

The BCCL BURST

SPRING 2025 VOLUME 09

Brampton Caledon
COMMUNITY LIVING
INTÉGRATION
COMMUNAUTAIRE
Brampton Caledon

905-453-8841

34 Church Street West,
Brampton, Ontario, L6X 1H3

www.bramptoncaledoncl.ca



IMPORTANT DATES

April 18th & 21st BCCL Offices
May 19th closed for the
July 1st public holidays
August 4th

May 3rd 'Art in the Halls'
Opens Caledon
Town Hall

May 6th BCCL Flag Raising
Town Hall Caledon



NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTORS

Sheri Thiffault Chris Fryer
David Marcinek Kim Cunningham
Abigail Afolabi Susana York

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As spring ushers in a season of renewal, it reflects the exciting initiatives taking place at BCCL. We are particularly excited about the launch of the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee, which will foster meaningful discussions and drive positive change across our community.

In February, we had the honour of celebrating both Black History Month and Inclusive Education Month. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who contributed to the BCCL Highlights Inclusive Education and Black History Month Videos, sharing impactful messages.

Looking ahead, we are eager to engage in a variety of upcoming BCCL events, including Community Living Month, which will bring BCCL together in new and inspiring ways.

Wishing you all a safe, uplifting, and inspiring spring season.

Respectfully, *Charles Rego*

BCCL'S NEW EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION (EDI) COMMITTEE



Committee Members:

Abigail Afolabi, Kelly Anderson, Kenna Coleman,
Shannon Devine, Tina Gareau, Bijoy Joseph,
Liesa Kingsland, Erum Nasir, Mercy Ossare,
Jason Rampersaud, Beverley Salmon, Kathleen Simpson

For any questions or inquires directed for the
committee please email:
Edi@bramptoncaledoncl.ca

BCCL is pleased to announce the establishment of its inaugural EDI Committee, formed in January 2025. Comprising employees from various departments across the organization, the committee's first initiative was to craft the following statement:

At Brampton Caledon Community Living, we are committed to fostering a respectful and inclusive environment that creates a safer space, to showcase and celebrate our differences.

We facilitate growth through training, education and recognition of our lived experiences and unique perspectives.

As an organization, we strive to be an ally that embraces our community, empowering voices which drives innovation and equality



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A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dear friends,

After such a long winter, where we were all kept busy shovelling never ending snow, I'm sure you are all excited about the spring sunshine on the horizon.

Brampton Caledon Community Living has accomplished so many milestones this year. BCCL artists were able to show off their creativity and talent with an incredible display at PAMA. We all enjoyed delicious food and friendship at the Open House. It was an excellent tribute to the Rutherford Road location.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank the wonderful staff who work so hard to continue to enhance the lives of so many people. Your commitment, passion, and dedication are an inspiration to all of us.

I hope this spring brings you energy and joy as we spend time in our community and with friends and family.

Carmen Baker
Chair of the Board

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR RETIREMENT GUS



Antonia Okoh, Ajoke Olatunde, Clodet Arthur,
Wosi Olaleye, Sheri Ash, Debra Rose, Deanna Lyver

BCCL would like to extend its warmest congratulations on your retirement. Your dedication and commitment have left a lasting impact on BCCL and, most importantly, on the lives of the people you supported.

CPS CALEDON CONNECTIONS

This Valentine's Day, the ladies' social group at Caledon Connections gathered for a delightful flower arranging class, transforming recycled teapots into stunning floral masterpieces. The atmosphere was filled with laughter and camaraderie as participants enjoyed arranging vibrant blooms while sipping on a delightful assortment of teas and indulging in delectable snacks.



Susan Clarke, Rebecca Hoek, Madeleine Ritlop

Aliky Rallis

Get your income taxes done at a free tax clinic

Do you need help with your tax return? You may be eligible for help at a free tax clinic if you have a modest income and a simple tax situation.



[Get your taxes done at a free tax clinic - Canada.ca](https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/tax/free-tax-clinic/)



Tax Season

EARLYCHILDHOOD EDUCATION

License Home Childcare (LHCC) is an innovative model developed by PIRS that aims to enhance awareness, accessibility, and trust between PIRS (and BCCL) and the licensed home childcare sector. Over the past year, we have fostered strong, supportive relationships with Home Providers through regular visits by designated Resource Consultants and engaging workshops.

