



Family Services of Peel

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Volume 17; Issue 2; May 2025

NEWSLETTER





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FSP QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER: Volume No. 17 Issue No. 2

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Message from the Executive Director Sandra Rupnarain

MDiv; AAMFT|RMFT|FELLOWS

Celebrating Growth, Grounding in Community

For the first quarter of 2025, Family Services of Peel (FSP) has remained steadfast in our commitment to delivering high-impact programs that address the evolving needs of individuals, families, and communities across the Region of Peel. As an organization rooted in equity, inclusion, and compassion, our work has been guided by a shared vision: to foster resilience, promote well-being, and empower those we serve.

From our clinical counselling services to human trafficking, to supports for newcomers through our employment programs, to our seniors' programs and initiatives addressing family violence and developmental disabilities, each program this year has been a conduit for hope and transformation. We continue to serve thousands of individuals, ensuring accessible, culturally responsive services are available to those who need them the most.

A cornerstone is the launch of FSP Commons — a vibrant, multi-functional space designed to strengthen community connection, belonging, and innovation. More than just a facility, FSP Commons is a reflection of our values in action. It will be hosting key programs such as Kitchen Harmony, empowering clients with developmental disabilities to learn life and social skills through culinary arts, Social Tables for Seniors, a gathering space combating isolation among older adults through shared meals, cultural engagement, joyful community building for our Family Education Programs such as Families and Schools Together and Active Parenting as well as professional development sessions, community engagement activities workshops and gatherings. The Commons has become more than a facility—it's a symbol of what's possible when we build spaces designed for inclusion and growth.

In line with our commitment to co-creation and meaningful community engagement, we also undertook a comprehensive community consultation this year. Engaging service users, local leaders, partner organizations, and residents, we listened deeply to the voices and lived experiences of our communities. This consultation is shaping our future direction, helping us ensure that our programs and advocacy remain grounded in the realities of those we serve. It reinforces our dedication to equity, dignity, and systemic change — not just as ideals, but as measurable goals. We're also proud to share that community consultation and board engagement for our new Strategic Plan are well underway. The insights, through team discussions, staff meetings, and frontline reflections—are helping shape a forward-looking roadmap that honours both client needs and staff voices. This quarter also saw the successful negotiation of our new three-year collective agreement. This milestone affirms our shared commitment to a respectful, fair, and values-driven workplace.

As we look ahead, plan our AGM and wrap up this fiscal year we carry the stories of those we serve and the collective energy of the staff who make this work possible into the new fiscal. Let's continue to lead with excellence and care—with one another, and with those who count on us.



International Women's Day Gala

The journey to create our first-ever International Women's Day Gala 2025 was one of dedication, passion, and collaboration. Months of meticulous planning, brainstorming, and organizing culminated in a spectacular evening that honoured the strength, resilience, and achievements of women from all walks of life.

From venue selection—guided by recommendations from our Executive Director—to crafting a memorable program and agenda, our core team, with the invaluable support of community connectors, worked tirelessly to create an unforgettable celebration. The idea for the gala stemmed from a collective desire to host an event that embodied the spirit of International Women's Day.

International Women's Day has its roots in the early 20th century, emerging from the labor movements in North America and Europe. The first official celebration took place in 1911, inspired by the 1908 garment workers' strike in New York, where women protested for better working conditions and suffrage. The day was later recognized by the United Nations in 1977, solidifying its importance as a global celebration of women's achievements and a call for gender equality.

Our team envisioned an elegant evening filled with inspiration, empowerment, and joy. The dedicated planning committee members met regularly to ensure that every detail aligned with this vision. Selecting the right venue was crucial in setting the tone. We sought a space that was not only sophisticated and elegant, but also welcoming and inclusive. The chosen venue featured brightly lit ballrooms, stylish decor, and ample space to comfortably accommodate our esteemed guests.

From the moment people arrived, they were immersed in an atmosphere of warmth and celebration. The enchanting melodies of a live saxophonist greeted attendees, setting the stage for an unforgettable night. The décor featured rich hues of gold and purple, symbolizing strength and empowerment.

Elegant centerpieces adorned the tables, while carefully curated lighting enhanced the celebratory ambiance. The evening commenced with a grand dinner that indulged guests with a curated menu of exquisite cuisine. Conversations and laughter filled the room as attendees, dressed in their finest attire, networked and shared inspiring stories.

