

DURHAM ASSOCIATION FOR FAMILY RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

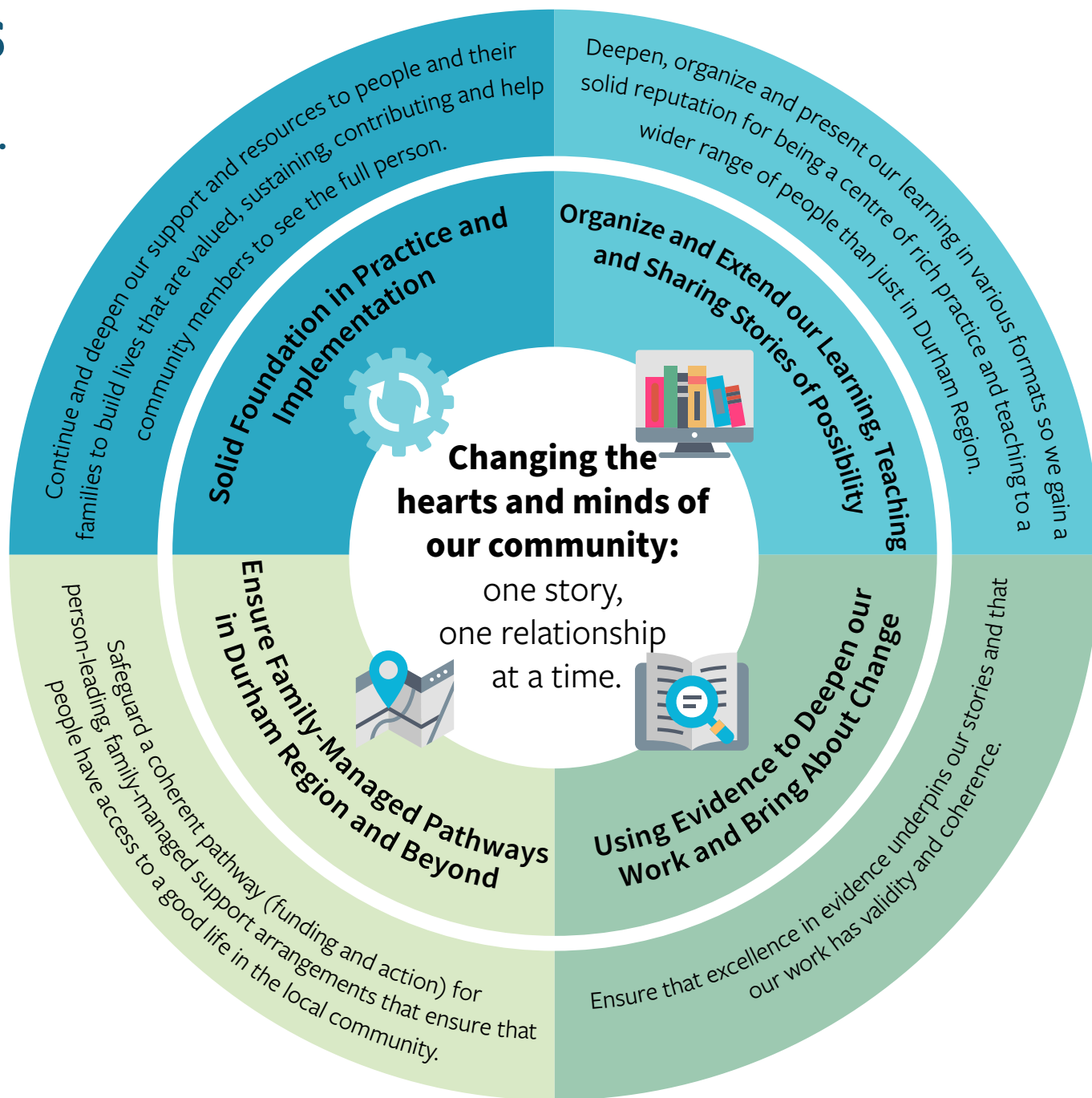
• One Person at a Time • Together With Families •

Strategic Plan 2023-2028



**Changing the hearts and minds of
our community: one story, one
relationship at a time.**

Over the next five years, we intend to help build and share good stories that will change what typically goes into the minds of community members. With good and impactful stories, a greater amount of everyday interactions with community members, and a higher profile to share these, together we can influence how our greater community welcomes and expects contribution from its members with disability.



Changing the Hearts and Minds of Community: one story, one relationship at a time

2023 - 2028 Strategic Plan
at a glance

Vision

We all enjoy full and meaningful life within our communities; we are all stronger when each member belongs.

Mission

Durham Family Resources works in partnership with a person with a disability, their family and allies to imagine, plan, implement, and work toward a good life in family, neighbourhood and community. Because our community is best when everyone contributes, our partnership aims to enhance the capacity of the whole family to care for one another and to sustain or enhance their valued social roles as family members and as members of the community. We support our Vision by working with the whole family, together choosing resources, supports and pathways anchored in practices that take place in ordinary community life, one person at a time, and use a Social Role Valorization (SRV) framework. Durham Family Resources is family-led, rooted in community, focused on recognizing capacity, and always moves toward critical analysis and action based on this Vision, Mission and Values

Values

The essential importance of a good life in family, neighbourhood and community

Freely given, committed personal relationships with people will best safeguard the lives and wellbeing of family members with disabilities

Communities have the capacity and a fundamental responsibility to welcome and support people with disabilities, and that our communities will be stronger and better when we all belong

When provided with adequate support, families provide the safest, most consistent and loving environment for family members and have the capacity to imagine, plan and build good lives for and with their family members in community

There is great value in family-to-family learning, family leadership and connection, and on the ability of families and allies to build and influence their communities to grow strong together



Solid Foundation in Practice and Implementation

Continue and deepen our partnership with families so that families achieve excellence in implementation and practice in all life domains, ensuring the work on the ground informs learning and guides steps forward in ways that express the voices and will of the person themselves, with practical projects that arise from listening to people and their chosen allies.

