

ADULT RESOURCE GUIDE

COMMUNITY SUPPORTS AND SERVICES
SPRING 2025

*Formerly Titled
Transition To Adulthood Resource Booklet*



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INTRODUCTION

The information in this Resource Guide includes some key resources for youth on the autism spectrum who are transitioning into adulthood, including those who do not qualify for services under Developmental Services Ontario (DSO). These resources may also be helpful for adults with a range of diagnoses and ages.

The information was collected by:

Sunbeam Developmental Resource Centre (SDRC)

205-1120 Victoria St. N | 205-1120 Rue Victoria Nord | Kitchener, ON, N2B 3T2

Tel: 519-741-1121 | Fax: 519-743-4730 | Website: www.sdrc.ca



Disclaimer

Sunbeam Developmental Resource Centre does not necessarily endorse the information contained in this booklet. The purpose is to provide information to the community. It is up to the reader to decide what is useful for them.

We have made an effort to ensure that our information is accurate and relevant, and will review the document periodically to keep it current.

Please contact r.khanam@sunbeamcommunity.ca regarding any updates, errors or omissions.

WHAT IS SELF ADVOCACY?

Self-advocacy means taking control of one's own life.

That can mean making choices about how to live your life, like choosing what you do at home, at school, at work, or in your relationships.

Neurodiversity and self-advocacy do not mean that people who have autism can do everything independently.

Everyone needs help from other people to live our lives, whether you have a disability or not.

Some people need more support than others to get what they need.

No matter how much help you need, you should be able to make your own choices.

Speak Up for yourself	Learn how to get information	Find out who will support you	Know your Rights and Responsibilities	Work on solving the problems	Ask for help from others when you need it	Learn about Self- Determination
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1. SUNBEAM DEVELOPMENTAL RESOURCE CENTRE (SDRC)

www.sdrc.ca

Regardless of any previous involvement with Sunbeam Developmental Resource Centre (SDRC), ANYONE in the community can access the following valuable services/supports we provide:



- **SDRC Workshops:** We invite you to explore various workshops offered throughout the year, and register to participate online at www.sdrc.ca/workshops-and-training
- **SDRC Newsletter:** SDRC publishes a spring, summer, fall and winter edition of the agency newsletter – SDRC Connection Newsletter. Our newsletter is available to everyone in our community. These newsletters highlight current events in developmental services, community events, upcoming workshops and programs, and other items of interest. To sign up for our informative SDRC Connection Newsletter visit www.sdrc.ca/sdrc-connection-newsletter.
- This **Adult Resource Guide** has been created and is maintained with current information specially for people who do not access specialized Developmental Services for adults in Waterloo Region through Developmental Services Ontario (DSO). Everyone in our community can access the booklet. It is downloadable on our website at www.sdrc.ca/resource-guides.

2. HELP TO FIND SUPPORTS AND SERVICES

Family Resource Coach – Waterloo Region Family Network

www.wrfn.info/Family-Resource-Coach-Team

Navigating the list of local services and supports available to people with disabilities and their families is much easier when you have a helping hand to guide you along the way.

Family Resource Coach provides these supports - connecting families, caregivers and self-advocates to programs, activities and valuable information on a variety of topics, such as:

- How and where to get an assessment
- Steps to take after receiving a diagnosis
- Funding options
- Services to address speech and language issues, sensory concerns, social skills, etc.
- Family support services (e.g., sibling support, parent groups, respite, etc.)
- Common issues among teens
- Common issues among adults
- General issues (e.g., sleep problems, haircuts, eating, dentist visits, etc.)

Support is available in all life stages - NO diagnosis needed. The Family Resource Coaches are available to meet in person, by phone, email, or virtual call to lend a helping hand and personal guidance to families and to connect you to updated information, resources, and opportunities available within our community.



To reach any of the Family Resource Coach Team:

- Call Leah Bowman at **226-898-9301** or by email at leah.bowman@wrfn.info
- Call Lisa Cook at **226-338-7274** or by email at lisa.cook@wrfn.info

For more information please click on the link at the top of this page or call **519-886-9150**.

Region of Waterloo Welcome Spaces

www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/living-here/welcome-spaces.aspx#Locations

Tel: 519-883-2100, TTY: 519-575-4608

Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

The Region of Waterloo offers in-person support at three **Welcome Space locations** for people who need to access certain Community Services programs.

When you arrive in a Welcome Space, knowledgeable, helpful staff will greet you. Support is available at each location for:

- **Ontario Works**
- **Child Care Subsidy**
- **Employment Support**
- **Housing Services**
- **Income Tax Clinics (March to April)**
- **Public Health Family Nursing Services**
- **Warming, Cooling and Clean Air Spaces**

Welcome Space locations and hours:

150 Main Street, Cambridge

- Open Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Enter through the main building entrance. The Welcome Space is on the first floor.

20 Weber Street East, Kitchener

- Open Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Enter through the main building entrance. The Welcome Space is on the first floor.

99 Regina Street South, Waterloo

- Open Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Enter through the main building entrance. The Welcome Space is on the first floor.

AIDE Canada

www.aidecanada.ca

The Autism and/or Intellectual Disability Knowledge Exchange Network (AIDE Canada), is a tool to connect members of the community to credible, reliable, and evidence-informed resources, and includes advice (through videos) from self-advocates.

Planning for Life Beyond Graduation Toolkit

www.planningnetwork.ca/resources/planning-for-a-good-life-beyond-graduation-toolkit-overview

This Toolkit offers information to help young people and their families plan for a good life after graduation high school. It contains a number of resources including the Planning for Adulthood Action Guide, a Webcast, and a Ready for Adulthood Checklist, all available on the website.

3. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

3.1 Ontario Works (OW)

www.ontario.ca/page/ontario-works

Ontario Works provides financial assistance and employment assistance to individuals 18 and over living on their own. You can also be eligible for OW if you are in a family home. It offers two types of assistance:

Financial assistance including:

- income support to help with the costs of basic needs, like food, clothing and shelter
- health benefits for clients and their families

Employment assistance to help clients find, prepare for and keep a job. This assistance may include:

- workshops on resume writing and interviewing
- job counselling
- job-specific training
- access to basic education, so clients can finish high school or improve their language skills

In most cases, a client must agree to participate in employment assistance activities in order to receive financial assistance.

Emergency assistance is also available to people who are in a crisis or an emergency situation (e.g., people who have lost their homes, are leaving an abusive relationship and/or are worried about their safety).

Eligibility

To be eligible for **Ontario Works** you must:

- live in Ontario
- be in financial need (your household doesn't have sufficient financial resources to meet basic living expenses)
- be willing to make reasonable efforts to find, prepare for and keep a job (unless you have specific circumstances that temporarily prevent you from doing so, such as an illness or caregiving responsibilities)

Other adult members of your household must also agree to participate in employment assistance activities.

How to Apply

You can start the application process either online, by phone or in person.

Online: To apply online click on this link: [Apply \(saapply.mcass.gov.on.ca/CitizenPortal/application.do\)](https://saapply.mcass.gov.on.ca/CitizenPortal/application.do)

By phone or in person: Contact these offices of **Ontario Works** in the Waterloo Region:

Office Name and Address	Phone Number/ Hours of Service	Intake/Apply
Waterloo Office 99 Regina Street South, Waterloo ON N2J 4V3	519-883-2100 8:30 am to 4:30 pm	519-883-2100
Cambridge Office 150 Main Street, Cambridge ON N1R 8H6	519-740-5700 8:30 am to 4:30 pm	519-883-2100
Kitchener Office 235 King Street E, 1st floor, Kitchener ON N2G 4N5	519-883-2101 8:30 am to 4:30 pm	519-883-2100

3.2 Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)

ODSP is a social assistance program that provides income and employment supports to eligible Ontario residents those have disabilities.

ODSP offers:

- Financial assistance to help you and your family with essential living expenses
- Benefits, for you and your family, including prescription drugs and vision care
- Help finding and keeping a job, and advancing your career

ODSP offers two types of support:

- **Income support** - Financial assistance provided each month to help with the costs of basic needs, like food, clothing and shelter. Income support also includes benefits, like drug coverage and vision care, for clients and their eligible family members.
- **Employment supports** - Services and supports to help clients with disabilities find and keep a job and advance their careers.



Eligibility:

To qualify for **ODSP income support**, you must:

- be at least 18 years old
- be an Ontario resident
- be in financial need and
- meet the program's definition of a person with a disability

How to Apply

You can start the application process either online, by phone or in person.