A highlight of the night occurred on the dance floor, where the energy was electric. Under dazzling chandeliers and vibrant lighting, guests danced the night away, celebrating unity, progress, and empowerment.

The gala featured a powerful speech by Iqra Khalid MP elected to represent the riding of Mississauga—Erin Mills in the House of Commons of Canada in the 2015. She has made significant contributions in women's rights. Her words served as a reminder of the great stride women have made toward equality. Her speech highlighted the importance of women uplifting and supporting one another.

None of this would have been possible without the tireless efforts of our incredible planning committee: Judy Lee, Shelley Garret, Lyn Caine, Natalia Lancheros, Monica Riutort and Sandra Rupnarain.

Their dedication—along with the support of volunteers, donors, sponsors, and attendees—ensured the success of this event. From securing sponsorships to coordinating logistics, the team worked around the clock to deliver a seamless and impactful experience.

The success of our inaugural International Women's Day Gala laid the foundation for what we hope will become an annual tradition. As we look ahead to future celebrations, we remain committed to honouring, supporting, and empowering women in every way possible. We express our heartfelt gratitude to all who played a role in bringing this vision to life. We can't wait to see what next year's gala has in store! A New Tradition Begins.



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY GALA
WHEN WOMEN RISE, FAMILIES THRIVE
#ACCELERATEACTION #IWD2025



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Click [here](#) for the IWD Recap Video

Program Spotlight: Youth Employment and Skills Strategy (YESS) Program

The Youth Employment and Skills Strategy (YESS) program at Family Services of Peel empowers young individuals aged 15 to 30 by providing the tools and support they need to gain meaningful employment.

Funded by Employment and Social Development Canada, the program focuses on breaking barriers to employment by offering tailored services such as career planning, resume building, interview preparation, and job placements with local employers.

Participants receive hands-on guidance from experienced Career Development Facilitators, who help them identify goals, improve their skills, and gain workplace experience through paid employment opportunities. In addition to career coaching, YESS also supports participants with wraparound services, including mental health referrals, financial literacy training, and mentorship.

Employers also benefit from YESS by accessing a motivated pool of job-ready youth and receiving financial support to offset training and wage costs. This mutually beneficial approach promotes inclusive workforce development while helping young people build confidence and long-term career success.

The YESS program is currently accepting applications from both youth participants and local employers.

If you're looking to start your career journey or are an employer interested in partnering with us, email yess@fsp Peel.org to learn more.

A vertical promotional graphic for the Youth Employment and Skills Strategy (YESS) Program. At the top, it features the Family Services of Peel (fsp) logo and the tagline 'Transforming Lives in Peel'. Below this, the title 'YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS STRATEGY PROGRAM' is displayed in bold, uppercase letters. A text box explains that the program helps youth aged 15 to 30 overcome barriers to employment through tailored support, job placements, and training opportunities. A purple banner below this text reads 'Building Brighter Futures through Skills and Opportunities'. The lower section of the graphic lists three key areas: 'Job readiness', 'Skills training', and 'Job placements', each accompanied by a target icon. Contact information is provided, including a phone number (905-270-2250), an email address (yess@fsp Peel.org), a website (https://fsp Peel.org), and a physical address (5975 Whittle Rd., Mississauga ON, L4Z 3N1). At the bottom, it states 'This project is funded by the Government of Canada.' and features the Canadian flag logo.

54th Annual General Meeting

Family Services of Peel invites you to its 54th Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Wednesday, June 11, 2025, from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM at the FSP Commons (Suite 130, 5975 Whittle Rd., Mississauga, ON L4Z 3N1).

This year's theme, **Leading with Compassion**, highlights our commitment to leading with empathy, understanding, and care as we continue to support Peel's diverse communities. This AGM is especially meaningful as it marks our first **in-person** gathering since the pandemic, providing an opportunity to reconnect, reflect on our achievements, and discuss the future of our programs and services.

Join us for an evening of meaningful discussions, program highlights, and community engagement as we work together to create a more inclusive and supportive Peel.

We invite all stakeholders, partners, and community members to attend and be part of this important event. Mark your calendars and save the date!

