

# FAMILY SERVICES of PEEL



## LITERACY

50<sup>th</sup> Celebration Committee members created an "FSP News" milestones video, which was aired at Family Services of Peel's Annual General Meeting in June. To view the video on YouTube, click on the following link: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YXvIirTv\\_H4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YXvIirTv_H4).

### Digital Literacy for Developmental Services Clients

In our modern world, digital literacy is one of the most important forms of communication. Over the past couple of years, this has been more evident, due to pandemic restrictions, which resulted in essential services, like Family Services of Peel (FSP), being required to shift programs and services to a virtual platform.

Everyone's experience of a primarily digital format was different. For some, it was a natural transition since they already had the required skills, and for others, it was much more difficult due to minimal experience with technology.

Based on participant feedback of our Developmental Services Drop-in Group, a few participants didn't have any issues shifting to a virtual group.

However, some individuals found the transition extremely difficult. Fortunately, the process became easier once they were taught how to use Skype by program staff, family, and friends.

In addition, participants really appreciate the virtual group as it minimizes their social isolation and provides an opportunity for clients to interact with group participants and program staff.

As digital literacy continues, it is important that people who work with vulnerable communities teach their clients how to navigate the internet and access support/information, so that they are not left behind.

<https://www.techlearning.com/news/4-tips-for-teaching-digital-literacy>

Article submitted by Daniel, Program Facilitator at Family Services of Peel

## Transforming Lives in Peel

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## Quarterly Newsletter September 2021

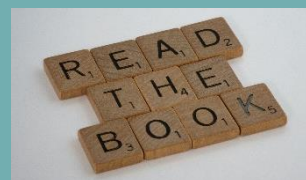
### In This Issue...



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School and library closures during the pandemic resulted in a negative impact for students.

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Literacy is a familiarity with scholarly writings, but also helps evaluate the validity of assertions.

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#### Student Corner

One of our summer students shares her placement experience at the Agency.

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## Editorial (By Sandra Rupnarain, Executive Director)

As we continue to grapple with the disruptive reality of the COVID-19 pandemic, most people are focused on the present and the near future. Will schools stay open? Are vaccines really working? What about my choice to not be vaccinated? When will this nightmare end, and what will the world look like in its aftermath?



During this time of social and emotional unrest, it might be good for us to consider the components and the practice of **compassion**. Lest we think that compassion is empathy, **note that empathy...** this is important... the foundational emotion for human connection, the spark that can ignite compassion, **has a dark side**. Empathy and compassion are very different and they are represented in different areas of the brain. On its own, without compassion, empathy is a danger as it's the brain's wired tendency to identify with those who are to us, close in proximity, in familiarity, and in kinship. And when we empathize with those close to us, those who are not close or are different seem threatening.

When unchecked, empathy can create more division than unity. With empathy, we join the suffering of others who suffer, but stop short of actually helping. With compassion, we take a step away from the emotion of empathy and ask ourselves, "**How can we help?**" Recognizing the differences between empathy and compassion is critical as we interact in these disruptive times. Recognize that:

1. **Empathy is impulsive. Compassion is deliberate.** Empathy is considered the reflexive and automatic part of our psychology, which originates in the emotion centers of the brain. Compassion is considered the reflective and deliberate part of our psychology, which originates in the cognitive centers of the brain.
2. **Empathy is divisive. Compassion is unifying.** Empathy is the tendency to join in others' suffering, particularly those who are close to us, but empathy is limited. When it comes to helping "outsiders" who are suffering, our brain perceives it as hard work and rejects the effort. Compassion is the joining in others' suffering, irrespective of their social or personal identity. It is the perspective that in any person's suffering there is a common humanity.
3. **Empathy is inert. Compassion is active.** Though empathy can feel good at first, it can also make you feel stuck. Compassion, on the other hand, is more constructive. It starts with empathy and then turns outward, with an intent to help.
4. **Empathy is draining. Compassion is regenerative.** Feeling for another person's suffering is depleting over time. When empathy is triggered in the face of another person's struggles, it can bring a relentless bombardment of negative emotions and experiences that, over time, can sap our cognitive resources and take a toll on our mental well-being. Because compassion is intentional and solutions-focused, centered on how to help another person while actively considering the various trade-offs, it is restorative versus draining. And, when we deliver that help, we get the added bonus of a dopamine hit. Helping feels good, and we are motivated to do it again in the future.