Online: To apply online click on this link: [Apply \(saapply.mcscs.gov.on.ca/CitizenPortal/application.do\)](https://saapply.mcscs.gov.on.ca/CitizenPortal/application.do)

Information on ODSP Employment Supports can be found in the **Volunteer, Employment and Training Supports** section of this booklet

By phone: Contact their main number 1888-789-4199 and ask to speak to the local office.

In person: These are the local **ODSP Offices** in the Waterloo Region:

Office Name and Address	Phone and Hours of Service
Cambridge Ministry of Community and Social Services Ontario Disability Support Program Income and Employment Supports 73 Water St. N., Suite 400, 4th Floor Cambridge ON, N1R 7L6	Main ODSP Number 1-888-789-4199; or Log into your online ODSP Account; or Visit the office in person. 8:30 am to-5:00 pm
Kitchener/Waterloo Ministry of Community and Social Services Ontario Disability Support Program Income and Employment Supports 715 Fischer Hallman Road, Unit 301 Kitchener ON N2E 4E9	Main ODSP Number 1-888-789-4199; or Log into your online ODSP Account; or Visit the office in person. 8:30 am to-5:00 pm

3.3 Canada Disability Benefit

The Canada Disability Benefit will be a monthly payment for working-age persons with disabilities who have low income.

The first month of eligibility for the Canada Disability Benefit is June 2025 and it is expected that payments will begin in July 2025. Further information regarding the benefit application process will be posted – see www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/disability/canada-disability-benefit.html

3.4 Ceridian Cares

Ceridian Cares is a grant-based service that provides grants for food, clothing, footwear, and/or household items. They also provide assistance for medical devices, home adjustments for barrier free living, and recreation programs for individuals and families in need.



Eligibility

- Applicant must be 18+ years of age
- Recipient must be a Canadian resident
- Recipient must be an individual or family in need of financial assistance related to the types of items supported by Ceridian Cares
- For the Basic Essentials grant type, recipient annual household income must be at or below the "**Low Income Cut Off before tax**" level as defined by Stats Canada on their Website: www.statcan.gc.ca
- For the Quality of Life grant type, recipient annual household income must be at or below the "median total income in their province or territory" as defined by Stats Canada: www150.statcan.gc.ca

How to Apply

Online: To apply online click on this link: www.ceridian.tbscloud.ca/form

3.5 Disability Tax Credit (DTC)

Canada Revenue Agency

www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency

Tel: 1800-267-6999



The Disability Tax Credit (DTC) is a non-refundable tax credit that helps persons with disabilities, or their supporting persons reduce the amount of income tax they may have to pay.

Eligibility:

There are different ways for which a person can be eligible for the Disability Tax Credit (DTC). The person must meet **one** of the following criteria:

- be blind
- be markedly restricted in at least one of the basic activities of daily living
- be significantly restricted in two or more of the basic activities of daily living (can include a vision impairment)
- need life-sustaining therapy

In addition, the person's impairment must meet **all** of the following criteria:

- be prolonged, which means the impairment has lasted or is expected to last for a continuous period of at least 12 months
- be present all or substantially all the time (at least 90% of the time)

How to Apply:

Online: Find Form T2201 (DTC Certificate) online:

www.canada.ca/content/dam/cra-arc/formspubs/pbg/t2201/t2201-18e.pdf

3.6 Income Tax Returns: Free Clinics for people who have low-income

Through the Community Volunteer Income Tax Program, community organizations host free tax clinics where volunteers file tax returns eligible people with low income.

Walk-in during business hours, complete a few forms and drop off your documents. A volunteer will prepare and e-file your tax return. Then, you pick up your documents. You will have to show proof of your identity when you drop-off and pick-up your documents.

Please click on the link below to check for more **clinics** in your area:

www.apps.cra-arc.gc.ca/ebci/oecv/external/prot/cli_srch_01_Id.action

You can also contact at taxclinic@theworkingcentre.org,

tax-clinic@waterlooregion.org, or

call 519-579-3800 ext. 3

Social Development Centre Waterloo Region

www.waterlooregion.org/content/contact-us

Email: Lesley Crompton, Tax Clinic Coordinator, lesley@waterlooregion.org

3.7 Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP)

www.canada.ca/registered-disability-savings-plan-rdsp

An RDSP is a savings plan that is intended to help parents and others save for the long-term financial security of a person who is eligible for the disability tax credit (DTC). Depending on the household income of the RDSP applicant the government also contributes an amount annually in the form of a grant or bond. Contributions to an RDSP are not tax deductible and can be made until the end of the year in which the beneficiary turns 59.

3.8 Benefits Wayfinder

www.benefitswayfinder.org

Benefits Wayfinder is an online searchable tool to help find benefits from all levels of government that you may be eligible to receive.

There is a YouTube guide on how to use the Benefits Wayfinder at [Helping Canadians access benefits: An introduction to the Benefits Wayfinder - YouTube](#)

The Questionnaire tab at the top of the Benefits Wayfinder can help you to find benefits you may not be receiving by customizing your search.

4. EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING AND VOLUNTEER SUPPORTS

4.1 Employment & Training Supports

ODSP Employment Supports

www.ontario.ca/page/ontario-disability-support-program-employment-supports



Individuals receiving ODSP (or individuals who have a disability that meets the criteria for ODSP) can access a range of supports to find and keep a job, and/or to advance their careers. Assistance is also available for those who wish to start their own business.

How to Apply:

- Contact the local ODSP office (contact information above) to confirm that you are eligible.

Eligibility:

To qualify for ODSP Employment Supports, you must:

- be at least 16 years old
- be an Ontario resident
- be legally allowed to work in Canada
- have a substantial physical or mental disability that is expected to last a year or more, and makes it hard for you to find or keep a job
- You don't have to be a recipient of Income Support to be eligible for Employment Supports.

How it Works:

Once you have been authorized for Employment Support, you will be referred to an Employment Support Agency. The Agency will develop a work plan with you. They will also help you access a wide range of services and supports, including help with job search, assistive devices, and/or job coaching, based on your specific needs.

Employment Services In Waterloo Region Region of Waterloo Employment Support

The Region of Waterloo offers support to people who are looking for employment or who would like to enhance their skills or develop a new career.

Drop into the **Welcome Space** at any of the locations below to use a computer, printer, fax, TTY, or open a voice mail box for your job search.



Drop in Centre Locations:

- Waterloo - 99 Regina St. S.
- Kitchener - 235 King St. E.
- Cambridge - 150 Main St.

Online and Email Notification

www.regionofwaterloo.ca

www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/living-here/employment-support.aspx

Check out the **Online Job Board** for job openings, career presentations, and job fairs in the community. Sign up to have job opportunities sent straight to your inbox as they are posted. You can also subscribe to the **Employment Opportunities and Training e-newsletter** to have the list of most recent job postings sent to you weekly.

CMHA Employment Support

www.cmhaww.ca

cmhaww.ca/programs-services/employment-services

Tel: 519-749-3700 ext. 4087



Canadian Mental
Health Association

Employment Services assists individuals over 16 years of age and either mental or physical barriers to finding employment on their own – a formal diagnosis is not required. They assist those eligible, in Waterloo Region and Wellington County to obtain competitive, paid employment. A range of employment supports are offered through three programs: **Bridging Employment Supports, Links To Work, and New Directions** (New Directions is available through the Centres for Mental Health). Details of these programs are available on their **website**.

Job Search Resource Centre at the Working Centrewww.theworkingcentre.org**Tel: 519-743-1151****Email: genmail@theworkingcentre.org**

Job Search Resource Centre is a local resource, designed to help you in your job search, which can be used independently or in collaboration with a Working Centre Employment Counselor. The job postings site is active and up-to-date. Located at 58 Queen Street South in Kitchener – the Job Search Resource Centre is a busy, lively centre that is welcoming and practical.

YMCA Employment Supportswww.ymcathreerivers.cawww.ymcacambridgekw.ca/en/employment-services/Employment-Services.asp**Employment Services Cambridge****Tel: -519-621-1621 ext. 6203****Employment Services Kitchener****Tel: 519-579-9622 ext. 244****YMCAs of Cambridge
& Kitchener-Waterloo**

The YMCAs offer a variety of employment supports including mentorship programs, job posting boards, assistance with resume and job search and workshops.

