

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2009



Empowerment for families facing addiction and mental health issues.

New Disability Savings Plan

On February 19th 2009, the Consumer/Survivor Information Resource Centre of Toronto located in the Mall at CAMH, held an information session about the *Ins and Outs of Ontario Disability Savings Plan (ODSP)*. Barbara Marwood and Marta Ingus sat at Malcolmson Lecture Theatre, before a group of consumer/survivors, CAMH staff and family members to help demystify the New Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) as well as what you are entitled to on ODSP.

Marta Ingus from ODSP clearly explained the connection between ODSP and the new federal Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP). Canada is the first country in the world to have a Registered Disability Savings Plan that will present families with a way to provide for the future financial security of their loved ones with disabilities. Over time, the RDSP will provide billions of dollars to supplement income and enhance quality of life to hundreds of thousands of Canadians. Any individual that is eligible for the Disability Tax Credit may set up an RDSP even if they are not on ODSP. The process begins by completing Form T-2201, which must be filled out by the individual, parent or guardian, followed by a qualified practitioner. After both sections of the form have been filled out, you must submit the completed form to the Canadian Revenue Agency for Assessment. Following this assessment, the Canadian Revenue Agency will determine whether you are eligible to receive the Disability Tax Credit or not. The government will match what you put in the savings plan up to 300% and is all exempt and not considered an asset by ODSP.

Here is a list of Financial Institutions who have been approved by the Federal Government to issue the plan to Canadians.



Thank You

What a pleasure it is to acknowledge and thank **Frank O'Hara** on behalf of the Family Council, for creating a Family Council website in dedication of his two deceased sons who suffered from schizophrenia. By your own generous commitment you have set an astonishing example and demonstrate the compassion of family members with a loved one suffering from mental illness and/or addiction. We truly can't thank you enough for your invaluable time and efforts. This site will allow us to reach and support a larger mass and for that alone we are forever grateful.

Thank you, Frank.

Family Resource Centre

RM G21 at College Street Site

The Family Resource Centre is a unique volunteer driven program made up of special people who have or have had a loved one with primarily a mental health issue or concurrent mental health and addiction issue. The volunteers in this program understand what it means to love and/or care for someone who is experiencing a mental health and/or addiction issue. Volunteers in this program appreciate that families are often the primary support to their loved one. They recognize how important it is for family members/care givers to get support so that they are in a better position to help their loved one.

Volunteers in The Family Resource Centre have experience in accessing the often overwhelming and complicated mental health system. They share knowledge they acquired while making the emotional and stressful journey of caring for someone with a mental health issue. They offer printed material on CAMH and community services and have a lending library.

PLEASE CONTACT THE FAMILY COUNCIL COORDINATOR,
SUSAN ALLEN, AT 416-535-8501 EX 6499

FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE HOURS

MONDAY 1-5

WEDNESDAY 1-6

A personal story

In my late teens, my brothers and I really started to notice the shifting moods my mother would have on a daily basis. She had always been very entrepreneurial, but gradually her business ideas became more and more bizarre. My mom had always been very successful so we never questioned her business decisions and invested all our family savings into her last idea, which seemed very good, about owning and operating a rental store. Within two years the business had gone bankrupt and my mother had a reputation for ruining weddings and never taking any responsibility. My dad had always hid money in his top drawer and in a desperate attempt to be a success again, my mother stole the money and spend all 600\$ on ribbon at Fabricland that was on sale. She said she had another idea. *“Do you think we are just used to your mother’s behavior and ignoring the fact that she has gone crazy?”*



I still remember my dad asking my brothers and I this question. I realized I had been asking myself this for a long time. We are from a small town up north and gossip had started to about our family and I began hearing stories about my mom everywhere I went. At school, a friend told me that my mom was calling him inappropriately at night. I thought he was just trying

“ . . . my mom had jumped out of the car on Hwy 401 and started running down it. ”

to be funny. A girl told me her mother had to throw my mom out of the flower department of the grocery store because she refused to leave until they listened to her floral idea. I thought she must have been misunderstood. I went to university and left my two brothers and dad behind. I will always feel guilt even though I know I had to leave. My mom would come to the city visit me at school but would be enraged when I asked her to leave after a few nights. She didn’t want my father to know she was there and she didn’t want to go home. My roommates found it funny how my mom would fall asleep everywhere. Everyone found it funny and impulsive when my roommate explained how my mom had jumped out of the car on Hwy 401 and started running down it. I tried to laugh. When I returned for Christmas that

