



March 20th marks the first day of spring.

Meeting the information needs of Consumer/Survivors in the Toronto Area

BULLETIN

528 March 16th – 31st, 2015

Consumer/Survivor Information Resource Centre of Toronto, 1001 Queen St. West, Toronto M6J 1H4
Phone Hours: M–F from 9–5 / Drop-in Hours: M–F from 9–4
Tel: 416 595-2882 csinfo@camh.ca <http://www.csinfo.ca/>

Community Announcements

Welcome to the Mainstream:

The Hazards Facing Low-Income People when Navigating the Financial World - Update



Two weeks ago, C/S info staff attended a report launch called, “Welcome to the Mainstream – The Hazards Facing Low-Income People when Navigating the Financial World”. A ton of discussion took place and one of the questions/concerns raised was that there should be a main database where consumers/survivors can share tidbits of financial info/tips/tricks for fellow consumers/survivors. One participant decided to take matters into her own hands and took notes at the meeting and wrote a blog:

Saving Money, Financial Traps,

Solutions: <http://wheelchairdemon.blogspot.ca/2015/03/saving-money-financial-traps-solutions.html>

There are useful links related to banking, collection agencies, saving money, consumer rights, and a whole host of other things.

We have a reference copy of the report pictured to the left at the C/S Info Centre You can also access it online here:

<http://www.houselink.on.ca/resources/research-evaluation-and-reports/> or contact Naomi from Houselink for a hard copy (she has limited quantities) at: 416 516-1422 ext. 250.

As always The Bulletin is YOUR newsletter so if you'd ever like to share info with fellow consumers/survivors or have an article idea, write to us: csinfo@camh.ca or snail mail us at:

Consumer/Survivor Information Resource Centre of Toronto
c/o The Mall
1001 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON
M6J 1H4

We love to hear from our readers!

Employment Works Update

Some of you may remember, C/S Info posted in the March 1st bulletin that the HR department of CAMH is thus far, not committed to re-hiring someone to do the work that Diana Capponi did as Employment Works coordinator. Instead, HR has downloaded her responsibilities among four staff people. I met with VP of HR on January 20th whereby I strongly suggested that there be a meeting with stakeholder organizations that have partnered with Diana in the past, or, who were very familiar with CAMH's strategic plan first implemented in early 2000.

On March 9th we held this meeting. In attendance, peers, consumer/survivor organization leads and allies. It was powerful. People spoke poignantly and advocated for not only a strong commitment and vision for the abysmal state of employment equity both internal and external to CAMH but for accountability and transparency of process. Why is there no plan to hire a new lead for employment works? Finally, and most importantly a call for full engagement on the scope of the work Diana did and development of a future vision. One person said it well: "anything less would be appropriation" (of Diana's work). Stay Tuned. More to come in the weeks ahead.

Lucy Costa
Empowerment Council

Movie Night: Tuesday March 24, 2015

Riverdale Food Working Group

Soup, movie, discussion, and gourmet popcorn. All the ingredients for a great evening. Come enjoy a warm bowl of soup, watch a food themed movie and munch on some gourmet popcorn. We will discuss the movie and how it might relate to the work of the Riverdale Food Working Group. Oh and maybe munch on some more of that gourmet popcorn!

Movie "Dirt"; "Dirt" tells the story of humans trying to re-connect to dirt the living skin of the earth.

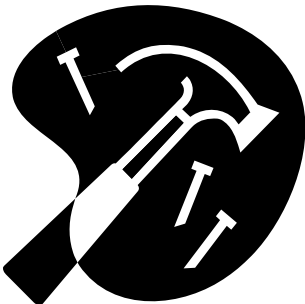
Where: Ralph Thornton Community Centre, 765 Queen St. East

When: Tuesday March 24th, 6:30 pm soup, 7:00 pm movie starts

Questions and R.S.V.P.: contact Maria: 416 392-6810 ext 225 or email: rfwginfo@gmail.com

The Repair Café is Back!!!

Need something fixed? It can be done.



The Repair Cafe is held one Saturday of each month at different locations in Toronto. At this cafe, there are volunteers (free of charge) available for fixing and showing you how to fix, laptops/computers, electronic devices, small appliances, lamps, small furniture, clothing, jewelry and book binding. To avoid line-ups please arrive early.

