

# SUMMER NEWS BRIEF



## Annual General Meeting for the 2023 Financial Year

On June 12, 2024, 30 members of Windsor-Essex Family Network gathered for our Annual General Meeting for the 2023 fiscal year. Over a delicious meal prepared by Chef Anthony and the culinary students at the Unemployed Help Centre, families (new and long time members) and community partners reunited or met for the first time.

By sharing a meal and the experience of listening and interacting with Sara Pot, guest speaker, what started as a formal meeting was transformed into a gathering of kindred spirits, bound by shared experiences and the promise of future gatherings.

Ultimately, the melding of new and old families bonded by the desire for inclusivity creates a tapestry of connections that strengthens over time. It's a reminder that family is not just about lineage but about the willingness to open our hearts to those who enrich our lives with their presence. In this way, every gathering becomes a celebration of diversity and a testament to the power of love and acceptance in creating a unified Family Network.

***At this year's AGM, WEFN was honoured to welcome mother, writer and facilitator Sara Pot. Following enthusiastic feedback from those in attendance, we asked her to write a follow up piece to share with those who were unable to join us.***

Driving into southern Ontario towards Windsor, my grandmother came to mind. My grandparents immigrated to the Woodstock area from the Netherlands in the late 1940s with a young growing family. In the fall of 1951, my uncle John was born with significant developmental concerns. It was a difficult time for an immigrant family living in rural Ontario to care for a child with numerous challenges.



Thankfully, there's been a mind shift in these 70 years on how healthcare sees disability. Medical & clinical support specific to disability and challenges in child development morphed into family-centred care that strives to improve patient and family wellbeing. Networks were created by parents, determined to see their children flourish - and equally determined to advocate for their children's rights to quality of life. It was an honour to sit at the table with the founders of Windsor-Essex Family Network and hear about the history of your community.

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## Windsor-Essex Family Network

# Tuesdays at the Network

Drop in & connect with other parents & family members who have a loved one with a disability.

Engage in conversation or quiet togetherness.

Read in our library or work on one of our computers.

Have a refreshment from our snack bar

Bring a craft project or special interest to work on  
... the options are endless.

**Every Tuesday**

starting July 9, 2024

**Drop-In 1pm-7pm**

7025 Enterprise Way, Windsor

We are in a scent free & nut free building

Together let's create a space  
where no one feels alone!

WEFN was recently awarded a **Capacity Building Grant from the Ontario Caregiver Organization.**

At WEFN we will be using the funding to continue training local family members who are supporting an adult with a developmental disability to mentor other families. WEFN has identified a particular need for family members that speak a language in addition to English. If you have an adult family member with a disability and would like to join our Family-to-Family mentoring team please contact the office.



## HOLD THE PRESSES!

Just before printing this News Brief, our team at WEFN was notified that we will be receiving another Community Living Ontario Family Engagement Grant for the 2024-2025 year.

Stay tuned for all of the creative, fun and informative ways we will be using these funds. Reach out to us if you have an idea about how you think we can encourage families to come together and support each other.

COMMUNITY LIVING  
Ontario

## FAMILY-TO-FAMILY MENTOR VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Do you have a family member/loved one with a disability?

Are you interested in sharing your knowledge, experiences & support with other families?

Join Our Team!

Receive ongoing training & support for your volunteer role!



Windsor-Essex  
Family Network

Families Helping Families Open Doors



We welcome family members from all backgrounds, and affirm diversity in all its forms. We also celebrate people from diverse cultural backgrounds and recognize the richness they bring to our community. Join us in creating an inclusive environment where everyone's unique strengths are appreciated and respected.

For more information email  
info@windsoressexfamnet.ca  
or call 519-974-1008  
or our website

<https://windsoressexfamnet.ca/>



I am an educator, writer and facilitator. I am also a parent of four. Like my grandmother, I birthed a baby with developmental challenges. We named her Rachel - and three years later, I birthed another baby with similar needs. We named her Janneke. We learned that our girls didn't fit a tidy diagnosis. In time, our genetics team created a diagnosis, largely due to the presentation of our two girls, making us one of just a few families with the diagnosis of Chitayat-Hall syndrome.

