what obstacles are preventing individuals from leaving hospital and how ministries are addressing this problem.

Seven years ago in the 2016 report, *Nowhere to Turn*, the Ombudsman made 60 recommendations to MCCSS, all of which were accepted. This included five recommendations which specifically dealt with individuals identified as “alternate level of care” patients in hospitals. This new investigation will include a review of the Ministry's progress on these recommendations.

Home and housing is a multifaceted issue which many families are working at across the province. Just like for anyone else, housing and home for a person with a disability can only be designed uniquely for the person with the help of family, friends and allies one person at a time - no cookie cutter prepared answers. Individually we can be responsive to many different scenarios. We hope to see these expectations reflected in the Ombudsman's upcoming report.



## Building a Home and Housing Toolkit at this April's Imagining Home Meeting

What's in your toolbox? If you could handpick the "tools" to build your unique housing vision and road map, what would they be? This month at Imagining Home we'll start to plant the seeds for a flexible toolbox that families can look into for the ideas, solutions, plans and more that would be selected especially for their own situation. The contents of the toolbox would also be practical, motivating and guiding ideas that are grounded in Social Role theory and our own Guiding Principles for Home and Housing. Each family would select the ones most useful for themselves – homeownership models, renovation possibilities, roommate contracts and more. Come and share what you would hope to see when you peek inside!

We'll also take a look at some highlights from the recently released provincial and federal budgets – how will these budgets move us towards more equitable and affordable housing options and where do they fall short? How do they matter to us or touch our lives around housing and support? Do they pay attention to good community principles while addressing the housing crisis? Click [here](#) and [here](#) to read the Federal and Provincial budgets.

And with our finger on the pulse of what's on offer in home and housing within our Region and beyond, we'll hear about some housing initiatives that may not quite hit the mark.

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 [ereilly@dafrs.com](mailto:ereilly@dafrs.com) to arrange an introductory call.

**IMAGINING HOME MEETING • NEXT MEETING • APRIL 12, 2023**

**ONLINE, VIA ZOOM!**

**CONTACT ERIN FOR DETAILS ([EREILLY@DAFRS.COM](mailto:EREILLY@DAFRS.COM))**



## Thinking it Through - What Will Summer Break Look Like?



Thinking it Through: School's out for the summer! We're just a few months away from the warm summer weather. What plans have you made for your children? What's available and happening in the community? What does summer look like for your family?

**JOIN US!** For this session of 'Thinking it Through' where we will start planning for summer 2023 and discuss the possibilities with our families!

Join together with families on Thursday, April 27 2023 from 6:30pm-7:30pm to "think it through TOGETHER"

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

# 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, and energy through building circles of support, and connecting with other families. 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 the 6-part Making The Most learning series and wishes to join the conversation. Contact Laura [lpowell@dafrs.com](mailto:lpowell@dafrs.com) for more information.

Next meeting is Monday, April 24<sup>th</sup> from 6.30-7.30pm via Zoom. Members are sent a link to join shortly before.



## MAKING THE MOST STUDY GROUP

APRIL 24, 2023  
6:30PM TO 7:30PM

## Important Dates At-A-Glance!

**Imagining Home**  
April 12 @6:30pm

**Bio Medical Study Group**  
April 14 @10am

**Thinking it Through**  
March 9 @6:30pm

**Making the Most  
Study Group**  
April 24 @6:30pm

**Making the Most  
Retreat**  
May 5-7 @6:30pm

**2023 Annual General  
Meeting**  
June 26

For more information,  
please visit our website at  
[www.dafrs.com](http://www.dafrs.com)

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

**CHAP**  
COMMUNITY HELPERS  
FOR ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

## 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!

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

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(905)436-2500 [www.dafrs.com](http://www.dafrs.com)