

# SDRC Connection

VOL. 20, ISSUE 2 SUMMER 2025



# Celebrating 25 Years of Service at SDRC!



Sunbeam Developmental Resource Centre (SDRC) is proud to celebrate 25 years of serving our community.

Although our name has evolved, our commitment to supporting individuals and families in the community has remained consistent.

Thank you to all who have been part of our journey!

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## Who We Are

Sunbeam Developmental Resource Centre (SDRC) is a division of Sunbeam Community and Developmental Services (SCDS). We offer a wide range of services for people with disabilities including Clinical Services, Service Coordination, Ontario Autism Program (OAP), Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Coordination, and Coordinated Service Planning. We act as a single point of access for children living in Waterloo Region with an intellectual disability and/or autism spectrum disorder for a wide range of services. For more information visit our website at www.sdrc.ca.

# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT SUNBEAM

#### Support Sunbeam's Hospital Care Program

When individuals supported by Sunbeam require hospital care, they often need more than just medical attention – they need familiar and trusted support.

Sunbeam's Hospital Care Program ensures our staff can accompany individuals during hospital stays, providing comfort, communication support, and continuity of care.

Entirely donor-funded, this unique program is especially critical for individuals who do not communicate with words. Our trained staff work closely with families and hospital teams to help interpret needs, reduce stress, and ensure quality care. In 2024-2025, the program provided over 1800 hours of in-hospital support.

Your donation helps us make sure no one faces hospitalization alone.

To show your support and donate to this innovative, person-centred project, scan the QR code here:





## Sunbeam Community's Newsletter

The Sunbeam Community Spring/Summer Newsletter is here! You can read it online at **www.sunbeamcommunity.ca/newsletters**, or pick up a printed copy at our Victoria St or Kingsway Drive locations.

# Sunbeam Community and Developmental Services Recreation and Wellness Calendar of Events

Through the delivery of specialized programming and activities designed to promote physical, emotional, and social wellness, Sunbeam's Recreation and Wellness team strives to enhance the quality of life and sense of community and belonging in the people they support. The team introduces the monthly Recreation and Wellness Calendar of Events, which contains information and details for all group activities at Sunbeam. It can be found on the Sunbeam Community website here:

#### www.sunbeamcommunity.ca/recreation-wellness-program

These programs are eligible for Passport funding for adults 18 and older, and are also available as fee-for-service options for children aged 12 and up.

For more information and registration, please contact the Recreation & Wellness department via phone: 519-893-6200 (ext. 1211) or email: recreation@sunbeamcommunity.ca

# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT SDRC - CLINICS

### Clinics at SDRC

 ${\tt Sunbeam\ Developmental\ Resource\ Centre\ (SDRC)\ hosts\ a\ variety\ of\ clinics.}$ 

Clinics are 1 hour long and hosted virtually via Zoom.

Limited to 10 participants (except for SLP clinic, which is offered 1:1).

Questions and discussion encouraged! For specific information on each clinic and dates please visit: www.sdrc.ca/clinics or scan the QR code below.

Call Rehana Khanam at 519-741-1121, ext. 2201 to register.

# Intake Financial Clinic Virtual

- Provides information on the various financial supports available to families who have children with higher support needs.
- Offered on a monthly basis.
- Available to families with children confirmed eligible for SDRC services.

# Ask A Speech Language Pathologist Clinic - Virtual

- A Foundational Family Service support.
- Available to parents/caregivers of children with autism up to 6 years and enrolled in the Ontario Autism Program.
- Each session will have a short presentation.
- Opportunity to ask questions about how to help your child's speech and language skills.



# Speech-Language Pathology Clinic

- Available to SDRC clients over the age of 6:
- with an intellectual disability and/or autism spectrum disorder
- living in Waterloo Region
- Offers family-focused consultation.
- Families are expected to identify one or two concerns/goals.
- Consultation/resources will be provided to address the goal.

# Ask A Behaviour Consultant Virtual Clinic Series

Available to parents and caregivers of individuals with a developmental disability and/or autism spectrum disorder.

The topics covered:

- Supporting Healthy Sleep in Children,
- Executive Functioning,
- Picky Eating,
- Hygiene,
- Transitions and
- School Refusal



# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT SDRC

#### Service Coordination Team of SDRC

Service Coordination is offered in Waterloo Region to children, youth and adults with a developmental disability and/or an autism spectrum disorder, and/or to their families. In general, SDRC Service Coordinators assist individuals and their families to strengthen their capacity to manage the challenges of caring for themselves/their children and enhancing their formal and informal networks of community resources. The client/family is always an active participant in all decisions.

The Service Coordination Model emphasizes a voluntary working relationship based upon mutual accountability between worker and client/family. With consent of the client/family the worker facilitates goal-oriented planning with time-defined supports. The client/family is always an active participant in all decisions.

Service Coordinators support people with kindness, compassion and understanding to navigate resources and support within their community. We facilitate independence and connections based on needs and goals identified by the individual.

Our team responds by providing information, education, resources and exploring opportunities and aspirations. We use a person-centered approach based on an individuals' and/or family's choices, values, needs and desires.

Below are resources through Grand River Transit regarding the Affordable Transit Program (ATP) and Travel Training.

#### • Affordable Transit Program (ATP):

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

If approved, all members of your household can purchase the discounted fare products. This includes all children 17 or younger.

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

#### Travel Training:

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.

www.grt.ca/en/rider-information/travel-training.aspx

#### Benefits of travel training:

- Freedom to go where you want when you want
- Greater community involvement
- Better access to employment and volunteer opportunities
- Lower transportation costs
- · Increased confidence and independence

# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT BRIGHTSIDE







# INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP SERVICE PACKAGES

Offering both in-centre and home services (individual) to meet the needs of families in our community!