Starling Community Services (previously known as Lutherwood)www.starlingcs.ca/employment

Starling Community Services offers a variety of youth and young adult (under age 30) employment services and programs. They assist with:

- Job search
- Resume development
- Interview skills



A variety of workshops are provided, and their resource centre offers a space to complete job searches and speak with an employment counsellor regarding suitable government employment programs such as Youth Job Connection and Experience Ontario.

There are two locations in Waterloo Region. Their contact information is listed below:

35 Dickson Street, Cambridge	Tel: 519-623-9380
165 King Street East, Kitchener	Tel: (519) 743-2460

Cambridge Career Connectionswww.cambridgecareerconnections.com**Tel: 519-622-0815**

Cambridge Career Connections is an employment resource centre offered through the John Howard Society. Their employment coordinators can assist with job search and placement. A variety of workshops are available.

JohnHoward
SOCIETY OF ONTARIO

**KW Habilitation Career Compass**www.kwhab.ca/kw-career-compass**Tel: 519-744-6307 ext. 1213**

KW Habilitation has the following employment Services:

- **Create an Employment Plan:** Individualized supports to plan for all the steps in reaching employment goals
- **Job Readiness:** Career exploration, workshops, resume building and interview preparation
- **Experiential learning opportunities** in authentic work and community settings to help identify individual interests and skill levels
- **Job Development:** Individualized job search plan in finding the right job
- **Job Coaches:** On the job training and ongoing job retention and maintenance supports

The above services can be purchased. For more information contact their office.

Hope Startwww.hopestart.ca**Tel: 519-823-9333****Email Marsaye Treen:** marsaye@rogers.com

Job exploration, search, trials and job coaching, specifically for people with disabilities.

Ray of Hopewww.rayofhope.net, (www.rayofhope.net/employment-services)**Tel: 519-578-8018****Email:** info@rayofhope.net

The Employment Services Program provides the education, counselling, practical life skills and on-the-job training necessary to be resilient in the workplace. Many people have not had the opportunity to learn the fundamental skills needed to overcome the challenges life presents. Must be between ages 20-29 and not in any type of school at the time of training. If you have experienced difficulty finding or maintaining full-time employment this program may be for you.

March of Dimes

www.modemploymentservices.ca

Tel: 519-579-5530

March of Dimes offers support in the following areas: Job Exploration, Active Job Search, Job Preparation and On-the-Job Support.

March of Dimes also provides supports such as wage subsidies and tuition for short term training programs like First Aid/CPR, through the Federal Opportunities Fund. Information on this program can be found through the following link: www.modemploymentservices.ca/services/accessible-biz-connections-abc-opportunities-fund/



Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program

www.oyap.com

OYAP is a high school program that allows youth to try a huge variety of apprenticeship-based careers in skilled trades, starting in Grade 11 or Grade 12 through the Cooperative Education program.

Employment Works

www.employment-works.ca/online

Employment Works offers online work preparedness training, providing a choice between instructor led or self-paced learning.



Canadian Career Pathways for Newcomer Women: In Her Shoes

www.ywkw.ca/ihswomen



Employment & entrepreneurship training program for visible minority newcomer cis and trans women and gender-diverse individuals with a focus on building computer and digital literacy skills, Canadian employment skills and starting your own business for the Canadian market.

Contact: Emily Dyck, Social Enterprise Coordinator

519-502-1746

Email: emily.dyck@ykwkw.ca**Kiran Aslam, Employment & Entrepreneurship Coordinator**

519-502-1746

Email: kiran.aslam@ykwkw.ca**Canadian Centre on Rehabilitation and Work (CCRW)**www.ccrw.org/employment-services/job-seekers-and-workers

CCRW is a national organization that offers employment supports for people who self-identify as having a disability, and includes pre-employment supports (resumes, cover letters, networking and interview skills), job search supports (looking for jobs, applying for jobs, connecting with employers), and job maintenance supports. Support may include assessments, training related to job-specific goals and workplace accommodations.



To be eligible for CCRW Employment supports, you would need to self-identify as having a disability. You do not need a formal diagnosis. CCRW also provides support for people who have short-term or long-term medical conditions that create barriers to work.

Individuals can complete a self-referral and access services directly or be referred by an agency or community partner.

Conestoga College Community Career Centrewww.conestogac.on.ca/career-centre

Free employment services targeted to newcomers, those facing barriers to employment (including those on social assistance) or people trying to move up in their careers. Skill support services are also offered.

At the Career Centre, clients can access:

- Job search assistance
- Resume and cover letter writing
- Interview coaching
- Career exploration
- Job fairs
- Networking events

- Other employment/educational opportunities: (Learning English for Free with LINC or trying a trades program for free)
- Financial Assistance: If you're currently unemployed and not sure where to start, [talk to us](#). You may be eligible for [Better Jobs Ontario](#) funding or other financial assistance to offset some of the costs of retraining or returning to work.

Autism Specific Employment Resources

Specialisterne

www.specialisterne.com

Tel: 416-479-0689

Email: info@specialisterne.ca



Specialisterne assists Canadian businesses and employers understand, value, and integrate the unique perspective and capabilities of people on the autism spectrum. They provide employment mentoring and job matching services. More information can be requested by contacting their office.

Autism Career Connections

www.autismontario.com/autism-career-connections

Autism Career Connections is a collaborative effort of Autism Ontario with Apex Academy, a leading educational platform providing equitable access to knowledge in the digital space.

Using a modular approach, employers and HR professionals will learn how to design inclusive working environments, adopt unbiased hiring practices, and foster success within the autistic community. Job seekers can look forward to employment preparedness programs. You will learn about your strengths, writing a resume, interview skills, and where to find work. Check at this link for more information:



Auticon Recruitment

www.auticon.ca/autism-spectrum-careers

Auticon is an organization where autistic individuals looking for work in the tech industry can find meaningful employment. For more information and to apply for open positions, click on the link above.

Employer Toolkit

worktopia.ca/resources/employer-toolkit



Sponsored by Worktopia the Employer Toolkit was authored by an autistic self-advocate, and involved extensive engagement with autistic employees, employers and human resources professionals across Canada. It provides employers with information on creating a work environment that allows autistic employees to thrive.

LCOworks

LCOworks is a free online program that supports positive employment outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities, a traditionally underrepresented and at-risk population in the labour market. Any Ontario resident with a developmental disability is eligible to participate in LCOworks. Email to apply or learn more at support@lifecourseonline.com.

Karis & Humber College's Culinary Skills Development & Employment Program

Get hands-on kitchen training from professional chefs through in-person & virtual ETraining with Humber College's Culinary Skills Development & Employment Program. This program is open to adults 18+ with a developmental disability. Email your application to Mary Lou Kelly, Program Coordinator: mkelly@karis.org.

4.2 Volunteer Opportunities

These are some places in Waterloo Region to look for volunteer opportunities:

Organization	Website link	Telephone	Comments
Volunteer Action Centre	www.volunteerwr.ca	519-742-8610	Opportunities can be searched by interest, events, location, etc.
Region of Waterloo	www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regional-government/volunteer.aspx	519-575-4400	Offer volunteer opportunities at museums, libraries, special events, and with seniors or children.
City of Kitchener	www.kitchener.ca/volunteeropportunities	519-741-2200 ext.7564	A variety of volunteer opportunities can be accessed using their search engine.

City of Cambridge	www.cambridge.ca/en/you-r-city/Volunteer.aspx	519-623-1340	A variety of volunteer opportunities can be accessed using the search engine.
Kitchener-Waterloo and North Waterloo Humane Society	www.kwsphumane.ca	519-745-5615	Can apply on their Website link to volunteer opportunities.
Cambridge Humane Society	www.cambridgehumanesociety.org	519-623-7222 ext.224	Can also inquire about volunteer opportunities via email at: development@cambridgehumanesociety.org

Other Potential Volunteer Environments

- **Grand River Hospital**
www.grhosp.on.ca/help
- **Conestoga College**
www.conestogac.on.ca/student-engagement/get-involved
- **University of Waterloo**
uwaterloo.ca/career-action/resourceslibrary/career-planning-job-search/volunteering
- **Wilfrid Laurier University**
students.wlu.ca/work-leadership-and-volunteering/volunteering
- **YMCA**
www.ymcacambridgekw.ca/en/Volunteer-for-the-YMCA
- **YWCA**
ykwk.ca/volunteer
- **Working Centre**
www.theworkingcentre.org/volunteer/83
- **Starling Community Services (previously known as Lutherwood) Volunteer page:**
www.starlingcs.ca/support/volunteer

5. HOUSING SUPPORTS

5.1 Housing Supports

Starling Community Services (previously known as Lutherwood) Housing Support Services

www.starlingcs.ca/housing

Starling's Housing Services helps individuals, couples, and families link with safe, sustainable housing in Waterloo Region. With a strong focus on eviction prevention and re-housing they have Housing Staff virtually, and in person at their Housing Resource Centres.