Register now: <https://www.zeffy.com/en-CA/ticketing/54th-fsp-annual-general-meeting>

We look forward to seeing you there!



The event card features a dark purple background with teal circular accents. On the left, the text '54th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING' is written in a large, white, sans-serif font. On the right, the FSP logo is displayed in a white box. Below the logo, the event details are listed in white text: 'Wednesday, June 11, 2025', '06:00pm - 08:00pm', and 'FSP Commons, Suite 130, 5975 Whittle Rd., Mississauga L4Z 3N1'. A green button with the text 'Register NOW' is positioned below the address. At the bottom left, a line of text reads 'Our first in-person AGM since the pandemic – be part of this milestone event!'. At the bottom center, the contact information 'For more information: fsp@fspeel.org' is provided.

54th
ANNUAL
GENERAL
MEETING



Family Services of Peel
fsp
est. 1971

Wednesday,
June 11, 2025

06:00pm - 08:00pm

FSP Commons
Suite 130, 5975 Whittle Rd.
Mississauga L4Z 3N1

Register
NOW

Our first **in-person** AGM since the pandemic – be part of this milestone event!

For more information: fsp@fspeel.org



Breaking the Stigma: Mental Health Awareness Month

Mental Health Awareness Month serves as a vital reminder of the importance of mental well-being. In Peel, many individuals experience anxiety, depression, and other mental health challenges, yet stigma often prevents them from seeking help. At Family Services of Peel, we are committed to breaking down these barriers by providing accessible mental health support.

One of the biggest misconceptions about mental health is that it only affects certain individuals. In reality, mental well-being is essential for everyone, regardless of age, background, or economic status. Mental health challenges can stem from work-related stress, financial struggles, trauma, or life transitions. Recognizing the signs—such as persistent sadness, loss of interest, or difficulty coping—can help individuals take the first step toward recovery.

Family Services of Peel offers confidential counseling and crisis support to help individuals navigate their mental health journeys. Through one-on-one sessions, group therapy, and wellness workshops, we create a safe space for healing and self-care. Additionally, we collaborate with community partners to provide culturally relevant mental health resources.

This May, as we observe Mental Health Awareness Month, we encourage you to check in on your mental well-being and support those around you. Simple actions, such as active listening, reducing stigma in conversations, and encouraging professional help, can make a significant difference. If you or someone you know needs support, contact Family Services of Peel to access our counseling services.

Mental health matters, and seeking help is a sign of strength. Let's work together to foster a community where mental well-being is prioritized and supported.

**Mental
health
matters**



Imagination or Self-Reflection?

The Cube Personality Test is a form of projective psychology, where the answers to symbolic questions provide insight into the participant's inner thoughts, feelings, and attitudes.

The test is more about self-reflection than providing definitive psychological analysis. It offers participants an opportunity to explore their subconscious views of themselves, their aspirations, relationships, and challenge.

Answer each of the questions below, at the end, the sample interpretation would be revealed.

The Desert: Imagine a vast, open desert. This is your starting point.

Question: What does the desert look like to you? Is it hot, cold, dry, or are there any specific features?

The Cube: Now, imagine a cube placed somewhere in the desert.

Question: How big is the cube? What material is it made of? How is it positioned? (Is it floating, on the ground, or leaning against something?)



The Ladder: Next, imagine a ladder near the cube.

Question: What does the ladder look like? How tall is it? Where is it in relation to the cube?

The Horse: Now, imagine a horse somewhere in the desert, near the cube and ladder.

Question: What does the horse look like? Is it moving? Is it close to the cube or ladder?

The Flowers or Objects: Some versions of the Cube Personality Test include other elements, such as flowers, clouds, or objects in the desert.

Question: Are there any objects or elements like flowers or clouds? Where are they positioned? What are they like?

The Final Question: The Storm: In some variations, a storm or other natural force is introduced at the end.

Question: Does a storm appear? What happens to the cube, the ladder, the horse, and the flowers during the storm?

The Interpretations:

1. The Desert: The desert symbolizes your current state of mind or life. A vast, empty desert could suggest feelings of isolation or a sense of being at a crossroads. A lush desert or one with vibrant elements might indicate optimism and hope in challenging circumstances.