Service is an eligible expense for Access OAP



#### SERVICE INFORMATION

- All services begin with an initial service consultation with our Clinical Intake (30 min in length and free of charge)
- Service delivery is supervised by our onsite Registered Behaviour Analyst (ONT.).
- Examples of goals:
  - · Daily Living Skills
  - Independent Living Skills
  - Responding Appropriately to Situations
  - Engaging in new activities
  - Dating and relationships
  - Tolerating No
  - Job Readiness
  - Early conversation skills
  - Communication skills (e.g. augmentative communication)
  - Social Skills

To schedule an initial service planning meeting please reach out to our Senior Therapist/Clinical Intake at brightside@sunbeamcommunity.ca

519-741-1121 ext. 2904

### WHAT'S HAPPENING AT SDRC - RESOURCE SUPPORT

# **Our Resource Support**

SDRC offers Resource Support to families of children under the age of 18 years, who have an intellectual disability and/or autism spectrum disorder. It provides quick access to short-term support for as long as the client is eligible for developmental services. Resource Support is mainly through telephone contact, email, or scheduled appointments.

# Resource Support offers a variety of services to eligible clients and includes:

- Providing information on a variety of supports and services (developmental services, community services, funding options, leisure/recreation, etc.)
- · Assisting with problem solving
- Facilitating referrals to other organizations/services
- Answering general questions regarding services and supports
- Helping assess strengths and needs
- Helping identify barriers to accessing services and supports
- Providing short-term emotional support
- · Liaising with other service providers

# The Resource Support Worker is not able to:

- Attend school meetings or medical appointments
- Assist with application forms
- Organize case conferences
- Develop service plans
- Provide ongoing, intensive support
- Act as a case manager
- Provide mediation/group facilitation

For Resource Support please call: 519-741-1121

## Adult Resource Guide: Community Supports and Services

This Guide, developed by SDRC and updated twice yearly, includes key resources for youth on the autism spectrum transitioning into adulthood who may not be eligible for adult services from Developmental Services Ontario (DSO). It could also be helpful for adults of any age who have been diagnosed with autism and/or an intellectual disability.

You can access the most recent version of the Guide (under "Resources") through our website: www.sdrc.ca/resource-guides

Below are some of the contents featured in this guide:

Help To Find Supports And Services
Income Assistance
Employment, Training and Volunteer Supports
Housing Supports
Transportation Supports
Adult Education Information
Legal Information And Supports
Mental Health And Crisis Supports

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Information
Cultural Supports
LGBTQ2S+ Services
Vulnerable Persons Registry
Social/Recreational Activities & Cards
Support And Social Groups
Online Resources
Long Term Planning

# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT SDRC - GROUPS

# The Weekly Mothers' Support Group at SDRC

The Mothers' Support Group is a 6-week group, providing the opportunity for mothers to discuss a range of topics related to parenting a child with an intellectual disability and/or autism. Topics include: understanding and sharing the diagnosis, grief and resilience, community resources, behavioural challenges and self-care. Guest speakers from the community and SDRC also contribute their expertise.

The group is a great way to connect with other mothers who understand your daily experience. It is a small group, for 6 – 10 members, and runs for 6 consecutive weeks. Two times are offered: Wednesday evenings from 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm or Thursday mornings from 10:00 am - 11:30 am.

Groups are offered 2 – 3 times per year. Please call 519-741-1121 for more information about how to join. Hope to see you soon!



# The Monthly Mothers' Group

Did you know that SDRC also has Monthly Mothers' groups?

Monthly groups are offered at two different times:

Daytime: The last Friday of the month

from 10:00 am to 11:30 am

Evening: The last Tuesday of the month

from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm



The purpose of the group is to connect with other mothers, share ideas, learn more about community resources and get support. Speakers are often invited to share information on topics of interest to group members. Some of the topics discussed in the past year were: anxiety, school issues and grief.

Please call 519-741-1121 for more information about how to join. Hope to see you soon!

# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT SDRC - GROUPS

# **Autism Social Skills Groups**

#### **Autism Social Skills Group**

SDRC offers a 6-week Social Skills Group to children/youth with an autism spectrum disorder between the ages of 11 and 17 years. A referral is required as this is not a drop-in group. **The Six-Week Group** runs on **Tuesday evenings from 5:00 pm-6:30 pm.** 

#### **Autism Monthly Social Group**

SDRC offers a **Monthly Social Group** for youth between the ages of 14 and 17 years with an autism spectrum disorder with no intellectual disability. Individuals must be able to be independent. The purpose of the group is to help individuals develop social skills. A referral is required as this is not a drop-in group.

The Monthly Social Group is offered every **2nd Wednesday** of the month at **5:00 pm-6:30 pm** with every other month to include a community outing.

Please call 519-741-1121 for more information about how to join.

# The Monthly Fathers' Support Group

**The Fathers' Support Group** is open to fathers in Waterloo Region who have a child (of any age) with an intellectual disability and/or autism. The group meets monthly.

It is a great opportunity for dads to discuss a wide range of topics related to parenting a child with an intellectual disability and/or autism. Fathers learn from guest speakers as well as from each other, sharing wisdom, understanding and a chance to talk to other dads who "get it".

Some of the topics discussed in the past year were: mindfulness, sharing the diagnosis and advocating for your child.

The Fathers Support Group meets on the 3rd Tuesday of the month from 6:30 – 8:00 pm.