Drop-ins are allowed but doors are locked and people need to be buzzed in.

Call 519-749-2450 between 8:30 am to 4:30 pm to find out how they can help you.

Starling Housing Support Services are offered on a drop-in basis.

Locations:

- 35 Dickson St, Cambridge
- 41 Weber St W, Kitchener

Drop-in hours are between 8:30 am - 4:30 pm, Monday – Friday.

Region of Waterloo Affordable Housing

www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/living-here/find-affordable-housing.aspx

The Region of Waterloo offers various types of affordable housing options that are specific to an individual's current living situation. Priority is given to certain populations.

Renter's Toolkit

Region of Waterloo also provides this information that is helpful for Renters or potential renters:

[www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/living-here/the-renter s-toolkit.aspx](http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/living-here/the-renter-s-toolkit.aspx)

Indwell

www.indwell.ca

Indwell is a Christian charity providing affordable supportive housing to vulnerable adults dealing with mental health challenges. Indwell seeks to empower tenants to achieve health and wellness goals and

to constructively engage with their communities. They have two buildings in the Waterloo Region and three more in development.

5.2 Emergency Shelters – Waterloo Region

Emergency Shelters and Meals

www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/living-here/emergency-shelters-and-transitional-housing.aspx

There is a region wide coordinated shelter system that works together to help people find a safe and appropriate place to stay, which may or may not include a shelter.

If you think you may need access to shelter, please call the **Housing Helpline** at 519-624-9133 (available at any time).

Families, please call 519-749-2450 (8:30am to 4:30pm Monday to Friday).

Keep a list of locations and contact information for shelters, drop-in services, and street outreach with you when you need it with the **pocket card** available on the website. There is also an accessible version of the pocket card.

You can view emergency shelter options in the online catalogue on the website above.

Youth Homelessness Prevention and Shelter Diversion: ARGUS

www.argusresidence.ca

At Argus, the goal with youth homelessness prevention and shelter diversion, is to end or prevent a young person from becoming homeless within 6 hours of their call to us. If they can't prevent their homeless experience, they will help them explore safe, temporary accommodation and provide them with the resources to support permanent housing.

- Argus Young Women: 519-650-0452; 1877-818-0388
- Argus Young Men: 519-623-7991; 1877-565-0755; 519-623-5810

6. TRANSPORTATION SUPPORTS

6.1 Public Transportation in Waterloo Region

Grand River Transit (GRT)

www.grt.ca

250 Strasburg Rd.

Kitchener, ON N2E 3M6

Tel: 519-585-7555

Deaf and Hard of Hearing (TTY): 519-575-4608



Grand River Transit - The Affordable Transit Program (ATP)

www.grt.ca/en/fares-passes/affordable-transit-program.aspx

The Affordable Transit Program (ATP) offers a 50% discount on the price of Grand River Transit fare products. ATP is open to anyone in Waterloo Region living with low income.

For more information and to apply, follow the link above.

GRT Travel Training

www.grt.ca/en/fares-passes/reduced-income.aspx

Tel: 519-585-7555

Formerly Easy Ride program is found at at <https://www.grt.ca/en/rider-information/travel-training.aspx> and has a new description:

Travel training is a free program designed to teach people with disabilities, older adults, and local people new to GRT services how to travel confidently and safely on transit.

You will learn to:

- Plan your trip to specific destinations using the easiest and safest route
- Read and understand route maps and schedules
- Recognize bus numbers, stops and landmarks,
- Travel to and from bus stops
- Board the bus with your wheelchair or scooter
- Pay fares and purchase passes
- Locate and transfer to other buses

Our experienced trainers:

- Have an in-depth knowledge of GRT services
- Put your safety and comfort first
- Ensure that the training is suited to your needs

Types of Travel Training:

Presentations: They deliver a presentation tailored to the specific needs of the community group on the accessibility features of GRT system.

Basic orientation to GRT: A shortened training for individuals or groups of people who already have some basic travel skills.

Mobility Device Sessions: Practical, on the bus training for people who use standard wheelchairs and scooters. GRT provides practice training sessions on how to board and exit a bus using a mobility device on an out of service bus.

One-on-one travel training: Individualized training for customers who find it challenging to learn to use conventional transit services. Training is provided in multiple sessions with the goal of the customer riding safely and independently (with an attendant if required).

Service provider workshops: This program is for agencies that have a client-base who needs extra information or instruction to be able to use transit independently. We provide your staff and volunteers with the training and resources they need to get your clients using transit. Please contact us for upcoming dates.

Request Travel Training:

Complete the [online form to request travel training](#): Select Bus>Service>Travel Training Request or Train>Service>Travel Training Request.

Questions: Contact 519-585-7555. TTY (Deaf and hard of hearing): 519-575-4608.

Ontario Works Medical Travel and Transportation (MTT)

The Ontario Works Medical Travel and Transportation (MTT) program may be available to Ontario Works adult participants for medical travel. The program is also known as the Transit Affordability Pass (TAP).

For more information about this program, contact your Ontario Works caseworker. If you are eligible and approved, your OW caseworker will help you with the next steps.

Grand River Transit: Transit Support Person

The Transit Support Person program is designed for people who require assistance using transit to get to their destination. Any customer who requires support can apply for a PLUSone card. The PLUSone card identifies a person who requires assistance while traveling on GRT due to a disability. The person providing assistance will not pay a fare.



There is no fee for your first PLUSone card, or if you need to replace a damaged card.

Eligibility for the Transit Support Person Program

The program is open to anyone who, due to a disability, cannot travel independently on conventional or specialized transit service. The support person can be a family member, friend, paid attendant or volunteer - anyone who travels with you to assist you in using transit.

How to Apply for the Transit Support Person Program (PLUSone CARD):

Complete the application form. You may do it:

- **Online:** Complete the **online application** at this link: www.grt.ca/en/rider-information/forms.aspx
- **By Mail:** Call Customer Service at 519-585-7555 to have a form mailed to you.
- **In Person:** Pick up a form in person at the Customer Service Centre (105 King St. E., Kitchener) or Ainslie Street Terminal.

The application should be completed by a health care professional with one of the following designations:

- Licensed physician
- Registered nurse practitioner
- Registered nurse
- Certified psychologist/psychiatrist
- Licensed physiotherapist
- Registered occupational therapist
- Licensed optometrist/ophthalmologist
- Registered Social Worker with the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers
- Sunbeam Developmental Resource Centre Service Coordinator
- CCAC Care Coordinator
- Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist

Any fees charged by a health care professional will not be reimbursed by GRT. Submit the completed form to:

Grand River Transit, 250 Strasburg Rd, Kitchener ON N2E 3M6.
Or Fax: 519-744-2899

Using the Grand River Transit PLUSone Card

The **PLUSone** card is a photo ID card that has the picture of the person who brings their support person with them onto transit. The card is carried by the person who requires assistance.

The **PLUSone** card should be shown to the operator when boarding, along with your fare or **MobilityPLUS** photo ID card.

Kiwanis Transit

www.k-transit.com

Kiwanis Transit is a specialized transit service providing reliable, safe and accessible transportation for eligible residents of Woolwich, Wellesley and Wilmot townships.

Disability Travel Card

www.easterseals.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Disability-Travel-Card-Application-Form-EN.pdf

The Disability Travel Card is for people of all types of permanent disabilities who require the assistance of a support person when travelling with VIA Rail Canada.

When a cardholder presents the Disability Travel Card when purchasing a ticket for travel with one of the participating companies mentioned above, one support person can accompany them during travel for a reduced fee. The person with the disability (the Disability Travel Card holder) pays regular ticket price.

A support person is an adult who accompanies a person with a permanent disability to provide those services that are not provided by the participating transportation company employees, such as assisting the person with eating, administering medication, communication and use of the facilities. Please contact them directly for specific details. The Disability Travel Card is not valid with any airlines. The Disability Travel Card is managed and administered by Easter Seals Canada. The card does not expire.

If you have any questions about the Disability Travel Card, please contact Easter Seals Canada at:
 E-Mail: info@easterseals.ca

6.2 Government of Canada: Information and Resource about Travelling by Airlines

www.travel.gc.ca/travelling/health-safety/disabilities

This page provides information about supports for people who have autism or other needs when travelling by air.

