

December 2023

Durham Family Resources

FAMILYfocus



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

Only a Few Tickets Remain for This Year's Stories by the Fire!

Our ninth annual **Stories by the Fire** is fast approaching! This *Stories by the Fire* gathering will return to its roots and be hosted live and in-person at the beautiful Robert McLaughlin Gallery in Oshawa.

There are only a few tickets remaining so if you are planning on joining us, click the link below asap! We will be holding a wait-list in case we have cancellations. If you are unable to attend in person, [sign-up here to receive a recording of the stories after the event!](#)

The theme of the evening will be centered around the idea of **reconnection**. Along with the stories, we will have a few pieces of entertainment, and a few songs as well. The doors to the Gallery will be open at 6:30pm, and the stories will begin at 7:00pm. Afterwards, we will mix and mingle in the main foyer with some light finger-food, great company, and all-around good cheer.

We hope to see you at this fantastic evening on Wednesday, December 13th - we know that when families and communities come together to exchange stories and ideas, it has the power to shape perspectives, strengthen bonds, and inspire change. Our *Stories by the Fire* event is the perfect occasion to do just that.

We can't wait to celebrate with you and share the magic of *Stories by the Fire* once again.



The Robert McLaughlin Gallery is located in Oshawa at 72 Queen St. There is free parking after 6pm in the parking lots surrounding the Gallery.

Stories by the Fire

Returns to an In-Person Experience!

Wednesday, December 13th @ 7:00pm

Robert McLaughlin Gallery
72 Queen St., Oshawa

Get your tickets here!





Did You Know? Our Next Generation Meetup Happens Monthly!

The NextGen group is a casual get together of those who identify as the “next generation” in the care and support of a loved one with a developmental disability. Whether you are a sibling, nibling, cousin or friend - come together with others to connect, share, and learn from one another!

The get together is typically held once a month, both via Zoom and occasionally in-person. [Contact Rosanne for more details!](#)

Thinking Through Reconvenes in the New Year!

“Thinking it Through” is a monthly online group for families of school aged children/youth.

Focusing on different topics each month, families learn about new topics, connect with fellow parents, expand their understanding of various children’s issues, and exchange ideas and stories!

Keep an eye out for the next meeting which will happen in January of 2024!



Send an email to Karen to find out more!

BioMedical Approaches Study Group Delves Into Book Reviews and Favourite Holiday Treats

This month the BioMedical group meets for the final time for 2023. The group will catch up about last month’s sensory presentation and demonstration, and also take a look at the past year of learning! Along with talking about updates to the group’s booklist, the season wouldn’t be complete without sharing favourite holiday treats - bring a recipe or a plate to share!

Everyone is welcome to attend and participate in the Bio-Medical Approaches Study Group. 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 on the second Friday of each month at 10am for about an hour to an hour and a half. **RSVP to Janet** ✉️ **if you’d like to attend!**



**STUDY GROUP
INFO
FRIDAY,
DECEMBER 8, 2023
10 AM**

Imagining Home Concluded for 2023 with Many Milestones and Successes in Home and Housing to Reflect On

We will not be holding an Imagining Home meeting this month, but instead would love to see you at our annual Stories by the Fire event to celebrate the festive season!

This year we have much to celebrate around family milestones and our collective successes in many areas of home and housing. 2023 was another year of small and steady steps in home and housing...

- DFR introduced a new 5-year Home Assistance Pilot as part of our Strategic Plan that will assist families to achieve greater home and housing stability and will be designed in the coming year.
- 4 more people received a portable housing benefit this year, bringing the total number up to 31 people connected with DFR (since 2019).
- 13 new families joined our Imagining Home conversations in 2023 – either for the first time or returning after some time away.
- We continued meeting with up to 11 families over the course of the year as part of our Housemate/Roommate Working Group – 4 of those families have figured out a roommate model and put it in place, and another 3 families are actively looking for a roommate.
- DFR was offered a fourth rent-geared-to-income (RGI) unit as part of a long-standing arrangement with a local non-profit housing provider, for someone connected with DFR to make a home of their own a reality.
- We facilitated two well-received presentations of our principled approach to home and housing at the International SRV Conference and the Durham Region MCCSS Family Forum.
- We continue to add to our growing collection of practical resources that support families in their visioning, planning and implementation of home and housing plans.
- Since the start of Imagining Home, 40 families have taken significant steps in their housing - this is what happens when families take the lead!
- And many more stories of big and small steps taken this year by families...

Looking forward to a new year with renewed hope and vigour to bring about more home and housing options for people, together with families!

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@dafrs.com to arrange an introductory call.

IMAGINING HOME MEETING • NEXT MEETING • WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10 , 2023 • 6:30PM

IN PERSON AT THE GATHERING PLACE!

CONTACT ERIN FOR DETAILS ([EOREILLY@DAFRS.COM](mailto:eoreilly@dafrs.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, and energy through building circles of support, and connecting with other families.

The meeting is open to anyone who has attended the 6-part Making The Most learning series or a MTM Weekend Retreat and wishes to join the conversation. Contact Laura lpowell@dafrs.com for more information.



MAKING THE MOST STUDY GROUP

We are taking a break for the holidays this month - and hoping folks can come out and get together for Stories by the Fire on December 13th - but are looking forward to seeing everyone again on Monday January 22, at 6.30pm via Zoom.

JANUARY 22, 2024
6:30PM TO 7:30PM

respiteservices.com



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. Contact Sandy at (905)436-3404 or sciarlariello@dafrs.com. New supporters are continuing to be added. Contact Sandy for more information!

Important Dates At-A-Glance!

Bio Medical Study Group

December 8@10am

Stories by the Fire

December 13@7pm

Thinking it Through

Meets again in January!

Imagining Home

Meets again in January!

Making the Most Study Group

Meets again in January!

For more information,
please visit our website at
www.dafrs.com

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

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