Please call 519-741-1121 for more information about how to join.



## City of Waterloo Introduces Sensory Backpacks

The City of Waterloo's Community Programming Inclusion Services team is excited to introduce a new initiative designed to support the sensory needs of community members while visiting city facilities. Twelve sensory backpacks will now be available free of charge for individuals to sign out at select locations. While available to all, sensory backpacks are specifically designed for individuals with sensory processing disabilities, sensory sensitivities or other needs. Public spaces can sometimes feel overwhelming, especially for those who experience challenges in filtering external stimuli such as bright lights, loud noises and crowded areas. These backpacks offer a variety of tools to help individuals reduce or increase sensory input based on their needs, including:

- To reduce sensory input: sunglasses, noise-canceling headphones
- To increase sensory input: fidget tools, a chair band
- For self-regulation and communication: Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), a timer, drawing pad

Sensory backpacks are available to community members of all ages but must be signed out by individuals aged 13 or older. They can be found at Customer Service desks in six city facilities:

- Albert McCormick Community Centre
- RIM Park Manulife Sportsplex & Healthy Living Centre
- Waterloo Memorial Recreation Complex and Community Pavilion
- City of Waterloo Museum
- Waterloo City Centre

Backpacks are available for use as long as needed during a visit but must remain within the facility at all times.

For more information about the City of Waterloo's Inclusion Services program or sensory backpacks, please contact inclusion@waterloo.ca.

## Ready. Set. READ!...

Ready. Set. READ!...is a program for JK, SK and Grade 1 students. Through stories, literacy games and reading in small groups with volunteers the program aims to show kids reading can be fun! Sign up online here or by phone 519-743-0271 x261.

# Service Canada's Outreach Program

Service Canada Outreach is reaching out to emphasize its commitment to the wellbeing of the community in the Kitchener-Waterloo Region. In line with their shared goal of empowering citizens, this program provides support and guidance on a multitude of fronts, including but not limited to:

- Canada Dental Care Plan (CDCP)
- Assistance with CDCP applications/ Follow-up questions
- Clinic and/or Information Session
- Social Insurance Numbers (SIN)
- Assistance with obtaining SIN for youth entering the workforce
- Canada Pension Plan Disability (CPPD)
   Canada Pension Plan (CPP)
- Assistance with CPP, CPPD, OAS, GIS applications, Follow-up questions
- Seniors Clinic and/or Information Session
- Old Age Security (OAS)
- Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS)
- A general overview of Service Canada programs Information Session on programs, services, and benefits
- Employment Insurance (EI)
- Assistance with El application/ Follow-up questions
- (Clinic and/or Information Session)
- Job Bank Assistance on navigating and utilizing the Job Bank website
- Guidance on optimizing job searches and applications for youth seeking employment

For more information please contact: Ashitha Jacob, Mobile: 226-753-6341 ashitha.jacob@servicecanada.gc.ca

## Canada Disability Benefit

The Canada Disability Benefit Regulations have been made and will come into force on May 15, 2025.

This is the final step in the Government of Canada's legislative work to make the Canada Disability Benefit a reality.

More information on the Canada Disability Benefit, including a summary of the regulations, is available at the following links:

- Canada Disability Benefit
- Summary of the Canada Disability Benefit Regulations

As announced in Budget 2024, the Government is committed to begin payment of the Canada Disability Benefit in July 2025.

The Canada Disability Benefit will be a new income-tested benefit providing low and modest-income working-age persons with disabilities up to \$200 per month in financial support. The first month of eligibility for the benefit will be June 2025, and it is expected that payments will begin in July 2025, as announced in Budget 2024.

To be eligible for the benefit, individuals need to be aged 18 to 64 and have been approved for the Disability Tax Credit. They also need to have filed their income tax return, as does their spouse or common-law partner if they have one.

## Accessibility Services and Accessible Resources at KPL

Kitchener Public Library offers many accessibility services for people for anyone eligible and who need them. Please check their Talking Book Status and Accessibility Status library cards to find if you are eligible - please check their website: www.kpl.org/your-

#### library/accessibility.

Here are some of the resources:

#### Access Technology:

Access Centres are computer Stations that provide accessible hardware and software for customers with or experiencing disabilities.

# Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA)

The Centre for Equitable Library Access provides accessible readina services to approx. 3 million people across Canada with print disabilities. CELA provides access to a collection of over 1 million titles in multiple accessible formats, including audio, printbraille and text. CELA content can be accessed in numerous ways including: physical items mailed to your home free of charge, downloading digital content to your computer, or Direct to Player service that sends the content to a DAISY Player, smartphone or tablet.

#### **DAISY Readers**

DAISY Readers have the ability to play content in the DAISY format. This format provides greater playback capabilities than a traditional audiobook on CD. The Readers are designed with unique tactile buttons so that the operation of the devices can be done with limited or no vision.

The DAISY Readers are preloaded with 50 books from a variety of genres and subject matter may also be loaded with personalized content upon request.

#### Descriptive Videos and DVDs

These are a form of audio-visual translation used primarily by blind and visually impaired consumers of television and film.

#### **Digital Magnifiers**

The Explore 5 is a compact electronic magnifier with a 5-inch screen that can magnify up to 22 times.

#### Large Print Material

Books, magazines and newspapers with a larger print.

#### Playaway Audiobooks

A single audiobook is loaded onto a pocket-sized device with minimal buttons for a simple and easy playback experience.

#### **Read Along Picture Books**

Picture Books that have an audio player attached to the book so that you can read and listen along together.