6.3 Private Driving Schools

Pro Drivers

www.myprodrivers.ca

info@myprodrivers.ca

519-267-8838

Young Drivers of Canada

www.yd.com

Cambridge@youngdrivers.com

519-623-6730

Ultimate Drivers

www.ultimatedrivers.ca

cambridge@ultimatedrivers.ca

kitchener@ultimatedrivers.ca

Cambridge - 519-622-9968, Kitchener - 519-954-2266

Defensive Drivers of Cambridge

www.defensivedriversofcambridge.com

drivesafecambridge@hotmail.com

519-622-6829

6.4 Specialized Driver Training

Specialized Driver Training Providers offer specialized driving training and assessment with an Occupational Therapist. Beneficial for individuals with driving anxiety and who need to develop cognitive skills for driving.

CBI Health Website link: www.cbi.ca/services/driving-assessment

Tel: 1800-558-4599

Driver Training and Assessment

www.drive.sehc.com

Tel: 1877-397-1035

7. ADULT EDUCATION INFORMATION

7.1 Adult Education

Project READ Literacy Network Waterloo – Wellington

Their mission is to provide any adult or family in Waterloo-Wellington with access to literacy training. They achieve this through knowledge building, knowledge exchange and assessment and development of knowledge and skills. They believe that literacy and Essential Skills are necessary to function independently to reach an individual's full potential.

Contact Project READ at **519-570-3054** or **info@projectread.ca** for a free referral in Waterloo – Wellington area to help find the right program fit for you.

7.2 Essential Skills Upgrading

Free upgrading (age 18+) of your reading, writing, math, computer and other skills essential for work, life and learning. Start any time, provides individual training, learn at your own speed, positive and friendly, day or night classes in KW/day classes in Cambridge. Free Pre-GED upgrading.

Waterloo Region District School Board

www.schools.wrdsb.ca/esu

Complete online form with questions or request to register at the above link.

St. Louis Adult Education Centres

www.stlouis.wcdsb.ca

Tel: 519-745-1201

St. Louis offers many options to earn secondary school credits, learn language skills or train for a hands-on skilled profession to become a Cook, Hairstylist/Barber or Personal Support Worker. Explore the path that is right for you!

Develop an educational plan for the year, with any combination of approaches. We encourage you to work with St. Louis' experienced Guidance Department to lay out the steps you could take to reach your goals quickly and affordably.

- Earn one, two (or more) secondary school credits in a 7-week morning or afternoon day class
- Take an online course
- Earn Credits@Work
- Do a Summer Co-op
- Learn at your own pace through self-study/ correspondence

7.3 College and University Education

Student Accessibility Offices

Conestoga College: www.conestogac.on.ca/accessibility-services

Disability Services/Accessible Learning - provides a full range of services for confirmed applicants and students that have a documented disability. Accommodations are developed according to the student's needs as supported by their documentation.

Success Summer Transition Program - Conestoga also offers a summer transition program for students that require support from accessible learning to familiarize themselves with their new learning environment and college life.

Accessible Learning Department of Conestoga College - provides supports for students with permanent and temporary disabilities. **The accessible learning department works with the student to:**

- Understand the impact of their disability in the college environment
- Develop a success plan that incorporates the student's goals and appropriate accommodations

Contact Information for Accessible Learning:

Campus	Phone Number	Fax Number	Email for all locations
Kitchener, Brantford, Cambridge	519-748-5520 ext.3232	519-748-3507	accessibility@conestogac.on.ca
Guelph	519-824-9390 ext.3717		
Waterloo	519-885-0300 ext.3507		
Stratford	519-271-5700 ext.221		

University of Waterloo

Students can apply for academic accommodations when they have received their offer of admission and have registered as a student with the University of Waterloo. The application can be completed online.

Once enrolled the student is assigned an Accommodation Consultant to develop a personalized academic accommodation and support plan. Once the plan has been developed, accommodations are requested for each class using the online system. AccessAbility Services can also assist with communicating the accommodation plan to each course instructor/faculty member as required.

Contact Information for Accessibility Services: uwaterloo.ca/accessibility-services

Email: access@uwaterloo.ca, **Tel:** 519-888-4567 ext. 35082

Wilfrid Laurier University

www.students.wlu.ca/academics/support-and-advising/accessible-learning

Accessible learning is available to students who have a permanent or temporary disability. This includes full and part-time graduate and undergraduate students. Laurier has an accessible learning online system where the accommodations, appointments, and case management software tools can be accessed.

Contact Information for Accessible Learning

Campus	Email	Phone Number	Campus Location
Waterloo	accessible_learning@wlu.ca	548-889-3514 Intake line: 548-889-3515	P220- 2 nd floor Peters Building
Brantford	lbaccessiblelearning@wlu.ca	519-756-8228 ext.5871	One Market - 207

Community Integration Through Cooperative Education (CICE) Program @ Conestoga College

The Community Integration through Co-operative Education (CICE) program is a two-year program designed to provide individuals with exceptionalities and other significant learning challenges opportunity to experience college life and enhance their academic and vocational skills with modified programming and support from Learning Strategists.

Domestic students should apply online at www.ontariocolleges.ca or by phone at 1-888-892-2228.

7.4 Campus Mental Health Services**Conestoga College - Tel: 519-748-5220 ext.3360, Email: myWellness@conestogac.on.ca**

Counselling Services offers individual counselling, support groups, and walk-in counselling appointments. There are no charges for counselling services.

University of Waterloo, Tel: 519-888-4567 ext.32655

uwaterloo.ca/campus-wellness/students

Counselling Services offers a team of professionals that strive to provide a secure, supportive environment to help students lead a healthy and balanced life. There is no charge for counselling services.

Wilfrid Laurier University

Offer counselling for issues that are expected to resolve in 6 months or less. Provide referrals to community providers if ongoing therapy is required.

Campus	Telephone	Email
Waterloo	519-884-0710 ext.3146	wellness@wlu.ca
Brantford	519-756-8228 ext.5803	lbwellnesscentre@wlu.ca

7.5 Scholarships, Bursaries and Student Loan Programs

Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP)

www.ontario.ca/page/osap-ontario-student-assistance-program

Tel: 1888-449-4478

TTY: 1800-465-3958

Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., excluding holidays.

If you have a permanent disability, you could be eligible for full-time OSAP funding if you're studying at 40% or more of a full course load. To be considered for this benefit, you must self-identify as having a permanent disability when applying for OSAP.

You can get additional aid to help pay for disability-related educational services and equipment. Through one application, you can be considered for the:

- [Bursary for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Canada Student Grant for Services and Equipment for Persons with Permanent Disabilities](#)

You can also get specialized help if you are having trouble repaying a student loan.

The Rick & Amanda Hansen Scholarship

www.rickhansen.com/Scholarship

The Rick & Amanda Hansen Scholarship for Youth with Disabilities, funded generously by the April 1 Foundation, provides financial support to Canadian youth with disabilities to pursue post-secondary education and realize their full potential.

Funding of up to \$10,000 per year (up to a maximum of \$40,000) is available for youth with disabilities looking to complete a 1- to 4-year post-secondary program at a publicly funded institution in Canada.

List of Other Scholarships and Bursaries

www.disabilityawards.ca/ontario

This Website has a comprehensive list of scholarships and bursaries available to Post-Secondary Students who have disabilities, across Canada.

7.6 Post Secondary Clubs and Associations

Conestoga College Clubs

www.conestogastudents.com/getinvolved/csiclubs

Conestoga College has a variety of special interest clubs on a variety of topics (i.e. video games, public service, music, dance, etc.) available to students.



Conestoga College Condors

www.conestogac.on.ca/athletics/index

Conestoga College also offers a variety of varsity sports, intramurals, and fitness based activities.

University of Waterloo

www.uwaterloo.ca/future-students/student-life/clubs

The University of Waterloo's Student Association offers a variety of clubs and recreational opportunities for students.

Laurier University

students.wlu.ca/student-life/student-organizations/student-clubs/index.html

Laurier University offers a variety of special interest clubs and associations that students may join.



8. LEGAL INFORMATION AND SUPPORTS

8.1 Waterloo Region Community Legal Services Clinic

www.wrcls.ca

This Clinic, with offices in Kitchener and Cambridge, provides free legal assistance to low-income individuals and families for a number of specific legal issues.

Assistance can range from advice to full representation.