2. The Cube: The cube represents your self-image or ego. The size and placement of the cube can reveal how you view yourself. A large, prominent cube might indicate high self-confidence, while a small or hidden one could suggest shyness or self-doubt. The material (e.g., transparent, shiny, or dull) might reflect how you feel about yourself internally versus externally.

3. The Ladder: The ladder represents your goals or aspirations. Its size and positioning indicate how you view your ambitions. A tall ladder placed directly beside the cube might show that your goals are closely linked to your self-identity. A small, distant ladder might suggest that your aspirations feel unattainable or disconnected from who you are.

4. The Horse: The horse symbolizes your relationships and emotions. The size, color, and distance of the horse indicate how you relate to others. A strong, close horse might suggest strong, close relationships, while a distant or weak-looking horse might indicate feelings of emotional distance or insecurity in your personal life.

5. The Objects: These objects represent external influences, like friends, family, or external circumstances. Flowers might indicate beauty or positive influences in your life, while clouds or harsh elements could suggest negativity or challenges. The number and position of these items can reflect how much external factors impact your life.

6. The Storm: The storm represents challenges, stress, or outside pressure. How each element of the scene reacts to the storm reflects how you handle difficulties in life. For example, if the cube withstands the storm, it suggests resilience and a solid sense of self. If the ladder falls, it might indicate a fear of failure or a lack of stability in your goals.

The **Cube Personality Test** is not scientifically validated and should not be seen as a definitive psychological evaluation.

It is intended as a fun and introspective activity that can offer insights into an individual's self-perception, emotions, and personal aspirations, but it should be considered one of many tools for self-reflection.

* * *

Here is another quick and easy personality test with two rounds, first choosing colours that you most prefer, then in the second round, choosing colours that you like least.

Access the "Test Colour" here:

<https://www.testcolor.com/personalitytest/personalitytest.php>

Honouring Our Elders: Celebrating Seniors Month

June is Seniors Month in Ontario, a time to recognize and celebrate the invaluable contributions of older adults in our communities. In Peel, seniors make up a significant and growing portion of the population, yet many face challenges such as social isolation, financial insecurity, and health concerns. This June, which is also the World Elder Abuse Awareness Month, Family Services of Peel reaffirms its commitment to supporting seniors through programs that promote social connection, well-being, and lifelong learning.



Our Social Tables for Seniors initiative offers a welcoming space where seniors can engage in meaningful activities, learn about elder abuse, and build friendships. Many seniors face language barriers and cultural isolation. Our program is designed to be inclusive, catering to diverse ethnic communities such as Caribbean, Chinese, and Spanish groups, with plans of extending to other groups in the future.

Beyond social engagement, we advocate for the well-being of seniors through education on elder abuse prevention, financial literacy, and access to essential resources. Elder abuse—whether financial, emotional, or physical—remains a pressing issue. By fostering awareness and providing safe spaces for discussion, we empower seniors to recognize and address mistreatment.

Seniors Month is also a time for families and communities to show appreciation for the elders in their lives. A simple phone call, a shared meal, or volunteering with a senior program can make a world of difference.

As we honor our elders this June, let's work toward a community where seniors are valued, supported, and connected. If you know a senior who could benefit from our programs, or if you're interested in volunteering, reach out to Family Services of Peel today. Together, we can make aging a joyful and enriching experience.



The Epidemic of Loneliness

As we know, one of the largest threats to seniors' well-being is loneliness. The loneliness epidemic among seniors is a growing public health concern with significant emotional, physical, and societal implications. As people age, they often face circumstances that increase their risk of social isolation and loneliness, leading to adverse health outcomes and a diminished quality of life.

The causes of loneliness vary among seniors, but are most often tied to significant life transitions, health challenges, geographic separation, technological barriers and even societal ageism.

Addressing the epidemic is a collective effort. Here's what we can do:

1. Strengthening Social Connections

- Encouraging family and friends to visit or maintain regular communication.
- Building opportunities for intergenerational activities that connect seniors with younger people.

2. Community Programs

- Local senior centers, libraries, and faith-based organizations often offer social, recreational, and educational programs.
- Transportation services to help seniors attend events or appointments.

3. Leveraging Technology

- Teaching seniors to use smartphones, social media, and video calling can help them stay connected.
- Platforms specifically designed for older adults can reduce the intimidation factor of new technologies

4. Healthcare Interventions

- Training healthcare providers to recognize and address loneliness as a health issue.
- Social prescribing programs that connect seniors to community resources.

