

THE COMMUNITY COLUMN

Community Living Parry Sound - Quarterly Newsletter



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A COMMUNITY THAT CARES

Emma Monk

You are receiving this newsletter because you are a part of our community and we wish for you to be as informed about, and as satisfied with our services as possible! If you'd prefer to receive this newsletter in digital form, please contact Emma at emonk@clps.ca to get on the mailing list.

As Community Living Parry Sound wraps up its 55th year and heads into the next, it's important that we recognize and give credit to those who have made 2017-2018 memorable. There has been many significant changes - in our services, our technology, etc., and we thank every single person who stood by us and exercised patience as we worked out the kinks. It is an incredible thing to be a part of and *belong* to a community that cares. It is with this support that we are able to fulfill our mission, ultimately ensuring that every person finds this support in their community, wherever or whatever it may be.

Your PATH to Success

By Jessica McDonald

This summer, 10 participants entered the Job Path program. This program was offered by Community Living Parry Sound (CLPS) in partnership with LINC Employment Services, Candore College, and the YMCA Literacy Services. Each week the group tackled a new challenge related to a different aspect of employment. The course included topics such as team-building and communication, skill discovery, the job application process, health and safety, and job retention.

In addition to the support and direction from a LINC program facilitator, the class was also led by professionals from the community. Luanne Graham from YMCA Literacy Services instructed *Cashier and Customer Service Training*; Cathy Allardyce from ELCO Hospitality instructed *Food Safety*; and Danny Shoebottom from Always Be Safe First Aid and Safety Training instructed a First Aid and CPR course. The program also featured two guest speakers from the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) who spoke about what it means to work while on ODSP.

Nearing the end of the course, the group went on a business tour to Home Depot and Trestle Brewery. While at Home Depot, participants learned about the different departments within the store and the employment roles that keep the store running smoothly. At Trestle Brewery, participants viewed the beer canning line and learned some of the day-to-day tasks required to run a local business.

After all of this hard work, families and supporters gathered to watch participants receive their Job Path certificates and employment awards. These awards were given out to selected participants under the titles of: Leadership, Innovation, Team-building, and Reliability.

The group plans to gather again in October to discuss aspects of the program they loved and also what they suggest can be improved upon. We hope to carry this knowledge forward to the next session of the Job Path program which occurs in February.

Stay tuned!



Participants of the Job Path program completed many different activities - like discovering what's important to you and what employment-related skills you may have.



Participants proudly hold up their certificates after they've completed the 5-week program.





LYNDSAY GRAY

Changing the Conversation

An update on the Good Life in Community Project

Two very exciting outcomes occurred as a result of the August 9th information session: 1) two of the attendees are now signed up to participate in the project, and 2) ideas were floated in regards to the four-part knowledge transfer speaker series, which will be held in the first year of the project. As a result of the brain-storming session, four vital topics emerged: housing, education/employment, technology expo and self-determination/self-advocacy.

Our first speaker series will focus on housing and will be held in town at the Sound Community HUB on October 30th from 5-7:30pm. We will host a panel of four speakers: Mike Romaine, for the District of Muskoka, will discuss the **Gateway Muskoka program**; Mayor Jamie McGarvey will present on his involvement in the **not-for-profit housing sector in Parry Sound**; Tracy Girard, the **DSO Housing Coordinator** for the North/North East Region will discuss her role and **projects that are currently underway in the region**; and we will also welcome Pamela Nelson, the Ontario Works Supervisor with DSSAB, to discuss the **homelessness strategy in the district of Parry Sound**.

The remaining three speaker series are tentatively scheduled as follows: **Education/Employment (April/May 2019)**, **Technology Expo (September 2019)**, **Self-determination/self-advocacy (Oct/November 2019)**. To learn about the project or to attend the speaker series, please contact Project Coordinator Lyndsay Gray (705) 938-0219 or lgray@clps.ca

Housing Forum

Tuesday, October 30th

5:00 - 7:30 PM

The Sound Community Hub
82 Gibson St.

Speakers include:

- Mike Romaine
- Mayor McGarvey
- Tracy Girard
- Pamela Nelson



A Better Life

By Tricia Bain

Like so many social changes that have taken root the seed of change often begins with a person who knows that something is not right and has the courage to say no, and mean it. Founding families of Community Living Parry Sound (CLPS) had the courage to say NO to institutionalizing their sons and daughters which was, at that time, the recommended approach to caring for children with a developmental disability and chose rather to keep their children home in their community. Change takes time. Ontario institutions that housed people with developmental disabilities have only recently closed, in fact Huronia Regional Center in Orillia did not close until 2009.

Thanks to the founding families of CLPS, people with developmental disabilities started living in Parry Sound and going to school with the kids in their neighborhood. Families who helped make this transformative change happen for their loved ones in the Parry Sound district deserve to be honored and recognized for their clear vision and strength of character. From institutions to living in their community with daily support was a giant step away from exclusion, towards integration and living as part of a community. The generation of parents who informed society that their children would be seen and not 'put away', raised the bar for the next generation of parents blessed with a child who has different abilities.