8.2 Steps to Justice

www.stepstojustice.ca

The Website link offers information on common legal problems in easy to understand language and provides step-by-step breakdowns that are practical and legally accurate. There are checklists, fillable forms and self-help guides, referral information for legal and social services across Canada and opportunities for live email and chat support.

8.3 Power of Attorney (POA)

www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/family/pgt/incapacity/poa.php

A Power of Attorney is a legal document stating that an individual is legally giving someone else the right to make decisions for them in case they are not able to make decisions for themselves.

A *Capacity Assessment* may be required to assess the individual's ability to make decisions, if a person can make decisions for themselves that are safe and responsible.

There are two types of POAs:

- **POA for Personal Care:** Trustee can make decisions about health care, housing and other aspects of personal life if you become incapable
- **POA for Property:** Trustee can make decisions about financial situations (bills, collecting money owed to you, selling/maintaining your home, managing investments)

Power of Attorney can be developed by a lawyer, or a self help kit is available through Service Ontario at 1-800-267-8097 or **online on their Website link.**

8.4 Capacity Assessment

A Capacity Assessment is the formal assessment of a person's ability to make decisions about their own property/finances and personal care.

If there are concerns that a person cannot make safe or responsible decisions a Capacity Assessment may be needed. This is a legal document.

For information about arranging a Capacity Assessment, how to apply for financial assistance if you cannot pay the full cost of an assessment, or enquiries about assessors, call:

416-327-6766 or 1866-521-1033.

When a person is not legally able to have a Power of Attorney, a Substitute Decision Maker, Legal Guardian or Public Guardian & Trustee help to make the critical decisions for them.

8.5 Substitute Decision Makers

www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/family/pgt/pgtsda.pdf

Under the *Health Care Consent Act*, in order to be able to consent to a medical treatment, admission to a care facility or personal assistance services, a person must:

1. Be able to understand the information relevant to the decision; **and** or
 2. Be able to appreciate the consequences of making or not making a decision
- if someone does not satisfy either or both parts of this test, he/she will be found "incapable" for the purposes of that treatment decision.
 - if a doctor finds someone incapable of making their own decisions about any form of treatment, the doctor will look for another person to make decisions for you. This person is called a "**substitute decision-maker**".
 - Everyone is presumed to be capable unless there is a reason to believe otherwise. Someone may be capable of consenting to some treatments and incapable of consenting to others.

For a detailed description of the details about Substitute Decision Makers, visit their website.

8.6 Public Guardian & Trustee

www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/family/pgt/overview.php

A Public (Government appointed) Guardian or Trustee helps individuals who

- are considered not cognitively able to manage certain situations (their health care or their finances) and/or
- cannot understand what may happen as a result of decisions they make and may cause themselves harm by not understanding.
- do not have a Substitute Decision Maker or person they trust to make sound decisions for them about their health and/or finances.

For more information on Public Guardian & Trustee, visit their Website.

8.7 ConnectAbility Resources to Help with Legal and Financial Issues for Self-Advocates and Caregivers

From time to time, self-advocates and family support people run into obstacles, grey areas, and bigger problems in the course of navigating the world, especially when dealing with organizations or systems that are not trained in autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Families report struggling with issues such as filing taxes; setting up bank accounts; obtaining insurance; struggling to keep employment; or estate planning. At those times, it can be difficult to know where to obtain information or support. This document can give you a place to start. For more information please check at this link:

www.connectability.ca/2017/12/04/resources-to-help-with-legal-and-financial-issues-for-self-advocates-and-caregivers/

9. MENTAL HEALTH AND CRISIS SUPPORTS

9.1 Counselling

www.counsellingwr.ca

Counselling is available, for free or at a reduced cost, through the Counselling Collaborative of Waterloo Region. Information and access to this service is available through the link above.

Free counselling is sometimes available through your Family Doctor's office, the Mental Health Department of your Hospital or at your local Community Health Centre. You can ask your Family Doctor if this service is an option for you.

9.2 The ADHD and Spectrum Centre Guelph and Ottawa

www.adhdinterrupted.com

The ADHD and Spectrum Centre offers diagnosis, counselling, coaching, groups, video classes and other resources in Guelph and Ottawa for neurodivergent people by neurodivergent people.

9.3 Telephone Crisis Support

Call Anytime to access Addictions, Mental Health and Crisis Services at these numbers:

HERE24/7

Here24/7 is also the central access point for mental health non-crisis support and clinical services.

Tel: 1844-437-3247 (HERE247), TTY: 1877-688-5501

Crisis Services Canada:

1833-456-4566

or by Text 45645

9.4 Walk In Crisis Help

Grand River Hospital Emergency Room

www.grhosp.on.ca/care/locations/kwcampus

835 King Street W. Kitchener

The entrance to Emergency of Grand River Hospital is at King Street West and Pine Street. Special signage will help you find your way. They serve patients of all ages who have emergency health care needs.

Open 24 hours a day.

St. Mary's Hospital Emergency Roomwww.smgh.ca**911 Queen's Blvd., Kitchener**

St. Mary's Emergency Department (ED) is a full-service department, open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Should you require emergency care, go to the Emergency Room, or call 911 if you are dealing with a serious injury or condition.

Integrated Crisis Centre

Operated by the Canadian Mental Health Association Waterloo-Wellington and Thresholds Homes and Supports, Integrated Crisis Centre opened its door on July 30, 2024.

This service is intended for individuals aged 18 years or older who are experiencing a mental health or substance-use crisis who cannot safely wait for community mental health or substance-use support.

Services include:

Walk-In Support: Individuals can visit the centre without an appointment, receiving immediate assistance from their caring staff.

Crisis Intervention: Trained peer support workers and service navigators provide crisis intervention, de-escalation, emotional support and brief follow-up.

Referrals: They connect individuals to appropriate community resources, including respite beds, mental health services, substance use health support, and other community referrals.

298 Laurence Ave., Kitchener (2 pm to 8 pm, Tuesday to Saturday)

Email: icc@cmhaww.ca

If you are in crisis contact HERE 24/7 at 1844-437-3247

9.5 Other Crisis Supports**Up to date shelter, service and outreach information (Pocket card)**

www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/living-here/emergency-shelters-and-transitional-housing.aspx

Good 2 Talk: Post Secondary School Distress Line

www.good2talk.ca

1866-925-5454

Or connect through 2-1-1

The General Distress Line

519-745-1166

Kitchener Waterloo Sexual Assault Support Centre

519-741-8633

www.sascwr.org

Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region

Kitchener-Waterloo: (519)742-5894

Cambridge: 519-653-2422

If you are in danger, Call 911

Crisis Respite – Thresholds Homes and Supports

- The Crisis Respite Program responds to individuals residing in Waterloo-Wellington area and offers short-term stays at no cost in a residential setting.
- Supports people 18 and over who are experiencing a mental health and/or psychosocial crisis.
- There is 24/7 staffing support and it is a voluntary service.
- Length of stay is determined based on individual need, however, the average time spent there is 5 days.
- Can be pre-booked /booked in advance for respite relief.

Referral Process – For further information, referrals or to apply to the Crisis Respite Residential Program, please call 519-576-7431 or Toll-free at 1866-797-7431.

9.6 Emergency Shelters in Waterloo Region

www.regionofwaterloo.ca/emergencyshesterframework

Emergency shelters are taking on a greater role in ending and preventing homelessness. Each shelter receiving funding from the Region is part of a coordinated system. They work together to help people find a safe and appropriate place to stay, which may or may not include a shelter.

If you need access to a shelter within a week, there are a few options for getting connected to a Housing Helpline:

Single adults across the region can call 519-624-9133 between 8:00 a.m. and midnight, seven days a week.

Youth (under age 25) in Kitchener-Waterloo can call 519-741-6415 between 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Youth (under age 25) in Cambridge can call 519-998-7292 between 8:00 a.m. and midnight, seven days a week.

Families across the region can call 519-749-2450 between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

CMHA Self Help & Peer Support

cmhawwselfhelp.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/What-is-Peer-Support.pdf

Self Help & Peer Support services are provided by people who experience a mental health and/or addiction issue for people who experience a mental health and/or addictions issue. Their services are part of CMHA Waterloo Wellington.

Services offered at their three sites include:

- Walk-in peer support and recovery groups. People are welcome to join at any time, with no registration or wait list. See our calendars for group offerings
- 1:1 peer support delivered by trained peer support staff and volunteers
- Leadership and mentoring opportunities for people who wish to learn about providing peer support
- Entrepreneurship support
- Community outreach
- Spark of Brilliance, expressive arts workshops
- Beautiful Minds program for secondary school students

To learn more about Self Help & Peer Support, call their administrative office at (519)570 4595 or reach out to any of their site locations below.