Why it matters?

Others need to see what is possible, and then be involved in good lives in communities that include the contributions of people with disabilities. Community members of all kinds need to see what is possible and be a part of what can be, before they can begin to ask for and create this on their own. When people are valued, systems and services will change.

Strategic Objectives:

- 5-Year home assistance pilot
- Families of children and youth engagement project
- Employment focus
- Support for decision making focus
- Family leadership initiatives
- Creative address to paid support challenges
- Develop a coherent social media strategy

What does success look like?

People living ordinary lives in more realms of life offering their contributions through valued roles and in relationship with others. Greater diversity in leadership and robust story examples. More mentoring/leadership emerging. Diversity of community members and younger families are more visible. A greater number of community members in varying relationship with the person with a disability and clearly seeing the typical lifestyle the person is leading.



Organize and Extend our Learning, Teaching, and Sharing Stories of Possibility

Establish a family knowledge and learning center, in partnership with families, building on our current highly regarded learning series and events, and based on the leadership and experience of people and their families, to become even better known as a reliable source of information and learning for families far and wide and their allies.

Why it matters?

Family-to-family learning is a powerful way to bring ideas to the very people who can best imagine, plan and implement them in real lives in ordinary communities. The stories that are then told and seen by others shape and influence the ideas about people with disabilities in the hearts and minds of the whole community. We plan to extend our proven influence in and out of Durham Region into the future.

Strategic Objectives:

- Continue to develop and deliver content together with families in areas of experience and expertise
- Design, build and launch a learning platform as the centerpiece of the learning center

What does success look like?

Families and allies have access to our current curriculum of teaching and learning opportunities and offerings. Families and allies in Durham and beyond will have access to a digital platform that organizes and offers materials to augment our current work.



Using Evidence to Deepen Our Work and Bring About Change

Enhance our skills in evidence collection and utilization to more deeply understand underlying dynamics and thereby showcase the valued role of people with disabilities in communities and the value of person-leading, family-managed individualized lifestyle support arrangements (PL-FMILSA).

Why it matters?

Thoughtful and relevant proof-of-concept information helps people to understand and trust the validity of the stories and information they see and hear. Trustworthy sources of information and transparent conclusions are very helpful in guiding people in families and communities down the real pathways to a good life in community. We need to learn how to do this better in order to underpin the stories we tell and the information we share.

Strategic Objectives:

- Learn and enhance competency in identifying, collecting and analyzing evidence
- Implement processes that will effectively collect evidence

What does success look like?

We are implementing by reasonable degrees a comprehensive strategy for collecting evidence in information and stories from and with families that show patterns and processes for success. The process and strategy for using evidence aligns with our principles and values and is being developed and reviewed by families, experts, experienced others. Year over year, our data shows changes and advances in community members' hearts and minds (mindset) and other identifiable trends and patterns of success. We consistently and increasingly use this evidence.



Ensuring Family-Managed Pathways in Durham and Beyond

Ensure a coherent pathway for family-managed support arrangements in Ontario, safeguarding access to ethical agency partners and good, typical and valued lifestyles for people with disabilities.

Why it matters?

We are at a point in time in Ontario where the family-managed and individualized lifestyle support model that aims to keep people with disabilities at the heart of their community is in jeopardy. We have experience and success with many significant elements of this pathway and a unique opportunity to join with others across the province who also want to ensure this remains one recognized pathway for families to choose.

Strategic Objectives:

- Build toward more family-managed capacity across the province
- Form strategic alliance network
- Continue the effective Collaborative Administrative Department (CAD) model
- Strong and sustainable organizational foundation and structure

What does success look like?

A funding pathway for family-managed individualized support arrangements remains in place in Durham. Some aspects of the Ministry's Journey to Belonging reform landed well for families. The Durham Family Resources' model has influenced other regions of the province. Our organization is strong, principled, sustainable, innovative and well-regarded by families first and foremost. We have more/different allies in government, across the sector and at community levels.

The logo consists of a stylized blue graphic on the left, resembling a vertical line with a horizontal segment and a small square at the bottom, and a large light blue circle on the right.

DURHAM ASSOCIATION FOR **FAMILY RESOURCES AND SUPPORT**

• One Person at a Time • Together With Families •

Changing The Hearts And Minds Of Our Community: One Story, One Relationship At A Time.

2023 - 2028 Strategic Plan

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Definition of Family

We use the word “family” to mean the person in the context of their chosen family and allies, where their mutual relationships offer the best chance to hear the voice of the person, and then support, augment or amplify this voice as needed.

Strategic Plan Overview

Durham Family Resources has long focused on partnering with people with disabilities and their families to imagine, plan, and lead ordinary lifestyles where they enjoy and experience the good things of life. Where this is happening, we see that community members who witness and are a part of these ordinary interactions, often experience profound changes and truly begin to see the value and contributions of people with disabilities in their immediate community. This opens doors for the person and also for countless other people with disabilities.