#### **Yoto Minis**

Kid-friendly audio picture books and portable player. Yoto Minis are a screen-free, cord-free and on-the-go-audiobook.

# Caregiver Nonviolent Crisis Intervention by Kerry's Place

Build your skills in managing and deescalating crisis situations to better care for and support those in your life who have autism.

This skill-building workshop is open to parents, caregivers, and family members of individuals with autism of any age. Participants will get an overview of the verbal and non-verbal communication concepts and strategies in the Nonviolent Crisis Intervention® (NVCI) training program. These skills and strategies can be used at home and in the community.

Please note: Participants will not receive a certificate of completion, or become NVCI certified. For more information, and to register, click on this link:

Caregiver Nonviolent Crisis Intervention by Kerry's Place.

# Canadian Centre for Caregiving Excellence: National Caregiving Strategy Engagement

Caring in Canada provides an in-depth analysis of the survey results collected in the National Caregiving Survey completed by more than 3,000 caregivers and care providers from across Canada.

Read the full report, Caring in Canada, and learn about Canada's National Caregiving Strategy's development. The report is available here - Report: Caring in Canada - Canadian Centre for Caregiving Excellence (canadiancaregiving.org)

# Virtual Urgent Care (VUC) UrgentCareOntario.ca

VUC is a program that provides virtual, same day/next day appointments for children and adults across Ontario with a Nurse Practitioner (NP).

These services are intended for non-urgent concerns that can be addressed through a virtual visit.

Patients can book an appointment through www.urgentcareontario.ca

Or call 1-844-CARE-844 (1-844-227-3844) and an appointment can be made for you.

# Mindfulness Program for Family Caregivers by CAMH

These free mindfulness sessions led by mindfulness expert Sue Hutton, MSW are open for registration. Audio links and resources to support your practice will be provided.

#### Dates:

Tuesdays Oct 7 to Nov 11, 2025 (1pm to 2pm) Tuesdays Jan 27 to Mar 3, 2026 (1pm to 2pm).

To register, email: hcardd@camh.ca

## 9-8-8 Help Line

9-8-8 is a new national helpline in Canada that gives people access to suicide prevention services via call or text. It's available in all provinces and territories, 24/7 and free of charge. Its goal is to prevent suicide. Calls and texts will be directed to a network of partners in communities across the country. People can call or text 9-8-8 toll-free, anytime for support in English and French.

#### 211

Life can be hard, but finding help is easy. Contact 211 day or night to find support for all of life's challenges. Call toll free at 1-877-330-3213. 211 is free and confidential and offers support in 150+ languages.

# The Ontario Caregiver Organization

The Ontario Caregiver Organization is full of resources for caregivers. Click on each title to go to the specific webpage.

• Ontario Caregiver Helpline: 1-833-416-2273

A single point of access for 24/7 caregiver information, supports, and services in both English and French. Live chat is also available Mon-Fri, 7am-9pm at

**ontariocaregiver.ca**. Some of their supports and resources are:

- The SCALE Program
- Online Support Groups
- Educational Webinars
- Toolkits and Resources for Caregivers
- Time to Talk Podcast

# Ask a Nurse at the Welcome Spaces

Public Health Family Nursing services are available at three Welcome Space locations, offering one-to-one, drop-in support from Public Health Nurses. This service is provided from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm on the following days:

Waterloo: Mondays at 99 Regina St S Kitchener: Tuesdays at 20 Weber St E Cambridge: Thursdays at 150 Main St

Nurses can assist with questions on pregnancy, growth and development, feeding, child health, and local health services.

# Tech Corner of City of Kitchener

City of Kitchener offers Kitchener Tech Connect courses for older adults looking to learn about tech. Programs are being offered in person at the Downtown, Kingsdale, Chandler Mowat & Doon Pioneer Park Community Centres. These free tech courses are for older adults in our community looking to improve social connections, access to information and digital literacy.

**Click here** to see upcoming courses and to register!

# Region of Waterloo's Resources on Children with Exceptional or Special Needs

Some children are born with exceptional needs or an exceptional need is identified later as the child grows. Region of Waterloo's website is a great resource for parents and caregivers of Children with Exceptional or Special Needs. You can find information on the following programs/services on the 'Children with Exceptional or Special Needs' page on their website at the link below:

www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/health-and-wellness/children-with-special-needs

#### Infant and Child Development

Infant and Child Development offers services and support to families of young children who may be experiencing developmental concerns, delays or disabilities.

A range of services are available to children up to age five who are not attending licensed child care or kindergarten.

# Finding Licensed Services for Children with Special Needs

The Special Needs Access Point (SNAP) is a single access point for children up to 12 years who are currently attending or seeking to enroll in a licensed child care program in Waterloo Region. SNAP accepts referrals from child care programs, parents, and community agencies.

Please visit the **Special Needs Resourcing Collaborative** website where you can find more information about referrals, what supports are available, and resources for both parents and early learning child care centres.

#### **Community Supports**

Extend-A-Family Waterloo Region KidsAbility Waterloo Region Family Network

# Financial Assistance: Help Paying for Child Care

Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities: If you are a parent or guardian who is caring for a child with a severe disability you may be able to get financial support through the Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities (ACSD) Program. This program provides financial support for low-income and moderate-income families to cover some of the extra costs of caring for a child who has a severe disability.

Special Services at Home: Families who are caring for a child with a developmental and/or physical disability can apply to the Special Services at Home (SSAH) program to get funding.

# Online Application for ACSD and SSAH

ACSD and SSAH applications can be completed online. Below are the links for these two applications:

ACSD: www.ontario.ca/page/assistance-children-severe-disabilities-program

SSAH:

www.ontario.ca/page/special-serviceshome

## **Disability Planning Helpline**

The Plan Institute is thrilled to announce the expansion of their Disability Planning Helpline.