Resource Consultants and Home Visitors collaborate to build ongoing relationships and provide support to home care providers. We offer universal supports, professional development workshops for childcare providers, and regular capacity-building initiatives.

Madiha, Nikita and Leila presented **Exploring the Mysteries of Children's Behaviour** workshop this past February with 51 providers in attendance.



Nikita Kowlessar, Leila Chaar, Madiha Jamil




ART EXPLOREATIONS: CREATIVE FUN AT PAMA

On March 12th, BCCL, in partnership with Peel Art Gallery Museum and Archives, hosted an inclusive afternoon of creative fun for children supported in BCCL's MFTD (Medically Fragile Technologically Dependent) Respite and Early Childhood Education department. Children, alongside their families, enjoyed a free tour of PAMA and a creative afternoon of sensory, cognitive and art-based activities. Thank you to the BCCL event organizers: Leila Chaar, Catherine Hernandez, Shafina James, Madiha Jamil, Shilpa Joharapurkar, Robyn Samson, Eden Sullivan, Susana York.

A heartfelt thank you to our esteemed PAMA partnership members—Maureen Couse, Josie Premzell, Sonya Cestra, and Sierra Narine—for their invaluable contributions in making this afternoon a success!



 Susana York

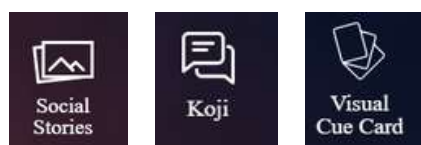


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TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

Sensory and communication challenges are a big issue for many people. KultureCity is an organization that works hard to catalogue and create accommodating sensory data for locations in many cities. This is included in their app, along with easy to use and customizable visual cue cards for communication that can be used for free on Android and Apple phones. Their newest addition is an AI based communication tool that can be used to generate communication trees with visual cues, as well as text to speech audio on the fly for those with difficulty communicating, or who don't use words to communicate.

App - KultureCity

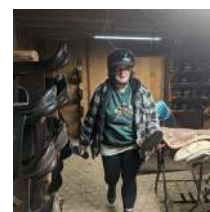


TURNING GOALS INTO REALITIES

Community Living Supports



"Horses are one of my favourite animals on earth! They are magnificent and they are friendly with other animals, which I adore. I did trail riding many years ago and always wanted to learn more about horses. I learned how to groom them, learned how to tack and saddle, while riding which I enjoyed very much! Meadowlarke Stables was an opportunity for growth and therapy to cope with the loss of my father as well. My favourite part of the lessons was when they were ready for my snacks because I felt they cooperated better lol"



Margaret Grist 

 Paula Carrasco

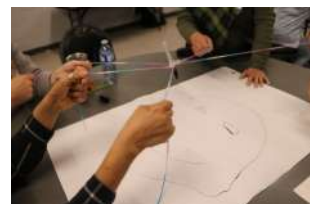
COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION SUPPORTS & SERVICE COORDINATION PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY

Professional Development Day: Learning, Teamwork, and Growth

On February 17th, BCCL hosted a successful Professional Development Day, bringing together the Community Participation Support and Community Resource teams. The day provided a valuable opportunity for managers to share insights about their specific locations, allowing everyone to gain a deeper understanding of the diverse programs offered through BCCL. Engaging team-building activities, including the "Plan a Meaningful Day Auction" and the "Blindfolded Puzzle" communication game, were well received, fostering collaboration and connection. Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive, highlighting the day's success in strengthening our teams and enhancing our shared mission.



Chris Fryer, Rob Brownlee, Cindy Ure, Margarette Guerra, Maddison Pilon, Alma Haynes, Kathleen Simpson, Kayla Shred, Danielle Bonsu



 Martina Giblin

Jermaine Martin, Julie Schick, Howie O'Neill, Sherry Lanktree, Sharon Lennie, Kelly Campbell, Alex Braganza, Dahlia Barret, Brittany Hughes, Lea Sandoval, Stephanie Soupourmas, Angela Atyeo, Sibonne McBean, Jacklyn Balliston, Salma Hossain, Chavon Douglas, Alaba Mustapha, Gurepreet Gill, Erin Pacheco, Cheyenne Barriault, Martina Giblin, Bijoy Joseph, Susan Clarke