However, for real societal change to happen, this needs to occur more often. Most often, people with disabilities are seen and portrayed as burden, child and charity, and therefore opportunities for a full contributing life in community are few. Based on our own observations and results, Durham Family Resources and families want to work together even harder and more intentionally to change the hearts and minds of our community. We want more community members to see and engage more often with people with disabilities in positive and mutual ways. Durham Family Resources intends to apply what we know makes a difference and challenge the structures and ideas that perpetuate devaluation within communities.

Over the next five years, we intend to help build and share good stories that will change what typically goes into the minds of community members. With good and impactful stories, a greater amount of everyday interactions with community members, and a higher profile to share these, together we can influence how our greater community welcomes and expects contribution from its members with disability.

The audience for this strategic plan are the Durham Family Resource families, members, staff and its board.

The purpose of this strategic plan is to guide the organization over the next 5 years (2023-2028) to more intentionally address community attitude that make it difficult to enable good lives for people with developmental disabilities and their families.

In this 5-year plan, Durham Family Resources has 4 main Strategic Directions (SDs);

- SD 1: Solid Foundation in Practice and Implementation.

Durham Family Resources aims to continue and deepen its partnership with families so that families achieve excellence in implementation and practice in all life domains, ensuring the work on the ground informs learning and guides steps forward in ways that express the voices and will of the person themselves, with practical projects that arise from listening to people and their chosen allies.

- SD 2: Organize and Share our Learning, Teaching, and Sharing Stories of Possibility

Durham Family Resources aims to establish a family knowledge and learning center, in partnership with families, building on our current highly regarded learning series and events, and based on the leadership and experience of people and their families, to become even better known as a reliable source of information and learning for families far and wide and their allies.

- SD 3: Using Evidence to Deepen Our Work and Bring About Change

Durham Family Resources aims to enhance our skills in evidence collection and utilization to more deeply understand underlying dynamics and thereby showcase the valued role of people with disabilities in communities and the value of person-leading, family-managed individualized lifestyle support arrangements (PL-FMILSA).

- SD 4: Ensuring Family-Managed Pathways in Durham and Beyond

Durham Family Resources aims to ensure a coherent pathway for family-managed support arrangements in Ontario, safeguarding access to ethical agency partners and good, typical and valued lifestyles for people with disabilities.

Durham Family Resources is uniquely positioned to address and change how people with disabilities are welcomed and regarded in Durham Region and beyond because;

We partner with families - who are community members and who have come to know how authentic participation and mutual relationship do positively impact the hearts and minds of their community.

We have a proven framework to draw from in terms of both high-order theory (addressing the why) and implementation strategy (addressing the how).

We have over 35 years experience and commitment of walking alongside families in various but steadfast ways, the last 10 years of doing so with specific focus.

We have a positive profile and proven reputation within the Region and across the province.

Who We Are

Overview:

Durham Family Resources is committed to partnering with families who have a loved one with a developmental disability in order to access the good things of life. Our organization is family-led and is based on principles rooted in Social Role Valorization (SRV) with a focus on one person at a time in real community.

Foundational Documents:



What's at our Table (WAOT) (2023)



The Nature of Family Support (2020)

Definition of What it Means to Belong and Be a Part of One's Community

The aim is to belong to a community where we are all valued, our differences are respected, our contributions drawn forth, and our needs are met in typical, familiar and valued ways so we can live in dignity among and in valued relationship with all others, and in typical life circumstances as enjoyed by us all.

A socially inclusive society is thereby evidenced by people;

- being present regularly and frequently in ordinary places in their communities,
- in typical and normative ways,
- in demographically representative groupings,
- holding valued social roles based on their interests and passions and choosing,
- wherein they make relevant and welcomed contributions,
- in and through their relationships with a range of other valued community members.

Statement of Vision, Mission, and Values

VISION

We all enjoy full and meaningful life within our communities; we are all stronger when each member belongs

MISSION

Durham Family Resources works in partnership with a person with a disability, their family and allies to imagine, plan, implement, and work toward a good life in family, neighbourhood and community.

Because our community is best when everyone contributes, our partnership aims to enhance the capacity of the whole family to care for one another and to sustain or enhance their valued social roles as family members and as members of the community.

We support our Vision by working with the whole family, together choosing resources, supports and pathways anchored in practices that take place in ordinary community life, one person at a time, and use a Social Role Valorization (SRV) framework.

Durham Family Resources is family-led, rooted in community, focused on recognizing capacity, and always moves toward critical analysis and action based on this Vision, Mission and Values.

VALUES

Durham Family Resources believes:

- In the essential importance of a good life in family, neighbourhood and community.
- Freely given, committed personal relationships with people will best safeguard the lives and wellbeing of family members with disabilities
- Communities have the capacity and a fundamental responsibility to welcome and support people with disabilities, and that our communities will be stronger and better when we all belong
- That, when provided with adequate support, families provide the safest, most consistent and loving environment for family members and have the capacity to imagine, plan and build good lives for and with their family members in community
- That there is great value in family-to-family learning, family leadership and connection, and on the ability of families and allies to build and influence their communities to grow strong together

Core Operational Values

Durham Family Resources has Core Operational Values that are important in guiding our approach to work. Together with families, we work in the following ways:

- We work with one person at a time in authentic community.
- Our approach is family-led, person-leading, and partnership-based.
- We prioritize the voice of the person we serve and follow their lead.
- We provide support, so families do not feel alone, and help them connect with others.
- We are committed to healing our relationship with Indigenous people.
- We are intentionally and plan-fully anti-racist.
- We believe in family-led community development.
- We equip families with critical thinking skills.
- We believe both families and communities are capable.
- We have a responsibility to reflect on and share our knowledge and experience.