They are offering additional one-on-one support to guide you through every step of the DTC application process. This includes support with "Part A" and "Part B" of the DTC application form, such as providing sample language, reviewing paperwork, and preparing a letter to take to a medical practitioner. For more information please check their website:

www.planinstitute.ca/rdsp-disability-planning-helpline

#### **APSGO**

The Association of Parent Support Groups in Ontario (APSGO) is for parents struggling with the behavior of a child, youth or young adult.

APSGO support groups help parents/guardians develop effective strategies, set limits and boundaries, and build better relationships with their children.

If you are interested please email APSGO-KW at: apsgo.kw@gmail.com. You can also visit their website for more information: www.apsgo.ca.

#### Smile Canada

Smile Canada has culturally responsive programs for children and young adults with disabilities (up to age 30) They are designed to support newcomers and refugees through financial support, education, mentorship, and more such as:

**Service Navigation** - Languages supported include English, Arabic, Urdu, Somali, Farsi and more.

Helps with identifying and connecting families with the right resources, this includes accessing medical specialists, educational programs, therapy services, and community organizations.

**Hospital Support Program -** Parent and Caregiver Wellness Packages and Services, Food Deliveries and Parking Allowances, Resource/advocacy support.

Financial Assistance - families will have access to SMILE's Scholarship rounds, where families can receive funding towards mental health therapy services, respite services, therapeutic tools, wheelchairs, walkers, hearing aids and more.

Newcomer Support - Provides immediate aid to refugees and newcomer families with children with developmental disabilities, physical ailments, and long-term medical conditions, including cancer. Provides ABA, speech and language, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, and psychotherapy.

For more information on their services, please visit their website:

www.smilecan.org/programs.
Intake form: www.smilecan.org/become-a-smile-family.

# EarlyON Team Early Learning, Child Care Navigators and Partners

Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Navigators seek opportunities to assist families in accessing Child Care, EarlyON programming, and other services that support the healthy development of children aged 0 – 6. They focus on supporting families who experience barriers accessing these services.

To meet with an Early Learning & Child Care Navigator you can send a request **online** or via email:

at earlyyearsinfo@ytr.ymca.ca You can also call 519-741-8585 ext. 3008 and ask to speak with an Early Learning and Child Care Navigator.

For more info please visit ELCC Navigators at this **link**:

www.earlyyearsinfo.ca/earlyonprograms-and-calendar/services

#### **AccessOAP**

AccessOAP is the Independent Intake Organization to connect you with autism programs and services available to your family through the Ontario Autism Program. If you have questions about the New AccessOAP, how to create an account or the Ontario Autism Program visit these websites:

www.autismontario.com/AccessOAP www.accessoap.ca

# EarlyON Waterloo Region Locations

EarlyON Child and Family Centres offer free, high-quality programs for families and children from birth to 6 years old.

Along with seven (7) EarlyON locations across Waterloo Region there are five (5) mobile sites where Drop-in Playtime is offered in the mornings:

- Wellesley Community Centre Monday
- Stork Family YMCA Tuesday
- New Dundee Community Centre Tuesday
- Wilmot Family Resource Centre Wednesday
- Victoria Hills Community Centre Friday

Drop-in Playtime: drop in any time the center is open.

Families are required to set up a KeyON account through www.KeyON.ca before participating in programs.

www.earlyyearsinfo.ca

## **Drop-Ins at EarlyON**

Family Resource Coach of WRFN hosts inperson drop-in meetings to answer your questions about community resources and child development. They take place at various EarlyON locations. Meetings do not require an appointment but are offered on a first come first serve basis.

Visit: www.wrfn.info/events for drop-in dates and locations.

Or call: 226-808-5460

## Counselling Collaborative

Counselling Collaborative of Waterloo Region: Autism Mental Health Support includes five Community Mental Health Agencies in the region, with over 50 therapists offering professional autisminformed therapy. Locations throughout include Waterloo Kitchener, Region Cambridge, Waterloo, Elmira, and New Hamburg. Virtual and telephone appointments are also offered. The central intake can connect individuals with the CCWR agency of choice. Flexible payment options include a sliding scale based on income, insurance benefits, or OAP core funding. Eligibility for other funding may also be discussed during intake. To register for counselling, visit www.counsellingwr.ca or call 519-884-0000.

# Camino Wellbeing + Mental Health offers Groups and Workshops

Camino wellbeing + Mental Health is offering several online and in-person child/youth, caregiver, and family groups. These groups are FREE and open to families of the Waterloo Region.

Check their website for all groups and workshops:

# www.caminowellbeing.ca/groups-workshops

To register call 519-743-6333 X 3250 or email: groups@caminowellbeing.ca

## **Integrated Crisis Centre**

Integrated Crisis Centre is operated by the Canadian Mental Health Association Waterloo-Wellington and Thresholds Homes and Supports.

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.

Their 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

## Region-wide Tutoring

Camino Wellbeing + Mental Health provides tutoring and homework spaces that are accessible and free of cost to families and students. For more information, visit www.caminowellbeing.ca/tutoring.