They will be able to serve visitors who arrive before 1:00 pm.

Visit www.repaircafetoronto.ca for more details.

WHEN: Saturday, March 21st from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

WHERE: Skills for Change, 791 St. Clair West @ Arlington

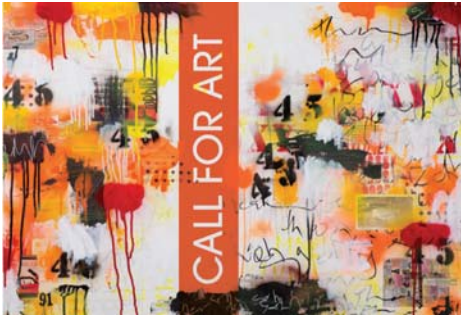
COST: FREE!! (Donations always welcome)

DIRECTIONS: Subway to St. Clair West station & streetcar west to Skills for Change

Hope to see you there or at a future Repair Cafe!

Call For Art

Call To Artists: Workman Arts members or artists who have received services from CAMH



Lorette Luzajic - You Will Attract Cultured & Artistic People to Your Home, 2013, mixed media

THERE ARE TWO WAYS TO SUBMIT:

1. Digital Submission – Please fill out the form here and email the submission form and digital images (150dpi, between 500px and 1500px across) of your work to: sarah_turner@workmanarts.com

OR

2. Drop-off – please bring your art to Workman Arts at 651 Dufferin Street from 9:00 am – 4:00 pm, Monday – Friday

- Artists may submit a max of 2 works. Works may be two-dimensional – max size 48" x 72" and/or three-dimensional sculptures – max size 24" x 24" x 24".

- Artists are responsible to deliver artwork in "exhibition ready" condition (mounted or framed with hanging hardware).

Submission Deadline: Friday May 1st, 2015 at 4:00pm

The exhibition will be held at the Gladstone Hotel, September 16th – October 15th, 2015. More details to follow.



Are You An Artist?



Are you feeling angst about how to sell your art, make money, get grants, network or simply where to find space to do your art work?

**Come to: The Business of Making Art Work Shop
Thursday April 2nd
Houselink Drop-in
(805 Bloor Street West Across From Christie Pits 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm)**

For more info please contact: Amanda Knopfli by phone at: 416 516-1422 or

email: amandakn@houselink.on.ca

Tokens and Snacks Provided





Mad Stories

Consumer/Survivor Story Group

Telling simple stories about everyday life is a nice way to ease up and refresh your thoughts. For those who want to get out and about, meet people and laugh a bit, a story group can get you started. Open to consumers, survivors, and anyone with mad experiences. Come listen or join in.

Mad Stories Connection is not a therapy, writing workshop, or activity group, and is not affiliated with any mental health agency or any university. Our meeting space is wheelchair accessible. This month we meet a week earlier than usual, on:

Tuesday, March 24th, 2015
7 - 8:30 pm OISE, 12th floor (Room 294)
at 252 Bloor St. West - St. George Subway

People liked the everyday stories the most, because the ordinary can surprise you, and there are many ways to tell a story.

Hosted by local writer Erick Fabris. Mad Stories was started last year in in Montreal, Vancouver, and Toronto.

For more information, please email:
madly@teksavvy.com or call: 647 478-4241.

Dance Therapy

416 Community Support for Women invites you to attend their free 'Change Room' Workshop*

Dance Movement Therapy looks at the correlation between movement and emotion. Explore how thoughts and emotions are experienced at a body level using breath, feelings, thoughts and body sensations.

The workshop is led by Dance Movement Psychotherapist, Megan English: www.meganenglish.com.

Thursday, March 19th at 2:45 pm
40 Oak Street (Dundas and Parliament) – Rogers Room
*Open to the public – men and women

Comfortable attire recommended

Please RSVP to Elena at: 416 964-6936 ext. 222 or
email: Elena.s@416community.com
Visit the website: www.416community.com

Computer...Help!



Martha Gandier offers fellow consumer/survivors free over-the-phone or remote online computer advice and support with repairs, upgrades, installations, networking, virus and spy ware scans and clean-ups, coaching in MS Office, Photoshop, etc. She can be reached at: gandier47@hotmail.com or if your computer is in really bad shape, and you can't even email, call the C/S Info Centre at: 416 595-2882 and we'll email Martha for you and then she'll call you. And if you have any computer article suggestions for Martha please let us know!

