

FAMILY SERVICES of PEEL

EMBRACING CHANGE...



Hello to our New Home on Whittle Road!

Developmental Services Social Platform Connection

The pandemic arrived in a fury and the Developmental Services (DS) team had to quickly assess the exceptionally negative impacts COVID-19 was having on their clients. The situation worsened as lockdown measures were implemented, which meant that they could not connect with their clients in the usual way and their clients' ability to actively socialize and participate in the day programs and other social events that were integral to their psychosocial health and well-being was reduced.

The DS team decided to embark on a mission of finding a way to keep their clients safe, informally engaged, and connected socially. They knew that they had to make use of technology, had to be creative, and come up with a solution. In other words, the DS team and their clients had to **EMBRACE CHANGE.**

So, the Team planned and implemented a virtual program, which debuted as their first **Social Platform Connection** on July 23rd, 2020. The intent was to provide a virtual social connection for clients. On the launch, seven clients participated. Everyone introduced themselves and then played the game, "2 Truths & a Lie", which served as an icebreaker and a way of getting to know a little about one another. The clients participated enthusiastically and reported that they really enjoyed seeing some friends and connecting with others. Social Platform Connection occurs every **Thursday**, from **2pm to 3pm**, and although the number of participants fluctuate from week to week, we continue to thrive as an online community.

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Transforming Lives in Peel

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Quarterly Newsletter September 2020

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In our Clients' Words...



“Thank you for assisting me with my résumé. Your patience and knowledge are greatly appreciated. I did learn a lot and hope to achieve great success with my job search.

I also want to tell you that I really enjoyed your webinars. They are very informative and you really take your time to explain things. You have a very calming and pleasant energy, which made it very easy to listen and learn from you.”

A Message from the Executive Director

I think that we all can agree that this has been an unusual year. We don our masks to do things that once were routine, but social distancing, line ups, and shortages of items are a reaffirmation that nothing is routine. How many times did you have to go back to your vehicle because you forgot your mask?

As an organization, we have experienced tremendous changes during this pandemic. The City Centre Drive building has been demolished and our Employment Ontario office will soon be empty. However, our new home is ready. We continue to exercise caution and follow the dictates of various levels of government to maintain a safe environment. Some staff and clients prefer face-to-face experiences but we must adhere to safety protocols.

We have developed new methods of connecting with each other and the clients we serve but to be honest, I am becoming overly saturated with virtual meetings and communicating mainly via e-mail. You type your thoughts but somehow, between your head, your fingers, and the recipient's eyes, your message becomes confusing or misunderstood. As for virtual meetings, how often did you attend meetings and spend the entire time staring at someone's face? In the pre-COVID-19 days, this was considered rude.

We will continue to move forward and regardless of the pandemic, we still maintain a sense of responsibility to our clients, friends, family, and neighbours. Our grandchildren, great grandchildren and beyond will read about this time and reach their own conclusions about how we collectively dealt with a worldwide crisis, and I trust that they will be proud of how we maintained our humanity.

Embracing Changes in Partner Assault Response Program Delivery

At the onset of COVID-19 we had to close our doors, which meant that in-person Partner Assault Response (PAR) groups were put on hold while we tried to determine the best possible way to deliver the groups online. To ensure clients were kept informed, PAR staff contacted all the clients while performing an inventory checklist of their electronic devices. This enabled us to run the program **virtually** (via WebEx) in very short order. Sounds easy, but it was not.

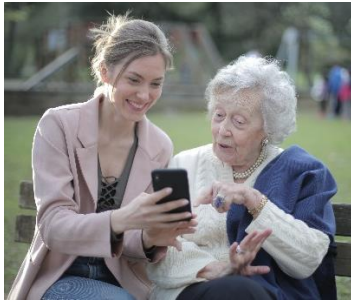
The referral sources, such as Probation and Victim Witness Assistance Program had to be notified, processes were reworked, many e-mails and phone conversations took place, clients were notified of details pertaining to the upcoming virtual group, ongoing e-mails ensured consent/agreements, and an e-transfer account was set-up to facilitate payment of fees. **A quick turnaround helped us to respond to the changes while maintaining services.**

We subsequently switched to **OnCall Health** as a virtual platform and this required orientation and training. Since some clients needed an **interpreter**, the PAR team accommodated them by having them participate in the group at our Employment Ontario office. There are currently four language groups (Arabic, Cantonese, Polish, and Spanish) who come into the office every Tuesday and Thursday, and to ensure safety protocols, all clients and interpreters are (COVID-19) screened upon arrival.