(Adapted from lectures by Rasmus Hougaard)

No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted. – Aesop

## Literacy during the Pandemic

As a result of pandemic restrictions, students moved to a virtual learning environment and some are struggling to keep up as they are not receiving much needed time and attention.

Last November, a University of Alberta study of early learners made headlines with the finding that students in Grades 1 to 3, who had struggled with reading prior to the pandemic, were six months further behind after 2020's extended school closures.

According to literacy organizations, the impact of school and library closures was felt hardest by children in lower socio-economic households, in part because of an existing imbalance in home learning environments, which may lack digital devices and high-speed internet. The already inequitable access to books is exacerbated by the removal of these in-person resources.



Unequal access to books during the pandemic is what prompted the *Read On Canada!* Initiative, whereby the Canadian Children's Literacy Foundation partnered with literacy groups and food banks to provide 150,000 books to children in 165 communities across the country. First Book Canada distributes books, as well as essentials, like winter coats and backpacks, to educators who exclusively work with kids in need, through a number of publisher partnerships.

Perhaps we can all bring a book the next time we donate to a food bank.

<https://childrensliteracy.ca/Programs/Read-On-Canada!> | <https://www.firstbookcanada.org/>

*Article submitted by Svjetlana, Program Manager at Family Services of Peel*

## The Importance of Literacy

It is obvious that over time the importance of literacy has grown proportionately to the growth of technology. And while an illiterate individual can currently find some useful occupation, in a few more generations, if our technological innovations continue to grow and spread, it's possible that an illiterate person will have no prospect of finding gainful employment.

Literacy can equally be couched in terms that indicate some level of familiarity with scholarly writings of the past and present; be they scientific, mathematical, religious, historical, prose or poetry. It can fortify one's perspective when evaluating the validity of assertions presented by other entities (e.g., individuals, media, political bodies, institutions, corporations or any other purveyors of possibly suspect information).

For instance, an example of a literate method of evaluating the validity of recently implemented COVID-19 countermeasures would be to research how the medical community had, by convention, established a protocol with which to manage such an outbreak prior to 2019. This might spotlight the consistency of their message over time and how far they may have strayed from their meticulously devised strategy.

The Canadian Pandemic Influenza Preparedness: Planning Guidance for the Health Sector (dated August 2018) is posted on the Government of Canada website, and within this document is heading designation *1.2 Purpose*, which states:

**"First, to minimize serious illness and overall deaths, and second to minimize societal disruption among Canadians as a result of an influenza pandemic."**

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## Marijoy's Food Blog

### *The ABCDs of Eating*

Literacy is prevalent for many as the school year begins. So, in this edition of my food blog, I would like to share with you my ABCDs of eating, which encompasses my recent dining experiences for delicious **Appetizers**, **Breakfast**, **Comfort food**, and most importantly, **Desserts**!

- **Appetizers:** **Nomé Izakaya**, located in North York, serves great Japanese inspired tapas. This place specializes in Sashimi and delectable small plates. My favourite thing about Nomé is their \$1 oyster nights on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Aside from this, one of my other top choices on their menu is **Japa-Burgers**, made with sliced rib eye meat and flavoured with smoky bbq and garlic sauces. It's the sweet, savoury juiciness for me! This place is an absolute go to for sharing.
- **Breakfast:** **Mildred's Temple Kitchen**, situated in the heart of

Liberty Village, is a Toronto staple that serves locally sourced breakfast food. My most desired, and their most famous dish is **Mrs. Biederhof's Wild Blueberry Buttermilk Pancakes**. These fluffy pancakes, served with wild blueberry compote, Lanark



County organic maple syrup, and whipped cream, is definitely worth the wait!

- **Comfort Food:** **Dav's Hotspot** in Mississauga is the epitome of comfort food! **Loaded Mac & Cheese**, **Buttermilk Fried Wings**, **Seafood boils**, **Jumbo Fried Shrimps**, and **Jerk or Cajun seasoned chicken** are all you need

to try at this place. The flavours are just astounding.