Below is a message from the folks at CLEO. Some of you may have heard about the changes coming to ODSP during the last forum the TC LHIN CSI network held or elsewhere. For those of you that are working and on ODSP this is particularly important for you as there are changes happening; however there has been a delay on when these new changes will take effect. Read below for more info.

Changes delayed for people on ODSP who work

The Ontario government just announced it's delaying changes to the rules about benefits for people who work while getting income support from Ontario Works (OW) or the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP).

Changes planned for April would now take effect in October 2015.

This month's On the Radar highlights the plan to eliminate the **Work-Related Benefit** and replace it with a new **Employment-Related Benefit**. Advocates say this will result in many people on ODSP getting less money.

How would eliminating the Work-Related Benefit change things for people on ODSP?

How people qualify

The **Work-Related Benefit** gives people on ODSP \$100 each month that they have income from a job, training, or self-employment.

They don't have to apply for the benefit and they don't have to show any work-related costs to get the benefit. If they report net income from work in a month to ODSP they will get the **Work-Related Benefit**.

How this would change

The government has not made all the details about the **Employment-Related Benefit** clear. But they have said that this benefit is supposed to help people who are moving into jobs, not people who are already working.

Someone who is already working might be able to get the new benefit only if they have costs related to an increase in their hours of work or the amount of money they make.

In most cases, to get the new benefit, people will have to work with a counsellor at an employment service agency to come up with a plan to show their ODSP caseworker. The caseworker will decide whether the person can get the **Employment-Related Benefit** and how much they can get.

How much people get

Under the Work-Related Benefit, a person with a disability who is on ODSP can receive \$100 per month, or \$1,200 per year.

They can also receive the benefit if their spouse or another person that ODSP includes in their household earns money. So, for example, if the spouse has earnings in a month, ODSP will pay the Work-Related Benefit. If both of them have earnings in that month, they will get \$200.

How this would change

Under the proposed **Employment-Related Benefit**, people may be able to get **up to** \$1,800 a year. The amount they get will depend on their employment plan. The benefit is to cover costs of moving into work, for example, work clothes, tools, licensing fees.

If their household includes a spouse without a disability, the **maximum amount** their spouse could get is \$1,200 a year.

The right to appeal

Now, if ODSP refuses to give someone the **Work-Related Benefit**, they can appeal that decision to the Social Benefits Tribunal.

How this would change

Caseworkers will make the final decision about whether a person receives the **Employment-Related Benefit** and how much they get. People will **not have the right to appeal** their caseworker's decision to the Social Benefits Tribunal.

Will there be a transition period?

For 6 months after the changes take effect, a person with a disability who is on ODSP and is getting the **Work-Related Benefit** can continue to get it, if they still qualify for it each month.

What are ODSP advocates doing?

Advocates are worried that the loss of the **Work-Related Benefit** will leave many people on ODSP with less money. They're also concerned about the loss of appeal rights because caseworkers will make the final decision about the **Employment-Related Benefit**.

They're working to get the government to reconsider before going ahead with these changes.

For the latest developments, see what the Income Security Advocacy Centre and the ODSP Action Coalition are doing on their websites: <http://www.incomesecurity.org/> and <http://www.odspaction.ca/>

EXPERTS' SCHOLARSHIPS

The 17th Annual Conference of the International Society for Bipolar Disorders in Toronto, June 3rd – 6th, 2015



Recognizing the need for greater integration of programming for clinicians and those with lived experience of bipolar disorder in its meetings, the ISBD will offer 25 scholarships to support attendance of those with lived experience of bipolar disorder at its 17th Annual Conference from June 3-6, 2015 in Toronto, Canada. Scholarships will provide access to the best of the ISBD conference by offering waived registration fees for the activities on June 3-6, 2015, which will include the Opening Ceremony, Awards Program, Celebrity Keynote Speaker, Welcome Reception and three full days of the ISBD Conference.

Eligibility: These scholarships are offered for non-professional attendees to the meeting on a first-come, first served basis. Non-professional status means that you are attending the meeting as a person with lived experience of bipolar disorder or you are attending in support of someone with lived experience. Professionals with lived experience and those applying for CME credit in the program will not be eligible for these scholarships.