year I realized my father had left and the house looked like a dump. I could barely get through the front door because of all the boxes and piles of paper everywhere. As I managed to make my way in, my youngest brother, 16, informed me there was no running water, and they were sneaking hydro with an extension cord into the neighbor’s garage. He said the neighbors knew but never mentioned it because they felt bad. Here I had been at school, meeting new people, having fun and my brother was living a secret life full of excuses as to why he had to take showers at school. My mother and I got into a fight about my dad and she threw my brother and I who were home for the holidays out of the house with literally nowhere to go. Another year went by and things seemed on the up and up. Power was on, water was on, and my brother said she seemed better but slept a lot. Then I got a call at school that my mom had been arrested and taking to penetanguishene mental hospital. She had run barefoot to a neighbor’s house and when they showed concern she bolted for the car and squealed off. She drove the

wrong way on the highway and called 911 daring them to catch her, and at the same time carving my fathers name into the dashboard of the car. After some time in the hospital, my younger brother and I arrived at the hospital to pick her up for thanksgiving weekend still not knowing what has happened. My mother was pacing in the anticipation of our arrival. The nurses were cold. The doctor asked me to sign that I would return her in 48 hours and that was it. No one told us what was wrong. No one asked where we were taking her. We didn’t know what was wrong with her, how to act, and it had been a year since we had seen her. I don’t think my mom knew what was going on. We took her to her place where she attempted to have a thanksgiving dinner. The turkey ended up on the lawn, my mother screamed that she couldn’t take it and begged to be returned to the hospital early. We were lost. Truly had no idea about what we should do. In a large majority of cases, clients are sent home from the hospital to their loved ones yet in this case there was no discharge plan and we were not a part of any of her recovery. They never asked her if it was ok to include us, which she told me after would have agreed to.

Anonymously donated by a family council member describing how mental illness of a loved one impacted her.

		APRIL 2009							
<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>			
			1	2 Strengthening Families Together 7-9pm @ Humber Regional Hospital, Keele St. Siblings Support 6:30-8:30pm @ MDAO	3	4			
5	6 CAMH: Family Resource Centre 1-5pm	7 Caring and Sharing Support Group 7-8:30pm @ Toronto East General Hospital F.A.M.E 7-9pm <i>Scarborough</i> Centenary Hospital Support Group F.A.M.E 7-9pm <i>North York</i> Family Support Group F.A.M.E 7-9pm Mental Health and the Law: Families	8 CAMH: Family Resource Centre 1-6pm	9 Strengthening Families Together 7-9pm @ Humber Regional Hospital, Keele St. Educational Evening for Family Members 6:00-7:45pm @ 60 White Squirrel Way F.A.M.E Concurrent Disorders Discussion 7:00-8:30pm	10	11			
12	13 F.A.M.E 7-9pm <i>Etobicoke</i> Family Support Group CAMH: Family Resource Centre 1-5pm	14	15 CAMH: Family Resource Centre 1-6pm	16 Strengthening Families Together 7-9pm @ Humber Regional Hospital, Keele St.	17	18			
19	20 Family Member Support 7:30-9:30 @MDAO F.A.M.E 7-9pm <i>Mississauga</i> Family Support Group CAMH: Family Resource Centre 1-5pm	21 Caring and Sharing Support Group 7-8:30pm @ Toronto East General Hospital	22 CAMH: Family Resource Centre 1-6pm	23 Strengthening Families Together 7-9pm @ Humber Regional Hospital, Keele St.	24	25			
26	27 CAMH: Family Resource Centre 1-5pm	28 Caring and Sharing Support Group 7-8:30pm @ Toronto East General Hospital	29 CAMH: Family Resource Centre 1-6pm	30 Strengthening Families Together 7-9pm @ Humber Regional Hospital, Keele St. F.A.M.E 7-9pm The Scarborough Hospital - Grace Division Support Group					

The Schizophrenia Society of Ontario



A REASON TO HOPE. THE MEANS TO COPE.
THE SCHIZOPHRENIA SOCIETY OF ONTARIO
SOCIÉTÉ ONTARIENNE DE LA SCHIZOPHRÉNIE
UNE SOURCE D'ESPOIR, DE SOUTIEN ET D'ENTRAIDE.

Strengthening Families Together, is a FREE 8-week program for families and friends who are providing care and support to a youth ages 14-35 who is experiencing a first episode of psychosis.

Course topics include:

- ❑ What are Psychosis and other related mental illnesses?
- ❑ Coping as a Family
- ❑ Treating Mental Illness
- ❑ Daily Living Tips
- ❑ Dealing with Crisis
- ❑ Understanding the Mental Health System
- ❑ Supporting Yourself and
- ❑ Your Loved One

For Information or to register, please contact:
Leanne Needham
Early Intervention Family Worker
Phone: 416-449-6830 ext. 252
Email: Ineedham@schizophrenia.on.ca

Caring and Sharing Support Group

This is a facilitated group for families and friends of people with schizophrenia.

Time: 7 -8:30 pm
Location: Toronto East General Hospital,
Lecture Theatre (2nd floor, E wing)
For more information, call 416.449.6830 or
Email Ineedham@schizophrenia.on.ca

The Family Association for Mental Health Everywhere (F.A.M.E)

(F.A.M.E.) offers support to families where any mental illness is an issue by providing education, resources and coping strategies. You're not alone. Drop in to a monthly peer-based support group in your area facilitated by F.A.M.E Staff.