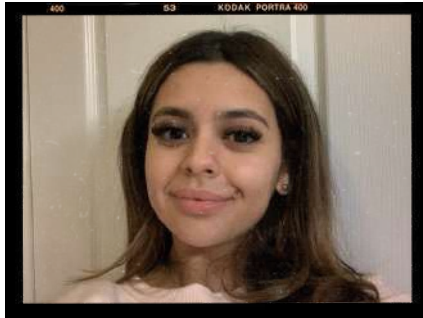
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THANK YOU YORK UNIVERSITY STUDENTS FOR YOUR PARTNERSHIP

HIGHLIGHTING THE IMPORTANCE OF COLLABORATION & EDUCATING FUTURE EDUCATORS

BCCL, in partnership with York University, offers students pursuing their Bachelor of Education opportunities to complete their community practicum placements. Through this partnership, students are mentored and guided in developing and presenting engaging, inclusive, and educational programs.

Students build meaningful relationships with participants, recognizing their unique strengths, and learn to adapt their program delivery to accommodate different learning styles—a valuable skill that will benefit them throughout their careers.



Samantha Caguana



Sergio Villalta

“I partnered with BCCL to complete my Community Placement for my Bachelor of Education degree at York University. During this time, I led the class Celebrity Spotlight and Trivia with Samantha, where I created engaging PowerPoint presentations and fostered meaningful connections with participants. This experience helped me develop valuable life skills, such as adaptability, communication, and leadership, while honing my ability to create interactive and inclusive learning environments.”

Samantha Caguana
CPS Virtual Programs



Ramanpreet Dhaliwal

“My experience in Brampton Caledon Community Living has been a very fun and positive experience. When I first came into the Downtown Brampton location, I was very nervous about not being able to connect with the staff and participants that are attending. Once I stepped into the building I was greeted with a warm welcome from both staff and participants! I have been able to have a great relationship with the staff and have been able to connect with them and getting to know them and their experiences. The participants have been very kind, loving, and have grown close to me every week. Every week I look forward to going in and helping with the programs offered, and they also look forward to my arrival. Even when I'm nervous to teach a program, I always end up having excited and happy participants every week!”

-Sergio Villalta
Brampton Connections

“I had an extremely wonderful experience working at Brampton Connections. The staff members were very welcoming and helpful. We engaged in communication and addressed any questions and concerns quickly and effectively. I enjoyed working with the participants as it provided me various experiences to interact and teach with them. I was given opportunity to observe how lessons were ran and what the centre's expectations were. This enabled me to prepare myself for my own program that I planned and implemented for.”

-Ramanpreet Dhaliwal
Brampton Connections



Harleen Kalkat

“During my placement at Brampton-Caledon Community living, I had an incredible opportunity to work with adults who have special needs. In this role, I supported individuals in various learning programs, and developed my own workshops. This experience not only depended my understanding of inclusive education but also allowed me to build meaningful connections and witness the impact of tailored educational approaches. It was truly rewarding to be part of such a dedicated team that strives to empower individuals and create a supportive community environment.”

-Harleen Kalkat
CPS Fisherman

“My field experience at Brampton Caledon Community Living was a great experience to genuinely create “a world that respects and embraces the dignity, inherent value and rights of all people.” As I have fostered a reflective practice throughout my practicum here, I have been able to build intentional moments and assist in creating a space that is fun, creative, and can foster and promote the fine critical and motor skills. I have made plenty of new friends and fond memories at the fisherman location.”

- Alzeena Lee
CPS Fisherman

THANK YOU YORK UNIVERSITY STUDENTS FOR YOUR PARTNERSHIP

HIGHLIGHTING THE IMPORTANCE OF COLLABORATION & EDUCATING FUTURE EDUCATORS ON INCLUSION



"During my time at Brampton Caledon Community Living, I have had the privilege of working alongside an incredibly dedicated and passionate team that aims to support all individuals in the community. This experience has contributed to my personal and professional growth as I embraced the collaborative environment centered around respect, empathy, and inclusion. These are strong values that I will implement into my future teaching practices. The opportunity to be involved with such a meaningful organization has been truly rewarding and I am grateful for the knowledge and skills I have gained throughout my placement"

-Jessica Marbella
CPS Fisherman.

"My time at Brampton Caledon Community Living (BCCL) has been a truly fulfilling experience. From the moment I started, I felt an incredible sense of warmth and belonging—like I was part of a big, welcoming family. The kindness and support from everyone made each day not only enjoyable but also deeply meaningful. I loved creating lessons each week and finding new ways to engage and connect with participants.

