

MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

IN DUFFERIN-CALEDON



Throughout the past challenging year, community mental health services and providers have continued to support and reach out to many people, individuals and families, through caring and creative ways - sometimes meeting in person with masks on, sometimes by phone, by text or virtually. In so many ways, providers have held hope, showed compassion, pointed to possibility, and offered encouragement while also supporting their own families and colleagues.

So, to all the mental health and health care providers, social workers, community workers, and front-line staff, we celebrate you – and appreciate you!! Thank you for all you have done, and all you are doing!

Upcoming Events...

The Dufferin HS&JCC, in partnership with FTP, is sponsoring a workshop for community providers on Feb. 11th on “Best Practices in Working with Families Experiencing Violence Against Women”. Contact Amanda Brasil at CMHA (brasila@cmhapeel.ca) for further information.

A Shout Out to...

The **CMHA Peel-Dufferin Crisis Team** for increasing crisis services – staffing and hours - within Dufferin during 2020. Working closely with police services and community partners, crisis staff have worked hard to ensure that community members with urgent needs are connected and supported!

The **DAFHT Mental Health Team** for being responsive and flexible in reaching out to many patients struggling with anxiety, isolation or depression, and for bringing creativity and collaboration to the process over the past year. Thank you to team members who innovatively revised the DBT Skills and Overcoming Worry groups to engage participants virtually!

The **DCAFS Child and Youth Mental Health Team** for continuing to offer outstanding service, for responding to the challenges of working with children or youth and their families in creative ways. Three cheers for you!

The staff of **Family Transition Place Team** for their amazing resilience, compassion, and commitment to the clients they serve while adapting services to meet needs. Whether learning to use online resources platforms to connect with clients and students ...or redesigning the layout of the women's shelter so families would have physically distanced space ...we celebrate FTP staff for their commitment and passion!

Hospice Dufferin's small but mighty team for their adaptability and creativity in continuing to provide group programs virtually for those who are palliative, caregivers or bereaved! Through 2020, Hospice Dufferin experienced a 25% increase in referrals!

Did You Know...

- ✓ **Hospice Dufferin is offering a virtual Social Recreation Group on Wednesday mornings - open to anyone in the community who is feeling the effects of social isolation. Please call 519 942-3313 ext. 2 to learn more.**
- ✓ **CMHA Peel-Dufferin's Crisis Team (Dufferin staff) are available from 10 am to 10 pm daily, while Crisis services can be accessed 24 hours a day at 1-877-811-2222.**
- ✓ **CMHA Peel-Dufferin facilitates approximately 20 different groups every week and Single Session Counselling can often be arranged within 24 hours. Access to CMHA services is available by calling 1-877-451-2123.**
- ✓ **DAFHT is facilitating a virtual social support group for older women experiencing loneliness called "Tea Time". Call 519-938-8802 ext. 330 for information.**
- ✓ **DAFHT and CMHA offer a weekly Single Session Clinic (currently phone or virtual sessions) on Thursday afternoons for Bolton/Caledon community members, age 16+. Call 519-938-8802 ext. 401.**
- ✓ **For child/youth mental health and parenting concerns, a phone talk-in session can be easily scheduled through the online booking portal at Dufferin Child & Family Services (dcafs.on.ca)**
- ✓ **FTP's shelter service and space was renovated so that, during Covid 19, women and their children have access to individual units to ensure physical and health safety.**

Reflections...

"The clinicians at DCAFS faced the same challenges as clinicians providing mental health services in other agencies: having no choice but to quickly learn to connect with clients through virtual means; coping with clients' or their own less-than ideal internet connections or devices to use; having to shift platforms as the clients or the agency changed preferences; rethinking therapy approaches and client goals to take account of fluctuating conditions; developing ways to offer group services virtually; all on top of their own struggles and worries related to the pandemic. However, child and youth mental health services may have some unique challenges. Sessions with young clients are less likely to have privacy, more likely to be interrupted by parents or siblings, and often impacted by the needs of others. (We were also surprised to discover that many adolescents were reluctant to connect through video.) As well, our work shifted to be more parent-focused, as parents expressed concern about their kids' stress levels. We also witnessed the impact on families, when some kids did not see a parent for an extended period of time due to health safety decisions for the child and their family. I have been in awe of the way my team took all of this in stride. They created a buddy system, developed and shared resources, and figured out how to flex their hours to accommodate client work, home life, and their own well-being. Through all, they have continued to cheerfully and willingly offer outstanding service to our clients. It has been an honour to accompany them on this journey."

-Catherine Hanenberg, Manager, Child and Youth Mental Health, Dufferin Child & Family Services