Segregated group homes, day programs for adults, special education classes and sheltered workshops providing unpaid or low paid jobs for adults who live with a developmental disability was a model of life that worked for many people and their families over the past 25 years. Camaraderie among those families and workers involved in building this version of a better life for a vulnerable population was real and deeply satisfying. Some families who receive support services grieve the loss of the connection they knew when day programs and sheltered workshops provided them a rich social opportunity with like-minded people. As Heraclitus, the pre-Socratic Greek philosopher said, "Change is the only constant in life", and what we can hope for in our developmental service work is that in the process of change, we protect what is working well and change what is not (or "don't throw the baby out with the bathwater" as my mother used to say).

Some families over the past 10 years have been advocating for a personalized approach to receiving support for their loved ones with a developmental disability; they have been saying NO to support services that are delivered using a segregated group model. CLPS has embraced this call for change and recognizes the truth it reveals; just because two people both have a developmental disability it does not mean that those two people a) are the same or b) want the same things out of life. Individualized funding such as Passport funding, also recognizes this fact. (Article continues below)

Terry Brenn is one of the founding members of our organization. He fought (successfully) for his son, Michael, to find his place within the community.



Neutral planning and facilitation is a new service helping people to navigate change successfully and it is available through CLPS and the Ontario Independent Facilitators Network. Planning sessions are unique to each person and unlimited in possible ways to support what a person wants for their life, at any stage of life. Neutral Planners have received specialized training to offer this personalized planning process to people CLPS supports and to others on the wait list for services. In order to navigate how to live a better life in community, some people are purchasing neutral planning with their Passport funding. CLPS is also offering neutral planning to other people, using grant funding, to help build capacity within the agency. Over 30 people are benefiting from receiving neutral planning services already and planners are gaining new skills and experience every day.

CLPS offers specialized supports provided by qualified staff and when the community plays its part in every citizen's life (providing for accessible affordable housing, employment and education, for example) innovative services such as neutral planning and facilitation become possible. Change is usually messy and confusing and change involving a group of people even more so. The direct path is NOT an option and what actually creates inspired new results, a better life, is hard work. CLPS has been working hard!

CLPS has neutral planners empowered to help people create a circle of support and facilitate a collaborative, person-centered network to achieve that person's goals. Planners help families consider any means available to achieve people's desired goals. Community Inclusion and Support Facilitators are important allies to people and their circle of support because they actually 'walk the talk' with a person who is working towards achieving the results of their plan. Planning can be focused on one goal, for example planning for a home they want, and can happen at any stage of life. Passport individualized funding allocates an annual amount of money for people to use specifically for planning delivered by a planner.

Individualized funding for services, inclusive housing, employment, recreation, enhanced support using technology, education, and increased social opportunities with people who have, and who do not have, a developmental disability are all areas in the process of changing the lives of people. The lives of people who have a developmental disability, their families and people who work to deliver the highest quality of support services. The path to a better life is not direct, it is not comfortable and it is not always clear; but it is a path that is moving to a better life for people with different abilities and their supporters.



Noah and Danielle reaching new heights atop the CN Tower during the EdgeWalk excursion.



Contact Kim Gauthier for any questions about Passport funding or planning and facilitation services at CLPS.
(705) 746-9330 ext. 241 kgauthier@clps.ca



You are invited to join the Community Living Parry Sound Housing Speaker Series on October 30, 2018 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Parry Sound Community Hub



This speaker series, as a part of the *Good Life in Community: Changing the Conversation* project (funded by MCCSS), will be the first of four in the series and will focus on a variety of topics related to housing in the Parry Sound community and other parts of the province. We will be hearing from guest speakers who are undertaking innovative projects and finding creative solutions within the current housing crisis in communities all across Ontario. Accessibility, adaptations/renovations, affordability, current housing support services, and homelessness reduction strategies, will be some of the topics covered in this speaker series.

If you would like to attend to learn more about housing in our community and beyond, please RSVP to Project Coordinator Lyndsay Gray (705) 938-0219 or lgray@clps.ca by **October 25, 2018**

Years of Service

Community Living Parry Sound is made magical by the people who support it - families, residents of the town, business owners, and staff. On October 1st, three staff members were given Years of Service awards for their tremendous hard work over the years. Congratulations go to the following incredible people we are lucky to work with:

- **Belinda Crawford-Poytress:** 20 years
- **Dawn Cox:** 30 years
- **Jo-Anne Demick:** 40 years



Through LifeShare, Ontario families and citizens offer a nurturing and safe environment for adults with developmental disabilities.

As a home provider, you are making a difference in someone's life. In turn, you can look forward to an incredibly rewarding and fulfilling experience of your own.

Excellent Remuneration Provided.

Ontario.ca/LifeShare

Find out if it's right for you.



Contact us for more information.

(705) 746-9330



We'd love to hear from you!

Is there anything you want to see in future editions of the Community Column?

Do you have any questions or concerns?

Do you want to receive the newsletter via email?

Contact Emma at
(705) 746-9330 ext. 261
or emonk@clps.ca