Lay Of The Land

It is important to outline the lay of the land that we are walking into in 2022-23, the year of preparation for and development of the strategic directions contained in our eventual plan.

As a result of our constant communication with families and throughout our Partner Conversations within the strategic planning process, we know and have been reaffirmed in our belief that the social devaluation of people with developmental disabilities by people and institutions in our communities is the greatest barrier to achieving our Vision of a community where we all belong.

Given that the pervasive story and images in our community continue to be that of a person with a disability as a client, as a burden, as troublesome, and as costly, families need and want support to change the hearts and minds of community members and organizations in our society. They want assistance to influence the dominant stories so that they convey the understanding that people with disabilities are worthy, contributing, welcomed and integral members of a full community. When communities come to see people with disabilities as familiar and important, then much greater accommodation, support, understanding, and welcome will be offered to ensure that people are present and contributing.

We want to help families, as community members themselves, make this happen.

How We See Ourselves & How Others See Us

Through our daily conversations with families, and this strategic planning process, we identified Durham Family Resource's strengths, opportunities, and challenges.

- **Strengths** of Durham Family Resources include the SRV-anchored principles, reputation for family-centered practice, proven track record helping people live ordinary good lives, financial stability, nimble and adaptable innovations, and global disability leaders.
- **Opportunities** for Durham Family Resources include deeper support to young families, continuing to offer unique aspects to the organization that are not offered elsewhere, expanding some aspects of the organization to other regions, and creating partnerships with like-minded organizations.
- **Challenges** that Durham Family Resources faces at this time include supporting school-aged families, effectively reaching and supporting racialized families, and creating a meaningful digital presence. Other challenges include continuing to build a knowledgeable and principled board of directors, constantly meeting the demands of growth while staying true to their mission, and thriving in the current chaotic and unpredictable environment.

Theme: Changing Hearts and Minds of our Community

Durham Family Resources' 5-year strategic plan intends to shift the community mindset toward people with disabilities from ideas of deficit, devaluation, and burden to seeing them as valued and contributing members of society.

This 5-year strategic plan aims to more intentionally focus on increasing our shared capacity (organization, families and allies) to change the community mindset toward people with disabilities from ideas of deficit, devaluation and burden and bring us closer to becoming communities that focus on contributions, common needs for all, mutual regard, and relationship.

We believe that the more deeply our community, including families, see and feel that people with disabilities are more familiar than different, more contributing than not, and more important and valued to include than not, the more easily real welcome will be extended through gestures, opportunities, supports, resources, and policy and legal changes where necessary. A community inside is a strong community.

And so our central theme to this strategic plan is:

**Changing the hearts and minds of our community:
one story, one relationship at a time.**

Durham Family Resources and families have a proven track record changing the hearts and minds of community members by sharing the lives and experiences of real people in real connection in the local community. In this strategic plan period, we are looking to build an abundance of opportunities to increasingly change the hearts and minds of our communities.

Our Strategic Directions For The Next 5 Years

Strategic Direction 1: Solid Foundation in Practice and Implementation

Overview:

A continuation and deepening of our excellence in supporting families in their implementation and practice in all life domains, so that the work on the ground continues to inform our learning and guide our steps forward with people and their families; this is the expression of the voices and will of people themselves, with practical projects that arise from listening to people and their chosen families.

Overall 5-Year Goal:

Sustaining the kinds of partnerships with resources, connections and support that result in family members with disabilities leading fulfilling, connected and contributing lives in their community and in growing relationship with other community members, in such a way that results in the following:

- Families in the lead where the voice of the person runs deep,
- Solid (principled, relatable, local, wide-ranging) and shareable stories,
- Valued, contributing lifestyles in all domains of life,
- Emerging and increasing personal, committed and unpaid relationships.

Why It Matters:

Others need to see what is possible, and then be involved in good lives in communities that include the contributions of people with disabilities. Community members need to see this not just in

presentations and stories, but at their workplaces, worship places, recreation and leisure places, and home and neighbourhood spaces. Community members of all kinds need to see what is possible and be a part of what can be, before they can begin to ask for and create this on their own. When people are valued, systems and services will change.

In this first strategic direction, we will strive to bring new, ongoing, coherent and authentic stories of real people in ordinary ways to the attention and spaces of ordinary citizens, including other families. We will continue to partner with families to build their stories of possibility and this will be a key way to change community hearts and minds.

Family voices and family energy and action show us that this is the heart of the work of Durham Family Resources. Stakeholders have repeatedly requested that this not be left behind in favour of other emerging directions.

How will we know we are getting there (i.e. Looking for evidence of):

- People living ordinary lives in more realms of life offering their contributions through valued roles and in relationship with others.
 - Some new places, roles and relationship arising for families new to Durham Family Resources or new to building toward the good things of life.
 - Some sustaining places, roles and relationships over time.
 - Diversity in the profiles of families and stories (cultural and racial identity, income and education levels, age range of family member with disability, range of supports required by the person, urban and rural lifestyles, and a diversity in options and supports (types of housing or work or contribution, circles or other ways to relationship, part of a family group.)
- Greater diversity in leadership and robust story examples.
- More mentoring/leadership emerging.
- Diversity of community members and younger families are more visible.
- A greater number of community members in varying relationship with the person with a disability and clearly seeing the typical lifestyle the person is leading (neighbours, bankers, employers, leisure club members, medical practitioners, etc).