## **Passport Program of Ontario**

The Passport Program, funded by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS), helps adults with a developmental disability be involved in their communities and live as independently as possible by providing funding for community participation services supports, activities of daily living and person-directed planning. The program also provides funding for caregiver respite for services and supports primary caregivers of an adult with developmental disability.

www.passportfunding.ca

## Vulnerable Person's Registry

The Vulnerable Persons Registry (VPR) is a community-based initiative that promotes communication between vulnerable persons, the people who support them, and the police. This information will assist officers when responding to an emergency involving a vulnerable person. The registry provides police with quick access to critical information. Access to this information is controlled. The police dispatcher has access to the Vulnerable Persons Registry (VPR). They will forward the registrant's information to the relevant police officer involved in the emergency. The information you provide the VPR remains safe and secure.

Individuals, their parent/legal guardian, or other legal authorities may register a vulnerable person. The VPR is voluntary and free to register.

www.vulnerablepersonsregistry.ca

# Creating Your Individualized Housing and Support Plan DSO Webinars

DSO hosted three session workshop series (repeating) in March 2025 to help begin creating an individualized housing and support plan for you or a family member with a developmental disability. The recorded sessions are available at this **link** 

## **Housing Toolkit by DSO**

Learn how the DSO housing toolkit can help you create a housing vision for adults with developmental disabilities.

This toolkit is a library of housing resources put together by DSO staff, with input from people in similar situations, to help you create a housing plan. If you choose to use the My housing and support plan form, Step 1 will provide you with tools to complete it. Additional steps within the toolkit will help you to fill in any gaps in your housing plan. For example, Step 2 "Reviewing housing options and locations" will help if you are not sure where you want to live, and Step 3 "Financing the Plan" will help you explore funding opportunities. There are 6 Steps, click on each step to access information, resources, tools and expert advice from our staff, families, partner agencies and organizations.

Check out this link for more information: www.dsontario.ca/resources/housing

To connect with DSOCWR Housing Navigator, call or email at: 1-888-941-1121, c.hall@sunbeamcommunity.ca

#### Canadian Dental Care Plan

Canadian residents with an adjusted family net income below \$90,000, who do not have dental insurance can apply for the Canadian Dental Care Plan (CDCP).

To check the eligibility criteria and application dates please check the website:

www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/de

ntal/dental-care-plan

# Waterloo Region Community Legal Services

Waterloo Region Community Legal Services provide legal advice and help for low income people residing in Waterloo Region with the following type of problems:

Housing Law (tenants)
Income Maintenance Law (ODSP, OW and CPP-D)

Employment Insurance
Name Change and Gender Marker Change
Consumer Protection
Sexual Harassment in Workplace

For more information please contact their office by phone or by using their online contact form located under the Contact Us section of their website if you require legal assistance.

**Website:** www.wrcls.ca Phone: 519-743-0254



# Ontario Electricity Board (OESP) Helps Low-Income Families

Check the website of Ontario Electricity
Support Program (OESP). If you are a customer of an electricity utility and in a lower-income home, you may qualify for a reduction on your electricity bill. Click here to learn more about it. The OESP will reduce the cost of your household electricity by applying a monthly credit directly to your bill. The credit amount will depend on how many people live in your home and your combined household income.

New Application ontarioelectricitysupport.ca/SelfAssessment

Renew Application ontarioelectricitysupport.ca/Renew

# Emergency Low Cost Food Program

There are many sources in the Region of Waterloo which provide emergency food hampers and meal programs. Please call the hamper or meal program first as the information, including hours of operation and services offered, is subject to change. Most churches also provide food hampers for their geographical area only.

Please contact the **Food Bank of Waterloo**Region at 519-743-5576, or the **Cambridge Food Bank**, 519-622-6550 for more
information about specific programs in your neighbourhood.

## Accessible Parks and Splash Pads in the Region of Waterloo

Explore the accessible playgrounds in our region:

Fun accessible activities for families of all ages, free or nearly free.

#### Waterloo Park

The new accessible playground is an opportunity for active fun for individuals of all ages and abilities. Featuring:

- accessible rubber surfacing and artificial turf hills
- accessible play structure features ramps and transfer stations
- sensory oriented play elements

#### Cambridge Churchill Park

Address: 200 Christopher Drive.

Cambridge, ON

#### Riverside Park

Address: 49 King St., West Cambridge, ON (Preston)

#### Kate's Place, Gibson Park

Address: 17 First Street West. Elmira, ON

#### Kiwanis Parks

Address: 1000 Kiwanis Park Drive, Kitchener





Summer is almost here and so is the heat. Fortunately the splash pads are open for to cool you off and have fun. Here is the list of splash pad locations around you:

- Breithaupt Park, 806 Union Street, 519-741-2502
- Carl Zehr Square, 200 King Street West (open daily from 7:30 a.m. to 9 p.m.)
- Chandler Mowat, 222 Chandler Drive, 519-741-2733
- Doon Pioneer Park, 150 Pioneer Drive, 519-741-2641
- Kingsdale, 78 Wilson Avenue, 519-741-2540
- McLennan Park, 901 Ottawa Street South
- RBJ Schlegel Park, 1664 Huron Road
- Vanier Park water play feature, 335
   Vanier Drive, 519-741-2345
- Victoria Park, Courtland Avenue West, 519-741-2345
- Waterloo Park, Father David Bauer Rd, Waterloo, Splash pad is located

Each location is open daily from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Meanwhile the City of Cambridge says its 11 splash pads will be open soon.

Waterloo's two splash pads are now open. They are open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

- Waterloo Park's splash pad is located off Father David Bauer Drive, next to the skate park. Free parking is available on the street or in lots surrounding the park.
- Albert McCormick Community Centre, 500 Parkside Drive, Waterloo, 519-885-1700.