5. Volunteerism and Engagement

- Programs that encourage seniors to volunteer or mentor can provide purpose and connection.
- Group activities such as book clubs, exercise classes, or gardening groups foster camaraderie.

The loneliness epidemic among seniors is not just an individual issue but a societal one. Building a culture that values older adults and fosters connections can combat loneliness and improve the lives of millions. Small actions—like a phone call, a visit, or even a smile—can make a significant difference.



Embracing Diversity: Pride Month in Peel



June is Pride Month, a time to celebrate the 2SLGBTQ+ community and advocate for equal rights, acceptance, and inclusivity. In Peel, 2SLGBTQ+ individuals continue to face challenges, including discrimination, mental health struggles, and barriers to accessing support services. At Family Services of Peel, we stand in solidarity with the community, working toward a more inclusive and affirming society.

Pride Month is more than just parades and celebrations—it is a reminder of the ongoing fight for equality. Many 2SLGBTQ+ individuals experience higher rates of depression and anxiety due to societal stigma and family rejection. Research shows that youth who are supported in their identity are significantly less likely to experience mental health crises. This is why inclusive services are essential in fostering a sense of belonging and safety.

Family Services of Peel offers confidential counseling, advocacy, and support programs designed to meet the unique needs of 2SLGBTQ+ individuals. Whether it's helping youth navigate their identity, supporting families in understanding and accepting their loved ones, or advocating for workplace inclusivity, our programs aim to create lasting change.

Community support is crucial in making Peel a safer place for everyone. This month, take time to educate yourself, attend Pride events, and use inclusive language. Small acts—like displaying a Pride flag, standing up against discrimination, or supporting 2SLGBTQ+ businesses—help build a more accepting world.

Pride Month is a celebration of love, identity, and resilience. Let's continue working toward a future where everyone, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation, feels safe, supported, and valued. If you or someone you know needs support, Family Services of Peel is here to help.

Origin of the Rainbow Flag

The Pride flag is a powerful symbol of the 2SLGBTQ+ community and its ongoing fight for equality, inclusion, and acceptance. Designed to represent the diversity and unity of the 2SLGBTQ+ community, it has become an iconic emblem worldwide.

The flag was created by artist and activist Gilbert Baker in 1978 in San Francisco. He envisioned the flag as a "new symbol for a new movement" and drew inspiration from the diversity and vibrancy of the LGBTQ+ community. The original colours on the flag had their own meanings:

- **Pink:** Sex
- **Red:** Life
- **Orange:** Healing
- **Yellow:** Sunlight
- **Green:** Nature
- **Turquoise:** Magic/Art
- **Blue:** Serenity
- **Violet:** Spirit

Over time, the flag has evolved to represent the growing inclusivity of the 2SLGBTQ+ movement. For example, a chevron with black and brown stripes to represent marginalized 2SLGBTQ+ communities of color, as well as the transgender community with light blue, pink, and white stripes. So, what is the significance of the flag? Unity, Visibility, Advocacy, Identity, and Impact.

The Pride flag continues to inspire and unite people in the fight against prejudice and inequality. It serves as a reminder of the progress made and the work still to be done for true equality. Whether flown at Pride parades, displayed in personal spaces, or incorporated into artwork and fashion, the flag is a powerful statement of love, acceptance, and resilience.



Honouring the First Peoples: Indigenous History Month

June is Indigenous History Month in Canada, a time to recognize the rich cultures, traditions, and contributions of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. In Peel, Indigenous communities continue to thrive despite historical and ongoing challenges, including the impacts of colonialism, systemic barriers, and cultural erasure.

Understanding Indigenous history is essential to reconciliation. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) outlined 94 Calls to Action to address the harm caused by residential schools and promote healing. At Family Services of Peel, we are committed to learning, supporting, and amplifying Indigenous voices as part of our role in reconciliation.

Indigenous peoples have long upheld traditions of community care, resilience, and environmental stewardship. However, many still face barriers in accessing culturally relevant services, healthcare, and economic opportunities.



This month, we encourage everyone to educate themselves about Indigenous history and current issues. Reading books by Indigenous authors, attending local events, and supporting Indigenous-led initiatives are meaningful ways to show solidarity.