It was inspiring to see how the activities brought out everyone's unique strengths and personalities. I left each day with a real sense of accomplishment, knowing I had contributed to such a positive and inclusive space. I am so grateful for this experience and for the wonderful connections I've made. Thank you to everyone at BCCL for making my placement so memorable!"

- Prabjit Dharmi
Caledon Connections



It has been a truly enriching experience working with Caledon Community Living during my placement. Being part of an inclusive environment has allowed me to grow both professionally and personally. I've had the privilege of working with students, helping to create engaging and accessible learning experiences that cater to their diverse needs.

This journey has reinforced my passion for special education and my commitment to fostering a space where every child feels valued and empowered.

Thank you for this opportunity and for making my time here so meaningful!

-Dolcie Davis
Virtual Programs

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION MONTH



BCCL celebrated Inclusive Education Month by emphasizing the importance of collaboration with community partner educators to promote best practices for inclusion in the classroom. Throughout the month, **BCCL Highlights** videos showcased the perspectives of selected RCs from the ECE department on what Inclusive Education means to them. Special thanks to Eden, Shazia, and Shafina for sharing their insights with us. One featured video highlighted how Shazia Masood teaches young Skai'lar at the Early Years Center to communicate her needs and wants using sign language—an essential skill for fostering inclusion and building meaningful relationships with peers. BCCL also extends its gratitude to Lynda and Harnoorpreet at Alpha Child Care Ltd. for sharing their valuable insights on the role of inclusive education and the critical support provided by BCCL Resource Consultants. Additionally, BCCL focused on the importance of recognizing and addressing Disability Exclusion in the classroom, as it restricts access to opportunities that help individuals with intellectual disabilities thrive on multiple levels.



Shazia Masood



Shafina James



Eden Sullivan



INCLUSIVE EDUCATION MONTH 2025



BCCL, in collaboration with Community Living Mississauga's Early Childhood Education Resource Services team, hosted a professional learning day in February that focused on Cultural Intelligence. The session explored what it means to be a diverse team that navigates various stakeholders daily.



*Brampton Caledon Community Living & Community Living Mississauga, ECE
Department Resource Services Team*



BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2025

BLACK LEGACY AND LEADERSHIP: CELEBRATING CANADIAN HISTORY AND UPLIFTING FUTURE GENERATIONS

Black History Month served as a time for learning and highlighting the contributions of Black Canadians. EDI Chair Liesa Kingsland was featured in BCCL Highlights, where she interviewed BCCL's Director of Family Resources, Margarette Guerra, and BCCL's Director of Community Living Supports, Esther Kamwanga, about the significance of Black History Month. CPRO Susana York also interviewed CPS' Sandra Brown and Rolly Scott on what Black History means to them. Sandra Brown has been a part of BCCL's Community Participation Supports for 20 years and is a passionate advocate, as well as a featured artist in BCCL's Unveiling Ability Exhibition at PAMA. BCCL's EDI Committee and CPS Virtual Programs celebrated the remarkable contributions of Black individuals in Canada and around the world, highlighting these achievements weekly and showcasing their ongoing impact on our country.



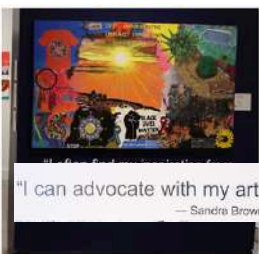
Liesa Kingsland, Margarette Guerra



Esther Kamwanga, Liesa Kingsland



Rolly Scott



I am social and will always greet anyone I meet with a warm smile. Once I meet you I will never forget a face! I am a strong advocate to stop cancer as I lost my brother to this horrible disease. My solidarity also stretches out to each movement which took place during the art piece I was a part of called Timeline: March 2020 – April 2022, that includes "Every Child Matters"; "Mental Health"; "Stop Islamophobia"; "Black Lives Matter"; "Mud Slide", and "Forest Fire In The West". I hope for a better future one day.



Sandra Brown



CONSIDER DONATING TO BCCL THIS YEAR



BRAMPTON CALEDON COMMUNITY LIVING

GOLF TOURNAMENT FUNDRAISER

GLEN EAGLE GOLF CLUB

CALEDON ON

SEPTEMBER 17th, 2025



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