## Programs for those with Disabilities

#### City of Kitchener

#### Inclusive Golf

Location: Doon Valley Golf Course Date: Sundays from July 6 to August 24

Time: TBD

More info: Call 519-783-8996 or visit www.kitchener.ca/activenet Registration opens at 8:30am on June 10 for Kitchener residents; June 17 for all.

For full program details please go to www.kitchener.ca/activenet.



## Belwood Lodge and Camp

An exceptional summer camp for children, youth and adults with developmental disabilities

Overnight and day camp Sessions available in july and August 322 Third St., Belwood near Guelph, ON

To register/questions:

visit www.belwoodlodgeandcamp.com email: office@belwoodlodgeandcamp.com Call: 519-843-1211

# City of Cambridge Integrated and Adapted Programs

#### **Adaptive Sport Fundamentals**

In this registered adapted program, participants have the opportunity to learn the fundamental movement skills such as catching, running, throwing, and jumping through a series of structured sporting activities. Classes will be modified for all abilities, and are open to participants ages 6-12 and 13-20.



#### Adapted Leisure Swim

An open swim opportunity for children, youth, and adults with diverse abilities to participate in a fun, supportive and supervised water environment. See their **Swim Schedules page** for more details and new dates when they are posted.

www.cambridge.ca/support-and-accommodations



# A Few More Recreational Programs in the Community for Individuals with Special Needs

City of Waterloo and Kitchener Adapted Aquatics – To register visit the respective website pages:

www.ca.apm.activecommunities.com/activewaterloo and

www.kitchener.ca/en/pools-and-swimming/swimming-lessons.aspx and scroll down to find the adapted Aquatics buttons.

Summer Active Living registration opens June 5. Swim registration opens June 19.

DARE - The Dance Adventure Rhythm Experience program provides active and social engagement adapted for all developmental and physical abilities.

For more information email dare@danceadventure.ca.

Feel the Beat - A dance class for young adults with developmental disabilities run through Athletics at WLU. Check this link for their Spring schedule when they update it. For more information visit:

www.secure.laurierathletics.com/ecomme rce

Arts for All – This class offered through Arts Abound is designed for children living with disabilities and includes a variety of art experiences (including dance, music, and visual art) that are adapted to the unique needs of each student to provide them an opportunity to express themselves. Please check this link for their Spring schedule when they update it.

www.artsabound.ca

Kitchener Kicks Dragon Hearts program for Martial Arts continues to practice on Saturday mornings at 9am for individuals with special needs. Both virtual and inperson options are available. New participants are welcome to try the program for free before signing up. Visit www.kitchenerkicks.ca/WP for more information.

Adaptive Gymnastics program at KW Gymnastics will offer in-person 1:1 coaching for individuals with special needs. www.kwgymnastics.ca/adaptive-program. Contact Asifa at adaptive@kwgymnastics.ca for more information.

#### Programs at YMCA

Membership is not required to access the free online workout programs of YMCA. At this link you will have free access to many different kinds of workouts from your home.

YMCA programming online:

www.ymcahome.ca

Fee assistance at the YMCA is available for eligible families. Please visit at this link:

www.feeassist.ca

## **Special Olympics**

Special Olympics Ontario offers a variety of impactful programs, including health initiatives, school-based programs, and Hometown Games, each contributing to the overall mission of promoting inclusion and well-being.

www.specialolympicsontario.com

# Adaptive baseball for children and adults with special needs in Waterloo Region

Registration for the 2025 Buddy League Challenger Baseball season opens at the end of March!

This Learn-to-Play, Junior, and Senior Divisions will be on the field at Riverside Park (Kin 1) from 5:30 - 8:30 p.m. on Monday and Thursday evenings from mid-May through mid-August. Stay tuned for specific details!

Please check their website for more information:

www.buddyleaguecanada.com

## **Sports for Special Athletes**

Sports for Special Athletes (SSA) is a grasscommunity-based roots, sport recreation organization. Locally based in Waterloo, their programs are designed for people with special needs, ages 5 years and up. They offer programs throughout the spring/summer and fall/winter seasons and include a wide variety of activities such as, 5 & 10 pin bowling, non-contact martial arts, adapted swimming, adapted yoga, floor hockey, boccia ball, mini-golf, softball (3 ability levels), soccer (2 ability levels), basketball, lawn bowling, power lifting, speed skating, curling and the annual Christmas party. They use city and school facilities and sport fields.

# Check their website www.sportsforspecialathletes.org

to see their latest schedule when they update and register.

## Move by Goodlife Kids

MOVE is designed exclusively to get youth with special needs active, and is offered FREE to families. Registered participants get access to three live online small-group sessions each week led by one of MOVE's passionate coaches.

Learn more at: goodlifekids.com/MOVE

#### Fitness Class

The Sun Life Centre for Healthy Communities is a community outreach program that aims to improve activity levels and the overall health of community members. For more information, contact:

Manager, Sun Life Centre for Healthy Communities, at: SunlifeCHC@wlu.ca

www.researchcentres.wlu.ca/
sun-life-financial-centre-for-physically-active-communities

## **Online Sensory Workout Project**

On behalf of Aptus Treatment Centre, the Sensory Workout Project is pleased to share the following training videos. Here are topic-specific video playlists:

Module 1: Intro to Sensory Workout, Fitness Goals, Outcomes & Safety www.youtube.com/playlist?module 1

Module 2: Intro to Sensory Processing 1 Training video & 3 dance-focused activity videos for people supported: www.youtube.com/playlist?module 2

Module 3: Intro to Sensory Processing & Physical Activity

www.youtube.com/playlist?module 3
Module 4: The Sensory Environment
www.youtube.com/playlist?module 4

#### Click on the links below for further information on each program

City programming in Kitchener–Waterloo offers recreation programs in various ways. Some of these are listed below:

#### Before and After School Programs

Extended day programs through the school board (ages 4-12 years)

Waterloo Regional District School Board -WRDSB Waterloo Catholic District School Board - WCDSB YMCA/YWCA

Kindergarten Extended Day Care (4-5 years)
School Age Youth Development (6-12 years)

City of Waterloo Camps-and-pre-school
City of Kitchener Children-and-youth Kitchener
City of Cambridge Children's recreation

#### Access 2 Card

The Access 2 Card program helps to ensure that entertainment, cultural, and recreational opportunities are more available and accessible to all. The Access 2 card is for people of all ages who live with a permanent disability and require the assistance of a support person at participating entertainment, cultural, and recreational venues across Canada.