Reflecting on my children and the process of finding (or creating!) a diagnosis has made me wonder about how we all make sense of things, particularly when our lives unfold in ways we never anticipated.

At your AGM, I shared with you a painting from Melissa Ellen Milton, an individual diagnosed with Dysautonomia. You can find it here:

<https://everylifefoundation.org/portfolio-item/flora-fauna/>

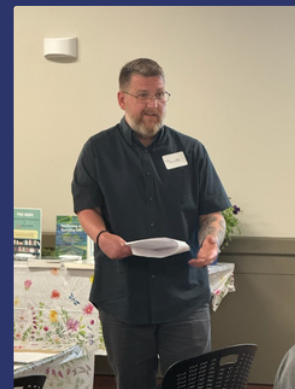
We shared what we saw in the painting, and we reflected on the different ways we make sense of things in our lives, how we interpret meaning. Though we might find some commonalities, we also offer unique perspectives that together make a wonderful (and sometimes messy!) whole. As we live, care, and work alongside each other, our success, our strength, and our capacity rely on relational development over time.

Let's offer grace to ourselves and to each other in our sense-making and know that good things can grow in the most unlikely places, such as daisies in the ditch, orange lilies in a field, and succulents growing with little water.

Our families, our lives - and Windsor Essex Family Network - can be transformed through meaningful connection and shared experiences. May you be encouraged in your sense-making, in your day-to-day details. There may not be an answer to every question or a solution to every problem, but let's keep each other company.

***"Change never happens at the pace we think it should. It happens over years of people joining together, strategizing, sharing, and pulling all the levers they possibly can. Gradually, excruciatingly slowly, things start to happen, and then suddenly, seemingly out of the blue, something will tip."***

***-- Judy Heumann, American Disability Rights Activist***



# Canadian Dental Care Plan 2024 Federal update

The Canadian Dental Care Plan (CDCP) applications are now open for:

- Seniors aged 65 and over
- Children under the age of 18
- Adults with a valid Disability Tax Credit certificate

If you're eligible for dental coverage through your employment benefits or a professional or student organization, you are not eligible for CDCP.

If you or your loved one receive ODSP, the first time you are asked on the application if you have "other dental benefits" answer "No" then the next screen will ask if you are receiving ODSP and you can answer yes.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/dental.html>

To complete the online application, you will need to provide all of the following information about yourself and your spouse or common-law partner (if you have one):

- Social Insurance Number (SIN) (if available for children)
- Date of birth
- Full name
- Home and mailing address
- List of dental coverage you have through government social programs (if any)
- You and your spouse or common-law partner (if applicable) must have filed your tax return for 2023 and have received your Notice of Assessment

To find out if your dentist is part of the Canadian Dental Care plan go to <https://www.sunlife.ca/sl/cdcp/en/member/provider-search/>

The dental providers are to be reimbursed directly through the plan, patients will not have to pay up front. But, depending on your family income you may need to pay a co-payment. Make sure services are ELIGIBLE before agreeing to them. For families with family income lower than \$70,000 -100% of eligible oral health care service costs will be covered at the CDCP established fees. Families between \$70,000 and \$79,999 - 60% of eligible oral health care service costs will be covered at the CDCP established fees. For families between \$80,000 and \$89,999- 40% of eligible oral health care service costs will be covered at the CDCP established fees.

Before receiving oral health care, you should always ask your oral health provider about any costs that won't be covered by the plan. Make sure you know what you'll have to pay directly to your oral health provider ahead of receiving treatment.

Families who have applied have reported that the online application is simple.

## Individual Education Plans (IEPs) & More

Thursday October 3, 2024 - In Person & Online Option

6:30 - 8:30 PM - Location to Be Announced

Superintendent of Education Presenters from both GECDSEB & WECDSB

Experienced families will be available to offer suggestions, information and support after the formal presentation.

Registration will open the first week of September - watch your emails, Facebook or our website for details



**Windsor-Essex Family Network &  
Enhancing Family Support for Education Group**



If you do not have access to a computer and/or would like help applying for resources, we are happy to help you at the WEFN office. Please call or email to make an appointment and be sure to bring with you all the information you will need.