Objective 1: Continuation and Deepening of Current Family Support

Because family and other stakeholders highly value the family-led, principled facilitation and planning supports for a good life in real community, one person at a time, for which Durham Family Resources is well-known, we will continue this support and resource to an ever-diverse range of families.

Plan:

1. Provide the current or higher commitment of facilitation and planning supports for ongoing, principled, *one-family-at-a-time* assistance and facilitation.

What Success Looks Like:

1. Through the partnerships with families and facilitation resources, whole families, who increasingly represent the diversity of the Durham Region/Ontario population, will be proudly offered a steady flow of stories of real people in valued roles and relationship in their community.

Objective 2: Supporting Family Action on Home and Housing

Because significant barriers to stabilizing home and housing include affordability and imagining what is possible, we intend to address both of these. In addition, successful examples of this will provide pathways for families and communities in the future.

Plan:

1. A 5-year Home Assistance Pilot that assists families financially in order to achieve greater home and housing stability.

What Success Looks Like:

1. More families achieving housing stability through the Home Assistance Pilot, with rich and illustrative examples of home, housing and support that will be helpful to others.

Objective 3: Getting Clarity on Pathways to Relationship

At all turns, families voice their interest and concern for inviting and shoring up relationships in their family lives. In particular, in a post-pandemic and isolated world, people with disabilities and their families are at heightened risk of not having enriching and safeguarding relationships with unpaid others in their lives.

Plan:

1. Continue and deepen the organizational focus on pathways to relationships which contribute to a person's access to the good things of life - through family and staff training, shared learning, and rigorous practice.
2. Ensure this is a focus early in discussions with and among families as they first come to Durham Family Resources facilitation, groups and events.

What Success Looks Like:

1. Families are engaged in noticing, implementing and bringing about relationship from the very beginning of their journey with Durham Family Resources.
2. Families continue to have stories to tell about new and deeper relationship in their lives so there are continuous solid and growing local stories to draw from.

Objective 4: Engaging Families of Children and Youth

Young families today are the leaders of tomorrow; investments in their children is an investment in good, ordinary lives for all. Our investment in young families until recently has not been sufficient to build sustainable leadership and will take years to fully develop.

Plan:

1. Plan and implement a Reaching Out strategy to very young families.
2. Implement a children's facilitation project with a larger investment in resources for children's facilitation.
3. Offer current and future learning and Learning Series in different formats that reach younger families better.

What Success Looks Like:

1. Parents of young children are stepping confidently into leadership roles; young children are more often taking on typical valued roles and lifestyles.
2. There are larger numbers of young families and a more diverse range of family demographics being served by Durham Family Resources and using our resources.

Objective 5: Pursuing Employment

Paid employment is a powerful rite of passage for most adults, and yet remains elusive to most adults with disabilities. A reliable process or strategy to attain the valued social role of employee or paid worker is still not within the grasp of most families. This requires further focus and attention.

Plan:

1. Understand, define and communicate employment success as part of a process that includes indications of growth and change in not only the job seeker but also the family, employers, and community.
2. Implement and assess/review an overall Employment Approach with various areas of focus.
 1. Customized Employment.
 2. Other employment strategies.

What Success Looks Like:

1. The pathway(s) to and conditions for employment success are better understood, supported and implemented so that the number of people working for pay increases at a reliable rate.
2. People getting paid work are able to tell their stories in ways that help others learn and repeat the success.

Objective 6: Recognizing Capacity and Ensuring Voice

We recognize that all people have the capacity to make decisions and to have a voice in the direction and details of their lives, but this is not often recognized in either the community or the law in Ontario. Together with families, we need to become more adept at supporting, hearing, amplifying, and augmenting the voice and preferences of people with disabilities.

Plan: While the voice of the person is interwoven in all aspects, this plan also ensures this pathway forward in the following ways:

1. Complete participation in the provincial Supportive Decision-Making (SDM) Pilot (2024) so as to make an impact on future legislative change in Ontario.
2. Continue with creative, respectful and participatory tracking of the issues and barriers confronting people with disabilities having their voices recognized in making decisions, with interventions where possible to protect and augment the voice of the person.
3. Explore various legal support to help the organization and families address legal and other complex issues as they arise.

What Success Looks Like:

1. Families in Durham Region know that Durham Family Resources is a reliable source of information and resources, useful to safeguarding the legal and actual voice of their family member with disability.
2. Families connected with Durham Family Resources have a number of successes and stories that have in fact safeguarded the voices and decisions of family members with disability, including those most at risk of not being seen as able to make decisions.
3. The various ways to support, amplify and augment people's voices are evident through many stories and projects.

Objective 7: Family Focus on Health and Wellbeing

Critical to physical well-being is having access to medical care and supports that value the life and voice of the person with a developmental disability. Families can make significant positive contributions to this end when they find ways to partner with the medical system in a joint effort to attain best healthcare outcomes for the patient.

Plan:

1. Follow family lead on health and well-being priorities.
2. Continue exploring emerging alternatives in good health through the Biomedical Approaches Study Group.
3. Safe At Hospital (SAH):
 1. To meet and collaborate with Lakeridge Health (locally – being safe within available medical systems).
 2. To meet in order to track and better understand MAiD (medical assistance in dying) laws and how to safeguard people with disabilities in its wake.
4. Keep a pulse on emerging trends/practices related to post-pandemic recovery.

What Success Looks Like:

1. Families and Durham Family Resources are mutual partners with the local healthcare and medical system, such that information and ideas for best practice, best healthcare outcomes, and assistance in communicating key messages happens so that people enjoy best health care outcomes, practice and supports through local community systems.
2. Families are aware of the threats that come with MAiD and have strategies and plans to safeguard the lives of their loved ones.