At Family Services of Peel, we aim to incorporate Indigenous perspectives into our work by partnering with local Indigenous organizations and ensuring our services are inclusive and accessible. Recognizing Indigenous land, promoting cultural awareness, and advocating for justice are key steps in building stronger relationships with Indigenous communities.

Reconciliation is an ongoing journey, requiring action from all of us. This Indigenous History Month, let's take the time to listen, learn, and commit to meaningful change. Together, we can create a future that honors and uplifts Indigenous voices.





Are we making progress in terms of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples?

The process of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples is complex and ongoing, involving efforts to address historical injustices, acknowledge systemic inequalities, and promote cultural understanding and respect. In many countries, including Canada, the United States, Australia, and New Zealand, reconciliation initiatives have gained significant attention, but progress varies widely depending on context and perspective.

It begins with acknowledging the history. For example, efforts to recognize the impact of colonization, forced assimilation, residential schools, and land dispossession are crucial. Public apologies, such as Canada's 2008 apology for residential schools, are symbolic but important steps. There are Truth-Telling Initiatives (e.g., Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission) which aim to document the experiences of Indigenous peoples and raise awareness among the broader population. Other key areas include:

Land and Resource Rights

Restitution of land, recognition of treaties, and negotiation of new agreements are critical. Land acknowledgments have become more common, but substantive changes like returning land or granting greater resource control are contentious and slow.

Legal and Policy Changes

Legislative efforts to protect Indigenous languages, cultures, and rights are ongoing. For instance, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) has been adopted by some countries into domestic law.

Cultural Revitalization

Supporting the revival and celebration of Indigenous cultures, languages, and traditions is a key part of reconciliation. This includes funding for education and cultural programs.

Economic and Social Equity

Closing gaps in education, healthcare, employment, and housing is necessary for meaningful reconciliation. Systemic barriers still prevent equitable opportunities for many Indigenous communities.

Community Engagement

Genuine reconciliation requires building relationships based on trust and mutual respect. Listening to and amplifying Indigenous voices is critical.

While there are significant efforts, reconciliation often faces:

- **Resistance and Apathy:** Many non-Indigenous individuals and institutions may be reluctant to engage meaningfully with reconciliation.
- **Tokenism:** Symbolic gestures without substantive action can undermine trust.
- **Systemic Barriers:** Institutionalized racism and historical power dynamics persist, complicating progress.
- **Resource Constraints:** Addressing centuries of harm requires sustained investment and political will.

Reconciliation is not a destination but a journey. Success depends on collective commitment, Indigenous leadership, and active participation from all sectors of society.

Are we truly reconciling?

The answer may depend on whose perspective you ask and the extent to which systemic changes are prioritized and implemented.

Economic Outlook: The Changing Labor Market in Peel

Peel's labor market is constantly evolving, shaped by factors such as population growth, technological advancements, and economic shifts. According to Statistics Canada, Ontario's unemployment rate fluctuated between 5-6% in 2024, reflecting both job creation and economic challenges.

A key concern for many workers in Peel is job security. The rise of automation and artificial intelligence has transformed industries, making some jobs obsolete while creating new opportunities in tech and skilled trades. However, many workers face barriers in reskilling, leading to employment gaps. Family Services of Peel offers employment programs to help job seekers navigate these changes, providing career counseling, resume support, and job placement assistance.

Another significant trend is the rise of remote and gig work. While flexible, these positions often lack benefits and job stability. Many Peel residents, especially newcomers, struggle with underemployment, where they work jobs below their qualifications. Addressing this issue requires better access to job training, credential recognition, and workplace diversity initiatives.

Employers also face challenges in hiring and retaining skilled workers. With an aging workforce and increasing retirements, businesses must invest in training and employee well-being to attract talent. Government programs, such as skills development grants, aim to bridge the gap, but ongoing efforts are needed.

As the job market evolves, continuous learning and adaptability are key. If you are looking for employment support, Family Services of Peel can help. Together, we can build a resilient workforce that meets the demands of a changing economy.



The Impact of the US-Canada Tariff War on the Region of Peel

The ongoing tariff dispute between the United States and Canada has created economic challenges that could significantly impact the Region of Peel, given Peel's strong manufacturing and logistics sectors, the effects of trade tensions between the two countries are particularly concerning for local businesses.