Innovation – The Birthplace of Change

Trains stand idle, buses don't run, ships don't set sail, and planes don't take off. All human movement by land, sea, and air have ceased. Nature re-established its supremacy the moment our predatory species gave it a chance. Animals timidly dare to walk through the streets of cities in the absence of the enemy. Waterways look transparent and the air



appears clear. An unusual and eerie silence has replaced cities' hustle and bustle. The sudden quiet is feared by humans, who feel incapable of living in solitude. All human activity is in a state of latency. Feverish activities have ceased to occur and people are looking inward, for a moment of self-reflection, painful, exhausting and toilsome.

Hence the perplexity, the bewilderment. The President of France warned us, "[We are at war against an invisible enemy](#)," a phrase that soon became viral throughout the world's media. The pandemic is, ultimately, a social phenomenon. Yet, we must ask, have we all been affected equally? Time has shown that seniors are the *most* vulnerable and the significant transmitters; life for them has changed drastically.

During this pandemic, the work of the Peel Institute on Violence Prevention focused on an innovative project for seniors. The [Social Table for Seniors](#) project is a unique initiative funded by the Region of Peel and implemented jointly by Family Services of Peel and the Peel Elder Abuse Prevention Network. This project aims to reduce the impact of isolation among seniors in Peel Region; which was already an issue, only to be exacerbated with COVID-19. Social Tables is building community connections and reducing isolation through the use of social media tools, such as YouTube, WhatsApp, and Zoom.

Community Connectors from the Chinese, Hispanic, Middle Eastern, and South Asian communities are the facilitators responsible for bringing seniors together weekly, using feedback that participants provide as the ongoing format and topics. The four languages seniors can access are Arabic, Hindi, Mandarin, and Spanish. Training is provided to help seniors navigate online and every group decides on the type of social table or club that is best for them, as it pertains to culture and needs. The project is documented through data collection, interviews, videos, and seniors' testimonies. Needless to say, the participants are empowered to showcase their talents and skills as well! [CHANGE and INNOVATION](#) – they usually walk together and Social Tables for Seniors is just one testimony of that!

Article submitted by Monica, PIVP Manager at Family Services of Peel

Embracing Changes in Partner Assault Response Program Delivery

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Sometimes we are forced to embrace changes that might seem impossible but as we have seen with this program, we can find a solution when we are challenged with sudden modifications. Thanks to an invincible team (Anita and Hasina) and the awesome facilitators (Aleksei, Azher, Darryl, Deon, Femi, Kristy, Michael, and Yammie), we are able to work successfully through this pandemic.

Article submitted by Hasina, PAR Coordinator at Family Services of Peel

It's Official!

With the demolition of our City Centre Drive building slated for mid-2020 and the lease expiry of our Employment Ontario office, the planning stages for our big move was underway when COVID-19 hit. We were forced to put everything on hold but are now back on track. [We have officially moved both offices into one location and we're open for business!](#) Once pandemic restrictions have eased, we'll host an **Open House**. So stay tuned for further information.



In other news, our 5-year [Strategic Plan \(2020-2025\)](#) was launched at our virtual Annual General Meeting in June. As a result of the new plan and recent move, we [redesigned our logo](#) and are in the process of rebranding all of our literature.

Marijoy's Food Blog

Food for Change – Montreal Eats

Travelling has been quite a challenge during this pandemic but it doesn't mean that we can't explore our very own country, while supporting the local restaurant industry.