CAMBRIDGE - 9 Wellington Street Cambridge ON N1R 3Y4 Tel: 519-623 6024 TF: 1844-264-2993

KITCHENER- 67 King St. E. Kitchener ON N2G 2K4 Tel: 519-570 4595 TF: 1844-264-2993

Connex Ontario Health Services Information

www.connexontario.ca/en-ca

ConnexOntario provides free and confidential health services information for people experiencing problems with alcohol and drugs, mental illness or gambling.

Funded by the Government of Ontario, Tel: 1866-531-2600.

Mental Health Literacy Guide for Autism (and Animated Video Series)

www.yorku.ca/health/lab/ddmh/am-help

This downloadable Guide provides knowledge about the different factors that can impact Autistic mental health. The Guide highlights how individual experiences and contexts play roles in the mental health of Autistic adults and how societal acceptance and appreciation of autism is critical for better support and well-being.

Written in consultation with advisors who have lived experience with autism. These are all Canadian contents.

10. FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER INFORMATION

FASD Coordination of Supports and Services

www.plexusfasd.ca

The FASD Coordinator will work with children, youth and families living with FASD up until the age of 18 or 21 and still attending school. You must reside in Waterloo Region.

In addition, resources can be provided to health and social service providers wanting more information about FASD.

FASD ONE

www.fasdontario.ca/about-us

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Ontario Network of Expertise (FASD ONE) is a group that works together to address issues related to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) in the province. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is a diagnostic term used to describe impacts on the brain and body of individuals prenatally exposed to alcohol. FASD is a lifelong disability.

PLEXUS

www.plexusfasd.ca

A single point of contact for children, youth and families needing support for FASD. Please note that support is available up to the age of 21, but only if still attending school.

Province-Wide Monthly Virtual Groups for Adults with FASD

www.fasd@able2.org

The Fetal Alcohol Resource Program at ABLE2 is happy to announce the first two Province-wide virtual groups for adult living with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). They include the FASD CanaEducational Group and the FASD Social Group.

Both groups will be held monthly. You can participate at your comfort level from the comfort of your home. For more information contact the Fetal Alcohol Resource Program at 613-761-9252 Ext. 234 or their website.

11. CULTURAL SUPPORTS

First Nations, Metis and Inuit Resources

Resources and contact information is available on the following Website links:

Anishnabeg Outreach

www.aocan.org



Crow Shield Lodge

www.crowshieldlodge.com



Healing of the Seven Generations

www.healingofthesevengenerations.ca



Southwestern Ontario Aboriginal Health Access Centre (SOAHAC)

www.soahac.on.ca

Email: info@soahac.on.ca



Southwest Ontario
Aboriginal Health
Access Centre

White Owl Native Ancestry Association

www.wonaa.ca



Multicultural Supports:

Resources and contact information can be found on the following Website links:

- Interpreter/Translation Services: www.kwmulticultural.ca/interpreters?rq=interpreter
- Cultural Groups: www.wwhealthline.ca/listServices.aspx?id=10423
- YMCA Immigrant Services: www.ymcathreerivers.ca/immigrant-services

12. LGBT2SQ+ SERVICES (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, pansexual, two spirit, androgynous and asexual)

Spectrum: Waterloo Regions' Rainbow Community Space

www.ourspectrum.com



Programs, research and resources for the LGBT2SQ+ community.

LGBT Youthline

www.youthline.ca

Peer led support agency that runs a support line as well as projects that focus on advocacy, education and community building for those up to age 29.

Rainbow Health Ontario Service Provider Directory

Directory of Service Providers committed to a LGBT2SQ+ positive approach.

www.rainbowhealthontario.ca/lgbt2sq-health/service-provider-directory/

The Rainbow Health Ontario's website also includes an extensive glossary of helpful definitions relevant to the LGBT2SQ+ community. It can be found at:

www.rainbowhealthontario.ca/news-publications/glossary

PFLAG

www.pflagcanada.ca



Support for parents and other family members who want to better understand and support their LGBT2SQ+ children/family members.

Virtual Session: How to Support LGBTQ+ Youth

David Da Silva, Community Engagement Lead, KW Counselling Services.

In this session you will learn about the issues LGBTQ+ youth face and how to support youth who question their sexuality or identify as LGBTQ+.

Below is a link to the recording for this session, available on the Woolwich Community Health Centre website, and two shared resources from the facilitator of the event, David Da Silva, Community Engagement Lead, KW Counselling Services.

Recording Link:

www.wchcwellnessblog.wixsite.com/mysite/post/how-to-understand-and-support-lgbtq-youth

Resources:

www.kidshelpphone.ca/get-info/2slgbtq-what-does-it-mean

www.ok2bme.ca/resources

13. VULNERABLE PERSONS REGISTRY

www.vulnerablepersonsregistry.ca

This voluntary registry provides the Waterloo Region Police Services with emergency contact information, detailed physical descriptions, known routines and special needs of the individual. This information assists officers in communicating with, attending a residence of, or dealing with an emergency involving the individual.

How It Works

People who register will be asked for Consent to Collect, Use and Disclose Personal Information. They will be asked to confirm that you understand this is:

- voluntary,
- are 18 years of age or older and
- have the authority to provide this personal information on behalf of the Registrant.

14. SOCIAL/RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES & CARDS

14.1 Guides and Website links

KidsAbility Recreation Programs

www.kidsability.ca/Community-Recreation-Directory-V2



The Community Recreation Programs Directory on KidsAbility's website lists a variety of recreational, camp, group, and social opportunities. The guide can be downloaded from the above link.

KidsAbility also provides information on the various inclusive or specialized recreation/leisure programs that are available in our community for children and youth of all ages. These are the links for 2024 summer camp information:

For Summer Camp information for children, visit [KidsAbility 2024 Summer-Camp-Directory-Day-Camps-for-Children](#)

For Summer Camp information for teens, visit [KidsAbility 2024 Summer-Camp-Directory for teens](#)

To access a Therapeutic Recreation Consultation, visit www.kidsability.ca/programs-services/therapeutic-recreation

Active Kitchener

www.kitchener.ca/en/recreation-and-sports/active-kitchener.aspx

The Active Kitchener is an activity guide created by the City of Kitchener which lists a variety of programming. The guide can be located on the Website link by entering "active Kitchener" into the search engine on the city of Kitchener. Below are some new inclusive programs - Inclusion Membership is required for these. Please call to know the upcoming dates and be included in the waitlist.



All-Access Hangout

All-Access hangout is for young adults 14 to 21 years of age, who have special needs and/or disability and who do **not** require one-to-one support. Participants will participate in a variety of activities including sports, crafts and cooperative games in a supportive environment that meets the sensory, emotional, and physical needs of the participants. Activities are designed with the interests and abilities of participants and will encourage building friendships, social skills, and life skills. Please call to know the upcoming dates and be included in the waitlist.

Inclusive Indoor Skatepark

This specialized program is for people with a special need or disability and their family and friends. The Inclusive Indoor Skatepark at Queensmount Arena allows you to try skateboarding/ scootering or

continue developing your skills with your family and friends. You can bring your own skateboard/scooter/rollerblades. The arena will be equipped with ramps and rails. One changeroom will be a dedicated quiet space, some people will be kept low, and lights will be dimmed.

Helmets are mandatory when using the skatepark. Loaner skateboards, scooters and helmets are available. All skatepark users must be 8 years old or older.

If the program is full, please register for the waitlist.

MoveMEANT For All

MoveMEANT For All is an inclusive fitness program for individuals 14 years and up with disabilities. The program will use creative and fun ways to get you working on your cardio and strength with the use of various equipment (like boxing gloves!). Program time will incorporate brief social periods to provide body breaks and maintain interest.

For more details please contact Marina Dotzert at Marina.Dotzert@kitchener.ca or by calling 519-741-2200 ext. 7228.

City of Cambridge Programs and Activities

www.cambridge.ca



Information on City of Cambridge programs and services can be found on their website: (www.cambridge.ca) by entering “activities” into the search button.

Active Waterloo Program Guide

www.waterloo.ca/en/things-to-do/programs-classes-and-lessons.aspx



The Website link offers a variety of recreation programs, classes, and lessons.

The recreation options can be accessed by typing “recreation and leisure” into the Website link’s search engine. Paper copies of the Active Waterloo Program Guide can be accessed at City of Waterloo facilities.