In response to U.S. tariffs on Canadian goods, Ontario Premier Doug Ford recently imposed a 25% surcharge on electricity exports to several U.S. states, including Michigan, Minnesota, and New York. This move aims to counteract U.S. trade measures and highlight the potential consequences of escalating economic disputes. However, such retaliatory actions may have unintended consequences for industries in Ontario, including those in the Peel region that rely heavily on cross-border trade.

One of the most immediate impacts of the tariff war is increased costs for manufacturers in Peel. Many businesses depend on raw materials and components sourced from the U.S., and tariffs raise the prices of these imports. Higher operational costs may result in reduced profit margins, forcing companies to either absorb losses or pass the added expenses onto consumers. This, in turn, could lead to higher prices for goods and services in the region.

Supply chain disruptions are another concern. Businesses engaged in cross-border trade may experience delays due to increased administrative and regulatory barriers. Companies that rely on just-in-time inventory management could face production slowdowns or shortages, further straining their operations. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which form a crucial part of Peel's economy, may struggle to navigate these trade complexities compared to larger corporations with more resources.

The tariff war also threatens employment stability in the region. If businesses encounter sustained financial pressure due to increased costs and trade uncertainties, they may resort to downsizing or reducing investment in workforce expansion. This could impact job creation and economic growth in Peel.

To mitigate these challenges, local businesses may need to explore alternative sourcing strategies, negotiate better deals with suppliers, or advocate for government support. Engaging with trade associations and economic development organizations can also help businesses adapt to the shifting trade landscape. While the full extent of the impact remains uncertain, proactive strategies will be essential for Peel's businesses to navigate the economic turbulence caused by the ongoing tariff dispute.

The Cost of Living: How Families in Peel Are Coping



The cost of living in Peel has risen significantly, putting financial pressure on many families. Inflation has affected everything from housing to groceries, making it difficult for families to meet their basic needs.

Housing remains a major concern. According to RentCafe.com, the average rent for a 2-bedroom apartment in Mississauga is around \$2,691 per month, while in Brampton, it's generally in the range of \$2,200 to \$2,900+ per month as of March 2025, making affordable housing a challenge for many. Families are increasingly turning to shared living arrangements or moving further from urban centers to find lower-cost options.

Food insecurity is another growing issue. Rising grocery prices mean many households struggle to afford nutritious meals. Food banks and community programs have seen an increase in demand. At Family Services of Peel, we collaborate with the Sai Dham Food bank to help families access resources, helping them navigate some of these challenges.

Budgeting and financial literacy are essential skills in today's economy. Families can benefit from workshops on managing expenses, accessing government benefits, and improving financial planning. While the cost of living remains a challenge, resources and community support can help families build stability.

If you or someone you know needs assistance, Family Services of Peel offers programs to help navigate employment difficulties and connect with available resources.



Supporting Newcomer Families: Challenges and Opportunities

Newcomer families play a vital role in the growth and diversity of the Peel region, yet many face significant challenges when settling in Canada. Language barriers, employment struggles, housing affordability, and unfamiliarity with local systems can make the transition difficult. At Family Services of Peel, we provide resources to help newcomers adapt and thrive in their new communities.

One of the biggest challenges for newcomers is employment. Many arrive with professional qualifications but struggle to find jobs that match their skills due to credential recognition issues. Underemployment is common, with many working in survival jobs despite having advanced degrees. Family Services of Peel offers employment support, including resume-building workshops, job search assistance, and networking opportunities to help newcomers secure meaningful work.

Housing is another major concern. With rising rental costs, many newcomer families live in overcrowded conditions or face financial strain. Accessing affordable housing programs and understanding tenant rights can make a difference.

Social integration is equally important. Many newcomers feel isolated, especially those who have left extended families behind. Programs that foster community connections, such as our newcomer support groups and cultural events, help families build relationships and find a sense of belonging.

Education is key for both children and adults. Parents often need guidance on the Canadian school system, while many seek opportunities for further education or skills training. Family Services of Peel offers services to help families navigate these challenges and find the support they need.