- **Desserts:** **Lamanna's Bakery**, located in Scarborough, is known as "Home of the BIG Slice" pizza, however, they also provide some incredible sweet treats. During my recent visit, I had an assortment of pastries, and let me tell you, I was not disappointed in a single one. My recommendations are the **Strawberry Shortcake Donut**, **Nutella Gelato**, **Ricotta-filled Cannoli**, **Lobster Tails**, **Tiramisu**, and **Churros**. So, basically everything. "You dessert it!"

As you explore the GTA for food discoveries, try not to forget your ABCDs of food venturing, and I hope that you get an opportunity to try these mouth-watering spots. As always, happy eating!

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

## The Importance of Literacy (Continued from Page 3)

One should question if the medical community has, in any way, been faithful to its second stated purpose. Similarly, have politicians and media done a profound disservice to the world in not performing their minimal due diligence in assessing the scholarly legitimacy and competence of the individuals making unprecedented restrictive recommendations more apropos of a totalitarian (i.e., communist) state than that of a democracy, without reasonable cause?

With higher levels of the two types of literacy illustrated in this article, comes a more sophisticated historical perspective, which consequently increases one's ability to interpret the validity of assertions and narratives. Literacy helps you contextualize everything and think critically.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/flu-influenza/canadian-pandemic-influenza-preparedness-planning-guidance-health-sector/table-of-contents.html>

*Article submitted by Franca, Office Manager at Family Services of Peel*

## Student Corner

This year marks the third summer that I have been working as a summer student at Family Services of Peel. My time at FSP has been a very experiential and rewarding experience. Not only have I been enabled with the opportunity to pursue an employment position in my related field of study, but also have gotten to connect, support, and give back to the members of my community.

As an aspiring Child and Youth Practitioner, this placement has provided significant insight for me to become more familiar and aware of social services, and has taught me the value of community support.



Family Services of Peel is excited to announce the launch of our **Online Learning Academy!**

The course is divided into 3 modules:

1. Social Determinants of Health and Trauma
2. Trauma Screening Tool
3. Trauma Stewardship

Who should enrol in the Online Trauma Screening Training?

- Doctors
- Front-line Workers
- Human & Social Services Workers
- Nurses
- Police Officers
- Psychiatrists
- Psychologists

To access our Online Learning Academy, visit <https://training.fspeer.org> and select "Online Training" to view available courses.

Another wonderful experience that has been offered to me has been my divergent exposure to the multiple sectors of this agency. From counselling programs to youth employment services, I have been given the opportunity to connect and facilitate programming that targets a diverse population of community members.

I am looking forward to the future opportunities that lie within the Agency and am eager to continue being a part of the "solution" for our society. – *Kas*



### Congratulations to...

- Brenda, promoted to Director of Human Resources
- Franca, promoted to Office Manager

### Welcome...

- Maria, Director of Client Services
- Sharuga, SIL Facilitator

### Stay Tuned...

- FSP – PIVP is launching the Sex Trafficking Prevention and Counselling Services Clinic on October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

Most of us use 'i.e.' and 'e.g.' but did you know that these are actually Latin terms?

i.e. = id est ("that is")

e.g. = exempli gratia ("for example")

## 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 (2)

Int'l Day of the World's

Indigenous Peoples (9)

International Youth Day (12)

### SEPTEMBER

Literacy Month

Int'l Day of Charity (5)

Labour Day (6)

Rosh Hashanah {Jewish} (6-8)

Int'l Literacy Day (8)

Yom Kippur {Jewish} (15-16)

Int'l Day of Peace (21)

Mabon/Autumn Equinox

{Wiccan} (22)

### OCTOBER

Women's History Month

Int'l Day of Non-Violence (2)

World Mental Health Day (10)

National Persons Day (18)

Halloween (31)



"Once you learn to read, you will be forever free."

Frederick Douglass



# FAMILY SERVICES of PEEL

## Mission, Vision, Values and Contact Information

### Head Office

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Counselling Info.

Training Site <https://training.fspeel.org>



<https://www.facebook.com/Family-Services-of-Peel-163434633676036/>



<http://www.linkedin.com/company/family-services-of-peel>



<https://twitter.com/fspeelca>

## Transforming Lives in Peel

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## Quarterly Newsletter September 2021

### 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/  
Graphics/Layout)*