

# Care & Share Family Network

## Newsletter - FALL 2018

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**Welcome,** to the first edition of the Care & Share Family Network's quarterly newsletter. Our goal for this publication is to provide information and inspiration to families, friends and caregivers of those with disabilities across the Chatham-Kent and Sarnia-Lambton communities. We truly appreciate the time you have taken to read the included information and hope you enjoy our first issue.

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### **Connected and Empowered!**

The Care & Share Family Network is family and friends of individuals with disabilities. Our network will build connections, encourage positive conversations, share information and learning, and offer a safe place for families to be inspired to dream big



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***"You're never too old to wish upon a star"***

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**The Advisory Committee of the Care & Share Family Network is a small but mighty group of dedicated family members, caregivers and friends of individuals who have a disability.**

**The original Family Engagement Project Steering Committee first met in 2016, with the desire to create an opportunity for local families to come together for support, information and education. Renamed The Advisory Committee, we meet about once a month, to plan upcoming meetings, organize educational events and most noticeably, plan the two special annual events each; the Family BBQ and Picnic at Mitchell's Bay and the annual Sounds of the Season, Holiday Concert.**

**We all have stories to tell and experiences to share, and as a group we want to help families and caregivers in similar situations to come together to share life's challenges and celebrations. This is a network created by families, for families for the purpose of sharing and support.**

**Everyone is welcome to come out to Care & Share Family Network events. If you are also interested in helping behind the scenes planning for our Family Network, please contact Sandy Reilly at 519-627-3133 or [careandsharefamilynetwork@gmail.com](mailto:careandsharefamilynetwork@gmail.com)**

**We would love to have you join us! Let's dream big and let's dream together.**

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### **Annual BBQ A Success**

The CSFN held their 2nd Annual Family BBQ on Saturday, June 16, 2018 in Mitchell's Bay, ON. Approximately 150 attendees enjoyed an afternoon filled with food, games, prizes and an opportunity to network with other families. Stayed tuned for information about our 2019 event.



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## **Happening In The Community**

### **Open House, Sarnia-Lambton**

The CSFN invites to attend our first Open House event being held in Sarnia

When: Wednesday, October 17th, 2018 from 7:00pm - 8:30pm

Where: Community Living Sarnia-Lambton Activity Centre, 1091 Wellington Street, Sarnia, ON N7S 1E5

Who Can Attend: Families, friends and caregivers of individuals with disabilities as well as those they are caring for

Why: We want to hear from YOU! The CSFN would like to hear what YOU are seeking in a supportive family network. This event also provides you with an opportunity to network with other families in your community

Please RSVP by email to [careandsharefamilynetwork@gmail.com](mailto:careandsharefamilynetwork@gmail.com) or by phone at 519-627-0777 ext 2505

## Sounds of The Season

Join us on Friday, November 23, 2018 at 6:30pm for an evening of seasonal music performed by local artists. Free refreshments, crafts and an opportunity to network with other families will follow the show. Please RSVP to 519-627-0777 ext 2505 or by email at [careandsharefamilynetwork@gmail.com](mailto:careandsharefamilynetwork@gmail.com)

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## Meet Our Families

Family can be defined in many different ways and although it seems like such a simple concept, the definition can be extremely complex. The Godfrey Family is a perfect example of how the support, love and unbreakable bond of a family can defy all odds.

### **How did you become aware of the Care & Share Family Network (CSFN)?**

In 2016, I (Linda) was approached directly by my friend and fellow parent advocate Sandy Reilly to become involved with a newly formed committee focusing on families supporting families across Chatham-Kent. Sandy felt that with my life experience and my desire to continue sharing our stories of success and struggle, the information would be a valuable resource to those in a similar situation. That initial conversation resulted in not only myself, but my daughter Terry-Anne as well as my sister Bonnie becoming active members of the Care & Share Family Network Steering Committee.

### **How has being a member of the CSFN helped you feel more connected to other families in the community?**

Terry-Anne's diagnosis has provided us with so many learning opportunities, not only within our family unit but also as individuals. Having a strong support network with the ability to lean on and learn from others in similar situations is so valuable. We wanted the opportunity to share our story and life lessons with others as well as learn from others and their situations. We all want the best, most independent life for our children and loved ones and the CFSN brings families together to promote and support each other through the ups and downs.

**Have you attended any of the monthly meetings and/or events offered by the CSFN?**

We try to attend as many meetings as we can and we have been to the holiday event and BBQ two years in a row. We try to get involved and assist with as much as we can. The BBQ is a lot of fun as we run all the games, our family comes to help too; my daughter, son-in law and my granddaughters, and they all help out. Terry-Anne preforms as Loveable the Clown and rides in her jeep visiting with families and making balloon animals for the kids. It's so much fun and it brings families together that may not otherwise have a chance to meet. The CSFN creates such an inclusive environment you can't help but feel welcome.

We also had the opportunity to attend a couple different conferences on behalf of the CSFN; one was a Family Network conference and the other was recently the Community Living Ontario conference. Both events were such an amazing opportunity to come together with other families and sector agencies and learn from each other about the struggles and successes of caring for a person with a disability, it was absolutely wonderful.

**Is there anything else you would like to share with others about the CFSN?**

It's such a supportive, inclusive group. The CSFN truly is families supporting families. Everyone is there for the same purpose which is to connect with families, friends and caregivers and empower each other to continue Dreaming Big.

*"Inclusion is love in action"*

- The Godfrey Family

**Dream Big**

**The Story of John's Crazy Sock's**

**John's Crazy Socks is a father-son venture inspired by co-founder John Lee Cronin, a young man with Down Syndrome. John's affinity for crazy socks paired with his love of making people smile made their mission clear: we want to spread happiness.**

**John's story is one of perseverance, courage and the inspiration to DREAM BIG!!**

**Click on John's picture to hear John's inspirational story**



*"Diversity is being invited to the party; inclusion is being asked to dance"*

-Verna Myers

# By the numbers...



**www.careandsharefamilynetwork**  
**312 Website visits in last 12 months**



**FAMILY BBQ & PICNIC**  
June 16, 2018

**144 people attended**  
including 30 volunteers!  
300 hotdogs cooked  
8 door prizes & 30 game prizes given

**51 Facebook Followers**  
**49 Facebook Likes**  
October 2018

We highly value your feedback because it helps us continuously improve our newsletter and make it relevant to you, your family and the community. We welcome your thoughts, questions and suggestions. Contact us by phone at 519-627-0777 Ext 2505 or email [atcareandsharefamilynetwork@gmail.com](mailto:atcareandsharefamilynetwork@gmail.com)



Proud Member of Family Alliance Ontario

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