Objective 8: Continuing to Support Family Leadership

Family leadership is at the heart of a family-led organization. Leadership takes noticing, nurturing, learning opportunities, practice and stories of success.

Plan:

1. Plan a range of family leadership opportunities annually to draw in diverse family member leaders at varying points along the leadership journey.
2. Offer opportunities for family learning, teaching and travel.
3. Pay attention to various ethnocultural and demographic makeup of family leaders so that representation increases from the current profile of Durham Family Resources family leadership.

What Success Looks Like:

1. A growing number of family leaders who represent the demographic and cultural diversity of the organization and community take on a variety of co-partnering and leadership roles that are visible to the membership and community.

Objective 9: Addressing Paid Support Issues (Team Building-Recruitment)

The labour market presents grave challenges to finding and keeping good paid supports which are essential to people's lives. At the same time, there is less cohesion within our family and neighbourhood lives. Together with families, we need to discover options and possibilities within the current economy and community reality. This runs parallel to a focus on the development of (unpaid) relationships.

Plan:

1. Ensure coherency in facilitation, family groups, presentations and elsewhere so that unpaid, natural supports are also included in all support discussions (in many ways) so that a person's life is never reduced to paid support.
2. Develop a new website to link local contracted workers with families which focuses on the opportunities to regard various support roles in innovative ways to community members who have not yet considered the mutual benefits of such work.
3. Continuing to explore new pathways – and feeding learning and possibilities to Centre for Learning.

What Success Looks Like:

1. Families have a new way of looking at the development of support teams, beginning with natural supports and relationships first.
2. Families have a familiarity and confidence in approaching new groups of the labour market for paid support roles in ways that are enhancing to their family members.
3. Community members who come to provide assistance to people understand and are drawn to the social justice aspects of the work.

Objective 10: Clarify and Act Upon the Role of Social Media for the Organization

Because we are an organization that values in-person relationships, and recognize the faulty and misleading promises of social media, this mode of communication has not yet been embraced, but is also worth taking the plunge because this is a world where a careful and considered use could provide the opportunity to bolster presence and reputation with families who we have not yet been able to reach in person.

Plan:

1. Discuss coherent and principled use of social media, taking into consideration:
 1. Linkages to newsletter, opportunity for communicating other DFR information, news, events.
 2. The cohort of younger families and their familiarity and reliance on social media.
 3. The Durham Family Resources deeply held values around relationship, which to a great extent will always need to have one “foot” in real person-to-person interactions in real space and time.

What Success Looks Like:

1. Through conversation, study, and small trials, Durham Family Resources has found a number of ways to successfully augment a social medial presence without replacing or diminishing in-person relationship.
2. Thoughtful use of social media in reaching out to younger families and families for whom this is their main mode of communication and information.

Strategic Direction 2: Organize and Extend Learning, Teaching, and Sharing Stories of Possibility

Overview:

It is our intention, in partnership with families, to move toward building a strong, principled centre of family-based learning and teaching excellence. This family knowledge/learning centre will become known as a source of relevant, reliable information and learning of many kinds, relying on the leadership and experience of people and their families.

Overall 5-Year Goal:

The overall goal is to increase access to current and future learning content and processes to families within Durham Region and beyond, based on our current profile and feedback on the quality of our learning events, materials, and approaches over the past decade. We are going to do this by:

- Co-designing a usable go-to platform for families and their allies which holds the resources developed with the values and principle base of Durham Family Resources that feels held by both families and the organizational foundations.
 - Keeping true to our current excellence in teaching and storytelling based on ongoing experiences with real, local families (this is our superpower).
 - Building a platform that will organize our teaching and learning materials and opportunities to give local and other families access to excellent content - in part at their own timing and volition, and not entirely depending on our workshop and learning dates.

Why it Matters

Family-to-family learning is a powerful way to bring ideas to the very people who can best imagine, plan and implement them in real lives in ordinary communities. The stories that are then told and seen by others shape and influence the ideas about people with disabilities in the hearts and minds of the whole community. We have a proven record of supporting families to learn and make this impact and plan to extend this influence in and out of Durham Region into the future.

How will we know we are getting there (i.e. Looking for evidence of):

- Families and allies have access to our current curriculum of teaching and learning opportunities and offerings.
- Families and allies in Durham and beyond will have access to a digital platform that organizes and offers materials to augment our current work.

Objective 1: Continue to Develop and Deliver Content Together with Families in Areas of Experience and Expertise

The learning that Durham Family Resources has been providing to families is proven to lead to good lives for people with disabilities and is a constant source of hope, ideas and strategies to families and allies.

Plan:

1. Excellence in support in hearing and telling stories in many formats
 1. Regular principled sessions (Social Role Valorization learning, Optimized Individualized Service Delivery, Building a Context for Relationship).
 2. Regular family learning series (e.g., Making the Most Family Learning Series and Springing into Possibilities).
 3. Regular strategies that work.
 4. Emerging and evolving family-based ideas.
 5. Emerging and evolving ideas and topics of conversation.
 6. Sharing of evaluations, data, learning, analysis, etc of interest to families.

What Success Looks Like:

1. People will be living their ordinary good life and be seen by community members.
2. The stories of people living their good life will be shared with Durham Family Resources and others and used as stories of possibility for other families.
3. Families implementing the learning will share what is and isn't working for them, informing new learning and pathways.