As an avid foodie who loves to travel for exquisite tastes and experiences, I had to visit **Montreal**. As one of Canada's top 3 cities for dining, Montreal is unquestionably a foodie's dream in quarantine and provides plenty of options for diverse food and beautiful views.

Planning a visit? Here's a list of some amazing places to try.

- If you love bagels then you have to visit **St – Viateur Bagel & Café** for their famous baked goods. **All Dressed** and **Cinnamon & Raisin** are my go-tos. Definitely "bae-goals"!
- **Gibeau Orange Julep** is a must! Montreal's most famous drink is



truly a beverage you have to try. It was such a hit with my travel companions that we ended up purchasing a few gallons to take

home! Their poutine and hotdogs were also an absolute delight. "Orange" you glad that I'm "poutine" it out there?

Many of you must know about **Schwartz's – Montreal Deli**. Who knew that something as simple as beef brisket, rye bread, and a slab of mustard could be so heavenly? I'd come "meat" you here again and again.

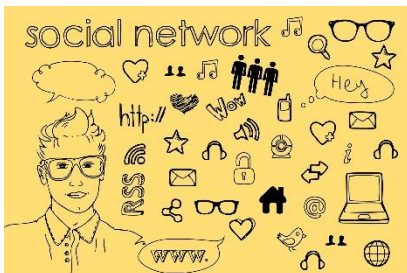
- **Joe Beef** was rated #2 for best restaurants in Canada in 2019. Famously known for their lobster spaghetti, this creamy, buttery and succulent seafood pasta was absolutely "clawsome"!
- **Restaurant Kazu** serves up amazing Japanese bar food, from their tasty Beef Carpaccio and Sashimi to their homemade soft ice cream. I truly enjoyed every dish. The tuna and salmon poke bowl was "fin-tastic", I would even say it was off the hook!

- For Italian fine dining, **Elefanté** was outstanding! We ordered **Pizza Burrata** and **Double Truffle** pasta. The flavours were immaculate. "Carbe Diem"!
- If you are looking for a gorgeous patio view of the old port then you must visit **Terrasses Bonsecours**. I went on a Sunday for brunch and ordered a pitcher of their **White Sangria** and **Grilled Pineapple** (with Greek yogurt and honey). We were feeling quite "grape"!
- **Au Pain Doré** serves up some lovely pastries, desserts, and bistro food. The **Mille-Feuille** and **Paris-Brest** are absolutely decadent. I tell myself that life is as sweet as the desserts you eat!

These were the highpoints of my recent food adventure but there are plenty more eats and treats you must try on your next visit to Montreal. Hope your tummy will be as pleased as mine and you found my food puns divine. Stay safe and happy eating!

Marijoy is a Program Manager at Family Services of Peel and an avid "foodie"

Developmental Services Social Platform Connection (Continued from Page 1)



The facilitators use the ideas presented by clients to create conversations and connection. Some of the activities include trivia, word

search, games, watching a short TV show with a theme, followed by a group discussion, or just having a conversation. The clients are open to trying new things, they enjoy the connection with each other and the uniqueness and diversity of the group.

We continue to have vibrant client participation and positive feedback, which equals to **SUCCESS!**

You never know what can happen when you **EMBRACE CHANGE**.

Article submitted by Sylvia, Assistant Manager at Family Services of Peel

Riddle-me-this...

I have seas without water, coasts without sand, towns without people, and mountains without land. What am I?

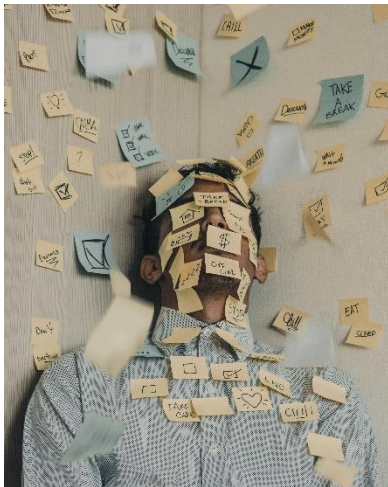
(Look for the answer to this riddle in Issue 4)

Solution to May's Riddle: An echo

Embracing Change – Harnessing Stress

During COVID-19 our stress levels hit a new high. We dealt with transitions, working from home, coping with a virtual world, and missing our work colleagues and friends. How do we embrace this change, manage stress, and use it as a motivator in meeting daily tasks and overcoming challenges? Here are some tips.