Scarborough

Centenary Hospital Support Group

Second Tuesday of the month, 7:00-9:00 p.m.,
2867 Ellesmere Rd., 6th floor.
Parking is validated.

The Scarborough Hospital - Grace Division Support Group

Last Thursday of the month, 7:00-9:00 p.m.,
3030 Birchmount Rd. at Finch, basement
Lecture Hall.

North York

North York Family Support Group

First Tuesday of the month, 7:00-9:00 p.m.,
Ancaster Community Centre, 41 Ancaster Rd.,

Etobicoke / West Toronto

Etobicoke Family Support Group

Second Monday of the month, 7:00-9:00 p.m.,
4214 Dundas St.W., Suite 209.

Mississauga

Mississauga Family Support Group

Third Monday of the month, 7:00-9:00 p.m.,
2600 Edenhurst Dr., Suite 101 (at Dundas & Hurontario).

Concurrent Disorders

Family Association of Mental Health Everywhere

A discussion of concurrent disorders (co-occurring mental health and addiction), research on treatment options and the impact of concurrent disorders on families. An online facilitator-led educational, support group for family members of persons with concurrent mental health and substance abuse problems

Guest Speakers from CAMH Concurrent Disorders Service:

Caroline O'Grady, RN, MN, Ph.D.
Advanced Practice Nurse/Clinical Project Scientist

WJ Wayne Skinner, MSW, RSW
Deputy Clinical Director for Strategic Priorities in the Addictions
Program

Islington United Church

25 Burnhamthorpe Rd. Room 6
(Dundas/Burnhamthorpe)

For more information and to register for this
FREE Etobicoke event please contact:
Mary @ 416-207-5032 X29

Mental Health and the Law: An overview for Families

An overview of criminalization, mental health
law, and the justice process. A presentation of
the SSO's Justice and Mental Health Program.

Guest Speaker:

Jennifer Donath
Justice and Mental Health Program Schizophrenia Society of Ontario

F.A.M.E Scarborough Office

Agincourt Community Services Assoc.
4155 Sheppard Ave East, Suite 100
Scarborough, Ont

For more information and to register for this
FREE Scarborough event please contact:
Paul @ 416-913-2144 or email
paulo@fameforfamilies.com

Mood Disorders Association of Ontario



**36 Eglinton Avenue W. Suite 602
Toronto, Ontario M4R 1A1**

Tel: 416-486-8046

Toll free: 1-888-486-8236

Fax: 416-486-8127

Email: info@mooddisorders.on.ca

Website: www.mooddisorders.on.ca

Sibling Support Group

A psycho-educational group for siblings of
individuals with first episode psychosis and
mood disorders.

Family Members Only

This group is for family members and/or friends
who do not have a mood disorder.

Editor: Jyll Simmons

Please send questions or comments to:

jill_simmons@camh.net

416-535-8501 X 6490

Center For Addiction and Mental Health

Educational Evening for Family Members

The CAMH Family Addiction Service is offering educational evenings for family members and friends who would like to learn more about substance abuse.

- ❑ Understanding Recovery
- ❑ Coping Strategies
- ❑ Treatment Options



White Squirrel Way is an internal street on the CAMH site at 1001 Queen W, btw Dovercourt and Ossington. Multi-purpose room. For Registration Information Please Call: Linda Tait @ 416-535-8501 X 7065

Family Resource Centre

Family Council- For Families



- ❑ Support for families and friends provided by volunteer family members familiar with the mental health and addiction care system
- ❑ Information and referrals related to mental health and addiction problems.
- ❑ Resources- lending library of relevant and current articles, books, magazines and videos for families.

Mondays 1-5pm

Wednesday 1-6pm

Telephone messages are picked up daily

Room G21 at 250 College Street
Toronto Ontario
M5T 1R8
Tel: (416) 535-8501 X 4015

Yes, I'd like to join The Family Council:

Name:

Address:

Email:

Phone Number:

(____) _____ - _____

Please mail to

33 Russell Street
Room 2043
Toronto, Ontario
M5S 2S1



The Secret Handshake

recognizes that peers are well and uniquely equipped to counsel and support others coping with the illness. Members are like-minded and can mentor and share recovery techniques and resources. Most important, we build deep friendships based on mutual

trust and respect, breaking the cycle of isolation, stigma and ostracism.

Many people coping with schizophrenia today do not have the support and skills to reintegrate into the mainstream. They may not be aware of some of the services available to them. We help them navigate the system. They can be very isolated, even in a family setting. Members flourish when they meet regularly with people who are living with the schizophrenia experience.

The Secret Handshake

60 Homewood Ave., Suite 219
Toronto, ON M4Y 2X4
(416) 968-9095

Email: info@thesecrethandshake.ca