Objective 2: Design, Build and Launch a Learning Platform as the Centerpiece of the Learning Centre

There is the opportunity to share the proven and practical strategies, tools, and stories of possibility that Durham Family Resources already teaches to families in a more scalable and resource-efficient way.

Plan:

1. Design the Learning Platform.
2. Build the Learning Platform.
3. Launch the Learning Platform.

What Success Looks Like:

1. Families will be able to easily access the learning that will help them support their loved one to live a good life at the time they need it.
2. The knowledge base of the organization will be captured and stored in one secure place that is accessible to team members and families.
3. Durham Family Resources will continue to have a good reputation in learning and teaching on family and community-relevant information.

Strategic Direction 3: Using Evidence to Deepen Our Work and Bring About Change

Overview:

This strategic direction is about further developing our expertise and reputation in collecting and using evidence as another way to demonstrate the valued place people with disabilities can hold within our communities. These methods will further our experience in how evidence might be useful in a family-led organization, likely based on where success and progress are noticed and then demonstrate what essential elements and processes have led to such results.

This work will involve using effective, respectful means to notice and follow stories of success and possibility. Together with families, we will learn to better notice, articulate and gather relevant information (stories and more) and then look for patterns and common pathways to success. We will also focus on noticing and following the ways that community hearts and minds are changed by stories, relationships, and other evidence.

This will be augmented by research to legitimize and safeguard a pathway forward that is individualized, planned and implemented one person at a time in real community, directed by the person themselves in the context of chosen families and allies in real community.

Over the past 5 years, we have stories, patterns, and some internal evidence to convince ourselves and a good number of families of the success of these kinds of supports and resources to help family members gain access to the good things of life in community. Now, we would like to use similar approaches to provide evidence externally to the greater disability sector and the wider community.

Overall 5-Year Goal:

Our overall goal is to increase our capacity to show and explain the impact of people with disabilities living good, contributing, and very ordinary lives in their communities.

Furthermore, we will demonstrate how thoughtful, principled family-managed support arrangements, often in tandem with the ethical partnering of a non-service providing agency, are a natural fit for people living a good life and their communities. As a result, family-managed supports are shown as a viable option for families to choose and implement and for communities who will welcome them.

Important learning from this work will be woven into our practice with families and taught and shared through the Learning and Teaching Centre.

Why it Matters

Thoughtful and relevant proof-of-concept information helps many people to understand and trust the validity of the stories and information they see and hear. In a world that increasingly misleads through visual distortions and focus, trustworthy sources of information and transparent conclusions are very helpful in guiding people in families and communities down the real pathways to a good life in community. We need to learn how to do this better in order to underpin the stories we tell and the information we share.

How will we know we are getting there (i.e. Looking for evidence of):

1. We are implementing by reasonable degrees a comprehensive strategy for collecting evidence in information and stories from and with families that show patterns and processes for success (including the areas of focus in Solid Foundations in Practice and Implementation above).
2. The process and strategy for using evidence aligns with our principles and values and is being developed and reviewed by families, experts, experienced others.
3. Year over year, our data shows changes and advances in community members' hearts and minds (mindset) and other identifiable trends and patterns of success.
4. We consistently and increasingly use this evidence at family, organizational, and political/societal/academic levels, including in Family Learning and Teaching Centre where possible.

Objective 1: Learn and Enhance Competency in Identifying, Collecting and Analyzing Evidence

While we have learned much about gathering evidence and analyzing results, we will be on a steep learning curve to do this well.

Plan:

1. Develop a system for understanding, identifying, gathering and using data and evidence for the purposes outlined by working with an evidence/evaluation/analysis consultant to deepen our learning and carefully build a staged model of entering into this work.

What Success Looks Like:

1. Durham Family Resources and families will begin to have a body of evidence that is regarded as valid, reliable and useful for both families who are interested in our approaches and also for policy and legal decisions to be made.

2. Such evidence will be used for changes in supported decision-making legislation, and possibly influence families and the government in the efficacy of these pathways for some families.
3. Community members at various levels will have stories and other kinds of evidence of the value and contributions of members with disabilities.
4. Families will have new, interesting and effective ways of addressing congregation, segregation and non-welcoming practices in their communities.
5. Coherent and ethical means of demonstrating evidence will be shared.

Objective 2: Implement Processes that will Effectively Collect Evidence

The thoughtful, respectful collection of information and experiences will have to take into consideration the values of Durham Family Resources and how to do this work at a pace with other demands of the organization and in keeping with wanting families to lead ordinary good lives.

Plan:

1. Develop a slowly evolving system for collecting relevant information (and how) and analyzing the main elements of effective progress in many areas of practice, including those outlined in SD #1.
2. Work on seeking patterns and elements of success. Begin in simple ways to set baselines.
3. Understanding the importance of process as a factor related to final and lasting outcomes.

What Success Looks Like:

1. Durham Family Resources and families will have another basis for persuasion and influence to other families, policymakers, community members, funders, and others to promote individualized funding, family-managed support arrangements, and a supportive Transfer Payment Resource as effective means of bringing about good lives in community.
2. Family stories, together with harder data will be available to influence various community leaders and community projects to take these into consideration, possibly avoiding congregating and segregating policies and practices.
3. Stories, learning events, policy documents, input and feedback to political initiatives, and our reputation as a source of solid and reliable information stems in good part by the approaches we have taken to using evidence and communicating it well.