Newcomers bring resilience, ambition, and cultural richness to Peel. By providing accessible resources and fostering inclusive communities, we can ensure that all families have the opportunity to succeed. If you or someone you know needs support, reach out to Family Services of Peel today.

Healthy Relationships: Strengthening Family Bonds



Strong family relationships are the foundation of a healthy community. However, daily stress, work demands, financial pressures, and digital distractions can weaken family connections. At Family Services of Peel, we believe that fostering open communication and mutual respect is essential in maintaining strong family bonds.

Effective communication is key to any healthy relationship. Active listening, expressing feelings openly, and resolving conflicts respectfully can prevent misunderstandings and build trust. Families who engage in regular conversations, whether over dinner or during shared activities, tend to have stronger emotional connections.

Quality time is also essential. Setting aside time for family outings, game nights, or even simple activities like cooking together strengthens relationships. In a world where technology dominates, making an effort to unplug and be present can improve family interactions.

Financial stress can be a major source of tension. Open discussions about budgeting, expenses, and financial goals help reduce conflict and encourage teamwork in managing household finances. Seeking financial counseling can provide families with strategies for better money management.

For families experiencing deeper challenges, such as communication breakdowns or unresolved conflicts, professional counselling can provide valuable support. Family Services of Peel offers family counselling services to help strengthen relationships, resolve issues, and improve overall well-being.

Investing in healthy relationships leads to happier families and stronger communities. If your family is facing challenges, know that support is available. Let's work together to build lasting connections and create positive family experiences.

Volunteer Spotlight: Making a Difference in the Community

Volunteers are the heart of every strong community, and at Family Services of Peel, we are grateful for the dedicated individuals who give their time to support our programs. Whether assisting with seniors' groups, mentoring youth, or organizing food drives, our volunteers make a meaningful impact.



One of our dedicated volunteers, Tes, has been part of our Social Tables for Seniors program. "It's rewarding to see seniors come together, share stories, and form friendships," she says. "Volunteering has not only allowed me to give back but has also enriched my own life."

Many of our programs rely on volunteers to provide mentorship, administrative support, and community outreach. Whether you have a few hours a week or want to get involved in a one-time event, there are many ways to contribute.

Volunteering is also an excellent opportunity to gain experience, meet new people, and develop skills that can enhance personal and professional growth.

We encourage individuals of all backgrounds to consider volunteering. Whether you're a student looking for experience, a retiree wanting to stay engaged, or a professional eager to give back, your contributions can create lasting change.

If you're interested in making a difference, join our team of volunteers at Family Services of Peel. Visit our website or contact us to learn more about upcoming opportunities. Together, we can build a stronger, more connected community.

"I don't always find it easy to work with men, but Sam has been incredibly patient and understanding with me, which I've truly appreciated." - VL

"I recently returned to services with FSP, and I'm very happy with the way the staff have treated me since I came back. I was worried they might not want to work with me because I can be quite demanding at times, but so far, the DS team has been very supportive and patient with me." - SH

Be More Than A Bystander

CCWESTT and Family Services of Peel are partnering to offer Ending Violence Association of British Columbia's Be More Than a Bystander training at no cost!

Be More Than A Bystander (BMTAB) is a training and educational program to support organizational and cultural shifts towards more welcoming, healthy, safe and respectful workplaces.

The training is geared towards men who are industry leaders representing employers, contractors, unions, trades training providers, or other trades-related organizations.

The training equips participants with practical tools and strategies to intervene and end cycles of bullying, harassment and violence in the skilled trades industry. BMTAB focuses on addressing gender-based and other forms of bullying, harassment and violence.

The 3-day intensive training engages men to take ownership and play an active role in ending bullying, harassment and violence in their workplaces. Many skilled trades leaders are men, and they have the influence to make change. This training helps them become a leader in creating safer workplaces. Participants learn effective intervention strategies to model in their organizations and are then tasked with sharing what they have learned with other colleagues.

This project has been funded by Women and Gender Equality Canada.



June 16-18, 2025

Family Services of Peel
Suite 300, 5975 Whittle Rd., Mississauga ON





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a big thank you to our Funders

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Our Mission

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

Our Vision

Transforming lives in Peel.

Our Values

Responsiveness

Excellence, Leadership, Innovation

Service Accessibility and Inclusion

Partnership and Collaboration

Engaging Community

Client Driven

Transparency

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