A support person is an adult who accompanies a person with a permanent disability to assist with services that are not provided by the employees at the participating venue, such as assistance with eating, administering medication, communication and use of the facilities.

www.access2Card.ca

Check your local Community Centres for PD Day, March Break, Summer Camps and activities at the link below:

Kitchener: www.kitchener.ca/communitycentres

Waterloo: www.waterloo.ca/communityand-rec-centres

Cambridge: www.facilities.cambridge.ca

Workshops and Activity Guides City of Waterloo Program and Activities Guide

City of Kitchener Active Kitchener
City of Cambridge: Inclusive activities
for children can be found at this link

These are some of the places who accept an Access 2 Card in the Region of Waterloo:

Cambridge: Butterfly Conservatory,

Fashion History Museum

**Kitchener**: Bingemans, Chicopee Tube Park, THEMUSEUM, Centre in the

Square, The Registry Theatre
Waterloo: Third Age Learning,
Waterloo Region Museum

#### Inclusion Services

If you or someone you know has a disability and needs support to join any City of Kitchener or City of Waterloo programs, Inclusion Services is here to help! They offer 1:1 support for people with disabilities wanting to participate in any in-person City programs. Support may be provided by program staff, training volunteers, support workers. All inclusion support is free of charge. Inclusion Services also provides up to two weeks of summer camp inclusion support in any City of Kitchener or City of Waterloo camp programs. Visit www.kitchener.ca/leisuresupport for more information on how to request support and to complete an inclusion membership form.

For any other accommodation needs or requests, please contact the Inclusion Services Coordinator at 519-741-2200 ext. 7229

# Helpful Links To Workshops and Newsletters

www.kidsability.ca/Community-Rec-Directory www.eafwr.on.ca/events wrfn.info/blog/tag/wrfn-newsletter wrfn.info/CommunityNewsAndUpdates www.caminowellbeing.ca autism-ontario-adult-e-newsletter

# Fee Assistance for Leisure and Recreational Activities

Fee Assistance for Leisure and Recreational
Activities is available from different sources in the
Region of Waterloo. More information on
eligibility criteria and how to apply, can be found
at these links:

The City of Waterloo:

Fee-assistance-application Waterloo

The City of Kitchener:

Fee-assistance Kitchener

The City of Cambridge:

Activities for Less Fee Assistance application Cambridge

YMCA of Three Rivers:

Fee-Assistance YMCA

# Online PAL Card Application

The PAL (Personal Assistance for Leisure Activities) card program allows individuals with a disability to be accompanied by a personal attendant so that they may have the help they need to participate in recreation and leisure programs and services offered by the municipality and PAL card partners. The personal attendant is not charged the program fee and is present for the sole purpose of assisting the person with the disability. The regular program/registration fee is charged to the person with the disability.

People can apply for the PAL card with the City on line here:

PAL-card-application-process Kitchener
Waterloo's PAL form is found here:
PAL-Card Application Waterloo
Cambridge's PAL form can be found here:
PAL-Card Application Cambridge

#### **ABOUT US**

# MAIN OFFICE 205 - 1120 Victoria St. N. Kitchener, ON N2B 3T2

Phone: 519-741-1121

Fax: 519-743-4730

E-mail:

sdrc@sunbeamcommunity.ca

Website: www.sdrc.ca

Hours:

9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday



SDRC Connection publishes four times a year. If you would like to receive notification when new issues are available on our website, please contact us at sdrc@sunbeamcommunity.ca providing your name and email address. If you have a family member currently receiving services from SDRC, please provide their name as well.

You can also sign up for newsletter notification online at our website: www.sdrc.ca

# Satellite Offices (Visits by appointment only)

### Cambridge

757 King St. E

Cambridge, ON N3H 3N8

Phone: 519-741-1121 Fax: 519-650-5729

#### Kitchener

65 Hanson Avenue Kitchener, ON N2C 2E2

Phone: 519-741-1121 Fax: 519-743-4730

#### Elmira

118 Barnswallow Dr. Elmira, ON N3B 2Y9 Phone: 519-741-1121

Fax: 519-669-3444

#### Disclaimer

We want to provide an informative resource that will be a useful guide for you. Sunbeam Developmental Resource Centre does not necessarily endorse the information contained in this newsletter. The purpose is to provide information to the community. It is up to the reader to decide what is useful for them. We make every effort to ensure that our information is accurate and relevant. We apologize for any errors or omissions that occur.

#### Code of Conduct

Sunbeam's "Code of Conduct For Persons Served and Family Members" can be found at www.sunbeamcommunity.ca/news

## Privacy, Consent, Collection & Disclosure

Sunbeam's "Privacy, Consent, Collection & Disclosure of Personal/Health Information 2024 Policy Bulletin" can be found at www.sunbeamcommunity.ca/privacy-policy