Eventbrite

www.eventbrite.ca



The Website link offers a variety of workshops and social opportunities. The Website link search engine allows for suggestions to be provided based on geographic location and areas of interest.

14.2 Video Game and Board Game Social Activities

www.cstarleague.com

Collegiate Star League



A video game league for college and university students. Each institution has teams that compete in tournaments.

Ontario E-Sports League

www.oesl.ca



The Ontario E-Sports League offers social and competitive gaming across Ontario.

Adventurers Guild Café

www.adventurersguildcafe.com



A board game and video game café. On Wednesday evenings they offer the opportunity for individual players (without a team or peer group) to meet up with other individual players to play a variety of games. The staff assists with introductions.

Games on Tap

www.gamesontap.ca/events



A board game café that also offers trivia nights. Events can be explored using the link above.

Meet Up

www.meetup.com

Find **Meetups** so you can do more of what matters to you. Or create your own group and meet people. You can browse **groups** by topics you are interested in on their Website link.

Open Space

www.eafwr.on.ca/open-space

Open Space is a weekly gathering that promotes inclusion within the community by getting people together at a cafe for food, fun and conversation.

In addition to weekly coffee and conversation, with the support of facilitators, attendees plan special events such as Halloween parties, and Open Mic Nights. All are welcome regardless of ability, and you do not need to be supported by Extend-A-Family Waterloo Region to attend.

14.3 Leisure and Travel Cards

PAL (Personal Assistance for Leisure) Card: Region of Waterloo and Guelph

www.kitchener.ca/en/things-to-do/personal-assistance-for-leisure-activities-pal.aspx

A PAL card allows a person with a disability to bring a helper - often a friend or family member -- with them to each activity to assist them in participating - in most cases, at no extra cost since the helper does not actually take part.

Leisure Access Card (LAC)

If you or your child would like to participate in one of our recreation programs, but cannot afford to pay the registration fee, you may be eligible for Leisure Access - a fee assistance program designed to make our programs accessible to everyone.

City	Website link
Kitchener	www.kitchener.ca/en/recreation-and-sports/leisure-access-fee-assistance.aspx
Waterloo	www.waterloo.ca/en/things-to-do/assistance-programs.aspx#
Cambridge	www.cambridge.ca/en/parks-recreation-culture/Recreation-and-Programs.aspx

Access 2 Entertainment Card

www.access2card.ca/get-your-card

The Access 2 card is for people of all ages and types of permanent disabilities who require the assistance of a support person at hundreds of participating entertainments, cultural and recreational venues across Canada. See their Website link for application.

Disability Travel Card

www.easterseals.org/about-us

The Disability Travel Card is for people of all types of permanent disabilities who require the assistance of a support person when travelling with VIA Rail Canada, Greyhound Canada, Coach Canada, and Ontario Northland. See Website link for application.

15. SUPPORT AND SOCIAL GROUPS

These are some support and social groups:

The ADHD and Spectrum Centre – Guelph

www.adhdinterrupted.com

Monthly Drop in ADHD and Spectrum's Support Group - A support group, typically led by someone with ADHD and/or ASD themselves, to connect with other individual's experiencing similar situations.

A-Team Waterloo Region

www.ateamwaterlooregion.wordpress.com

The A-Team is primarily run by individuals with Asperger's Syndrome, *for* individuals with Asperger's Syndrome, with some assistance from **Waterloo Region Family Network**. Their goal is to create a safe and welcoming environment to meet adults with Asperger's Syndrome (or ASD – level 1), discuss topics of interest, share experiences, and embrace their neurological diversity.

Open Space: Extend – A – Family

www.eafwr.on.ca/open-space

Open Space is a weekly gathering that promotes inclusion within the community by getting people together at a cafe for food, fun and conversation. All are welcome regardless of ability, and you do not need to be supported by Extend-A-Family Waterloo Region to attend.

Connecting, Interests and Activities Group

This group in Waterloo Region is for adults (18+) diagnosed with asperger's/autism spectrum disorder Level One.

The purpose of the group is to create a safe and supportive space for people to have fun, meet and connect with others, and take part in activities. Support people or family members welcome.

A drop-in group, held on the second Thursday of the month, from 5 - 7 pm.

Downtown Community Centre, 35 B Weber Street West.

Contact Kelly Groh at 519-731-3923 or email: grohtech@xplornet.com

16. ONLINE RESOURCES

These are some online resources:

Autism Ontario

www.autismontario.com/

A Website link that provides useful information, including informative Webinars, for anyone with Autism Spectrum Disorder. They also provide an online “Education Portal” providing other resources after registration.

Resources specifically related to the transition to adulthood, including a transition pictograph and the “Journey to Adulthood Portfolio” can be found through the Child/Youth tab of the website, or can be accessed directly at www.autismontario.com/transition

You can sign up for Autism Ontario’s newsletter, to stay informed about relevant issues and supports, through the following link www.autismontario.com/newsletter.



Ability Online

www.abilityonline.org

Providing youth with disabilities, parents and professionals a secure online experience that removes social barriers and promotes independence, respect, acceptance and inclusion.



Autism Junction

www.autismcanada.org/resources/autism-junction

Autism Canada and the **Provincial and Territorial Council members** are proud to bring you Canada’s Online Autism Service Directory. It lists hundreds of service providers across the country. From dentists to **therapies** and funding to training, **Autism Junction** can help you connect to the services you need.



Autism Canada's Forum for Adults on the Spectrum

A project of autismcanada.org

www.facebook.com/groups/1710172265882835

The intention of this group is to be a respectful, accepting, safe place for Spectrum Adults to share, ask questions and get advice.



17. LONG TERM PLANNING

Independent Living Centre – Youth in Transition Program

www.ilcwr.org/youth-transition

The Youth In Transition program brings young adults (aged 15-24) with all abilities together in a fun, supportive environment to help them prepare for independent living. The program runs two 12 weeks sessions each year. The weekly meetings are a great opportunity for peers to get together, share experiences, learn new skills and have fun.

Youth group activities include educational and recreational activities, guest speakers and group discussions. There is a strong emphasis on socializing and team building. Participants take the lead in planning session topics, coordinating activities, and preparing and serving dinner as a group.

Weekly meetings include educational and recreational activities that will help youth prepare for independent living.



Bridges to Belonging – Person-Directed Planning/Independent Facilitation

www.bridgestobelonging.ca/supports-services/planning-and-facilitation/

Bridges to Belonging provides hourly fee-for-service options for individuals throughout a transition in their lives. Person-Directed Planning or Independent Facilitators offer individuals support to guide the process of planning and developing goals that are attainable.

Bridges to Belonging's work is to fulfill our mission to support people to build on their unique abilities, to create the life they want in the community. Based around our work as Independent Facilitators, we do that in a few ways:

- Through Person-Directed Planning and Facilitation, our core service
- Through the Independent Facilitation Demonstration Project, a provincial planning and facilitation initiative
- Through MAPS, PATHs, and graphic facilitation
- Through Caregiver Support



Partners for Planning Network

www.planningnetwork.ca

This Website link is an online resource support for families and individuals planning their future.



Plan Institutewww.futureplanningtool.ca

The Future Planning Tool simplifies the process of planning your future and guides you through the steps of planning for a good life, including financial security, personal network building, estate planning, housing choices and supported decision-making.

**Waterloo Region Family Network**wrfn.info/About.htm

WRFN is uniquely able to help exceptional families and individuals thrive. Through education and meaningful connections, they offer support in making informed decisions for now and through all life stages.

**Waterloo Region Family Network Support Group**www.wrfn.info**A New Chapter: Families Moving Forward**

This peer-led group is for parents/caregivers interested in preparing for the future of their youth/adult family member with a lifelong disability. For more information please access the [link](#) or call 519-886-9150.

ConnectAbilitywww.connectability.ca/transition-planning-milestones-for-youth-with-autism

ConnectABILITY.ca

Autism Services Directory of ConnectAbilitywww.connectability.ca/directory

This directory contains Community Participation Support, Caregiver Respite and Person-Directed Planning Support listings for transitional age youth and adults that may be purchased using Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services.

This Directory is for Programs that are:

- Not Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services funded and are provided on a Fee for Service or free basis only.

- Not included in [MyCommunityHub](#). You should check [MyCommunityHub](#) to see if there are programs you are interested in. On [MyCommunityHub](#) you can register and pay directly for the programs you choose.

18. OTHER

SHORE Centre

www.shorecentre.ca

Shore Centre offers sexual and reproductive health services.