Strategic Direction 4: Ensuring Family-Managed Pathways in Durham and Beyond

Overview:

Safeguarding a coherent pathway (including policy, funding and action) for person-leading, family-managed individualized lifestyle support arrangements (PL-FMILSA) in Ontario is essential to our way of walking with families. This pathway is to ensure that people have access to good, ordinary lifestyles and have access to an ethical agency partner (principled, not tied to service provision) if they so choose, so that families are not alone and not unsupported.

To achieve this, we will need to find and develop agency allies who are in alignment with our principles and values and with whom we might share some aspects of our funding stability (CAD model) and other features (access to our Learning platform, supporter matching website, etc).

We need to continue a commitment to the kinds of secure, flexible, reliable, transparent financial and administrative collaborative resources (CAD) that are necessary to support family-managed arrangements. This model is of interest to both funders and families and ensures a myriad of complementary practices and clientele, along with a revenue stream to ensure a solid foundation for innovation and new directions.

All of this work must be supported and underpinned by a passionate, dedicated, skilled organization, within a workable organizational structure with reviews to ensure its viability over time.

Overall 5-Year Goal:

To articulate and be a significant family/organizational force ensuring a person-leading, family-managed voice gains legitimacy in policy and pathways and supportive structures going forward.

Why it Matters

We are at a point in time in Ontario where the family-managed and individualized lifestyle support model that aims to keep people with disabilities at the heart of their community is in jeopardy. We have experience and success with many significant elements of this pathway and a unique opportunity to join with others across the province who also want to ensure this remains one recognized pathway for families to choose.

How will we know we are getting there (i.e. Looking for evidence of):

- A funding pathway for family-managed individualized support arrangements remains in place in Durham.
- Some aspects of the Ministry's Journey to Belonging reform landed well for families.
- The Durham Family Resources' model has influenced other regions of the province.
- Our organization is strong, principled, sustainable, innovative and well-regarded by families first and foremost.
- We have more/different allies in government, across the sector and at community levels.

Objective 1: Build Toward More Family-Managed Capacity Across the Province

Families are often in the best position to develop solutions for their loved ones with disabilities, but currently there is a limited understanding of this pathway and limited availability of resources and support for family-managed pathways.

Plan:

1. Continue to create capacity across the system by careful and measured engagement with out-of-region (OOR) families.
2. Incorporate the learning and opportunities to the benefit of Durham Family Resources families in Durham.

What Success Looks Like:

1. Families outside of Durham have access to the knowledge and learning resources needed to build good family-managed solutions.
2. Families in Durham Region with Durham Family Resources have access to adequate funding and supports to enable their loved one to live an ordinary good life.
3. Outside of Durham Region Durham Family Resources is known for its effective, innovative and creative solutions and ideas of family-managed support arrangements of all kinds.

Objective 2: Form Strategic Alliance Network

If family-managed support arrangements remain unique only in a few areas of the province, then all are threatened. A group of organizations and individuals that share and are aligned with Durham Family Resource's principles of a good life are stronger in their advocacy for change than if they were to pursue their goals independently.

Plan:

1. Form a strategic collaborative of allies across the province of agencies interested in agency-supported ethical family-managed support arrangements, with some common features.

What Success Looks Like:

1. A group of organizations who are aligned with Durham Family Resources' principles and aims in regards to family-managed support arrangements agree to form a strategic alliance around government funding and administration.
2. The group meets to set shared goals and create an advocacy action plan.
3. Advocacy efforts for the enablement of good lives for people with disabilities are accelerated in Ontario.

Objective 3: Continue the Effective Collaborative Administrative Department (CAD) Model

Because CAD is an essential key to creative and unique responses to brokering for families and because the model also creates a revenue stream to fund the operations of Durham Family Resources' work with families and people with developmental disabilities.

Plan:

1. Ensure that CAD continues to have the work and the capacity to maintain the Durham Family Resources goals and challenges (funds and skills; imagination).

What Success Looks Like:

1. There is greater interest and capacity from the government to allow capacity-building organizations such as Durham Family Resources-CAD to broker individualized funds.
2. CAD is a strong, responsive model of funding and administrative support that serves as a role model, if not mentor, to other like-minded organizations.

Objective 4: Strong and Sustainable Organizational Foundation and Structure

Ensuring our work remains values-based and principle-driven, we can rely on these foundations for guiding us through unexpected moments in a world that is increasingly chaotic. The right people with the right skills and the right values and beliefs are essential to helping families and people with developmental disabilities to live ordinary good lives.

Plan:

1. Planned review of the foundational documents to update operational values to ensure coherent wording and definitions.
2. Ensure that Durham Family Resources has the organizational structure to sustain and grow this work.
3. Regular process of organizational evaluation or review (programmatic evaluation, administrative review).

What Success Looks Like:

1. Durham Family Resources has an organizational core that has made necessary adjustments to support the work and plans of this strategic plan.
2. Foundational documents provide continued guidance in all areas of organizational life.
3. Durham Family Resources values and principles continue to lead and guide families through unfamiliar and unexpected situations as they arise.

Glossary

BCR: Building the Context for Relationship

CAD: Collaborative Administrative Department

DFR: Durham Family Resources

IF: Individualized funding

MAiD: Medical assistance in dying

MTM: Making the Most Family Learning Series

OISD: Optimal Individualized Service Design

OOR Families: Out of Region families

PL-FMILSA: Person-leading, family-managed individualized lifestyle support arrangements

SAH: Safe At Hospital

SDM Pilot (2024): Supported Decision Making Pilot

SDs: Strategic Directions

SIP: Springing into Possibilities

SRV: Social Role Valorization

TPR: Transfer Payment Resource

WAOT: What's at our Table