Stay Organized Start by prioritizing your tasks. Listing your goals with due dates/action plans is essential for having purpose, staying organized, and reducing stress. There is no better stress reliever than a fully completed to-do list.



Get Ahead of It Track your stressors, which includes identifying situations that create stress and your thoughts and reactions to them. Finding patterns among what triggers your stress can help you better predict the onset of stress and assist you in managing it. Try to complete your most stress-inducing task first, whenever possible.

Wellness When you take care of yourself you become more resilient to life's strains. Regular exercise, enjoying hobbies, and keeping in touch with friends can contribute to developing positive endorphins,

which help counteract the effects of stress. Recharging your mental batteries promotes creativity, staves off burnout, and can help with your job performance upon your return.

Breaks Regardless of what you choose to do on your breaks, don't skip them. Studies have shown that breaks can boost creativity and combat stress by allowing decompression.

Stay Connected When working remotely, we miss out on the impromptu moments with colleagues that can lead to good ideas. In lieu of in-person contact, schedule virtual lunches/breaks or phone coworkers to touch base and collaborate. Talking to your Manager can also be helpful in calming stressors or worries.

Final Thoughts Be mindful when you go out. Not everyone has the good fortune to be able to work from home. For the sake of those who still have to be physically present on the job, be sure to wash your hands regularly, wear a mask/face covering, maintain physical distance, and thank those serving you. **These changing times require us to embrace changes so that we can manage our health and well-being.**

Article submitted by Brenda, H/R Manager at Family Services of Peel

$$\begin{array}{rcl}
 \text{shoes} + \text{shoes} + \text{shoes} & = & 30 \\
 \text{person} + \text{person} + \text{shoes} & = & 20 \\
 \text{ice cream} + \text{ice cream} + \text{person} & = & 13 \\
 \text{shoe} + \text{person} \times \text{ice cream} & = & ?
 \end{array}$$

Monthly Observances

Family Services of Peel celebrates diversity via articles, videos, information sheets, social media, and our glass whiteboard. The following observances will be recognized during the months listed below.

AUGUST

Aboriginal People Month
Civic/Provincial Day (3)
Terry Fox Day (3)
Int'l Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples (9)
Int'l Youth Day (12)

SEPTEMBER

Literacy Month
Int'l Day of Charity (5)
Labour Day (7)
Int'l Literacy Day (8)
Terry Fox Run (20)

OCTOBER

Women's History Month
Int'l Day of Non-Violence (2)
Thanksgiving Day (12)
Int'l Day for the Eradication of Poverty (17)

ANSWER to Vol 11 | Iss 2 Riddle

2 shoes = 10
Male figure = 5
1 cone = 2

Therefore:

1 shoe = 5 + male figure holding 2 cones and wearing shoes = 5 + 4 + 10 = 19 × 1 cone = 2

Remember... multiplication before addition, so:

$$5 + 19 \times 2 = 5 + 38 = 43$$

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Transforming Lives in Peel

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Quarterly Newsletter September 2020

Mission Statement

Through leadership, research, collaboration, and innovation, we support families and individuals in Peel to transform their lives.

Vision Statement

Transforming Lives in Peel

Values

Responsiveness
Excellence, Leadership, Innovation
Service Accessibility and Inclusion
Partnership and Collaboration
Engaging Community
Client Driven
Transparency

What **Diversity** and **Inclusion** means to Family Services of Peel:

Diversity

The mix

Inclusion

Making the mix work

Sandra Rupnarain (Editor)

*Franca Vettese (Co-Editor/
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