What is Covered? Scholarships include only waived registration for June 3rd beginning at 4:45PM and running through June 6th at 3:30PM. Scholarships do not include travel, accommodation, or other incidentals related to attendance at the conference.

How To Apply: Contact the ISBD at paternosterc@upmc.edu to provide your name, advocacy organization affiliation (if applicable), physical address, an email address and phone number. The deadline for applications will be April 6th, 2015.

Notification & Wait List Policy: ISBD will notify successful applicants of their scholarship award by email and registration details will be provided within 5 business days of notification. A wait list will be established after the scholarship spots have been filled and openings will be filled in the order of original receipt. Wait list opening notifications will be sent via the email used in the original application and applicants will have 72 hours to confirm upon notification.

EXPERTS BY EXPERIENCE ... It's the Experience that Makes the Difference

These scholarships will support some exciting new plans ISBD has for the Toronto meeting, which will feature a new "Experts by Experience" track, bringing together those who are experts both by professional and lived experience and creating a personalized experience for these delegates that is blended seamlessly with the other sessions of the conference. In order to make this the best experience possible for our audience, ISBD, under the auspices of our Advocacy Committee, has partnered with the following recognized experts in the field of bipolar support and advocacy: The Mood Disorders Association of Ontario (MDAO), the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA), and the International Bipolar Foundation (IBPF). The programming we are developing represents the collective wisdom of many of the leading organizations in bipolar disorder and is a first of its kind for a conference on bipolar disorders.



Presents:

1st National Symposium on Alternative Mental Health Knowledge

Saturday, May 2nd, 2015 from 8:45 am – 3:30 pm in Moncton, NB

This symposium is being held in Moncton, NB at Wedgewood Hall, 80 Lockhart Avenue. Please register soon as there are only 100 seats available. Speakers and topics include: Rob Wipond (pitching mad: news media and the psychiatric survivor perspective), Brenda Lefrançois (alternative practice in "mental health": building survivor-led services), Lia Tran (can the status quo bring on recovery?), Ed Pomeroy (the yin and yang of a good professional background) and Nérée St-Amand (while the wealthy continue to promise, the poor are still waiting!).

How to register: \$29/person (coffee and lunch included) Registration deadline is April 27th, 2015.

Please Pay by PayPal at: <http://www.ourvoice-notrevoix.com/> (click: DONATION).

Advocacy of Dream Team wins heart and minds: Porter

Toronto Star article

By: Columnist, Catherine Porter Published on Wednesday March 4th, 2015

The Dream Team, a group of advocates who have lived with mental illness, celebrated 15 years of speaking up on homelessness, poverty and human rights.

The Dream Team celebrated its 15th anniversary last week. The party was held beneath the glimmering chandeliers of the 519 Church Street Community Centre's ballroom. There were stuffed canapés and cake, speeches and singing. I left inspired, feeling the world was in good hands.

The Dream Team is a group of people who have suffered mental illnesses. Many of them were homeless at one point. You might have walked by one of them slumped on the sidewalk in the past.

We often think of people like them as shadows — voiceless, powerless. They have cured us of that, and other bitter stereotypes about “crazies” and “bums.”

They formed to lobby governments for [supportive housing](#) so people like them could [get off the streets](#) and live independently.

Their initial approach was simple: Just tell their own stories. You'd be amazed at how effective that is. “I thought I was going to die on the street. I thought I'd freeze to death, starve to death, I wouldn't be able get proper medical attention,” says Phillip Dufresne, a founding member of the Dream Team. “Supportive housing saved my life.”

The truth is we all live in supportive houses. When we're sick, our family members or neighbours make us soup and help get us to a doctor. But the Dream Team is talking about formally supportive houses: group homes or apartment buildings that employ social workers, recreation workers, sometimes cooks.

They sound complicated and expensive, but in fact are cheaper than homeless shelter beds, jail or hospitals. Plus, they provide stability. The Dream Team flipped the rusty logic on its head: first you get housing, then you get better.

Dufresne provides a case in point. Once someone who was “angry all the time living on the street,” he joined the organization's board soon after he moved into an apartment with Houselink Community Homes.

City councillors listened. So did Dalton McGuinty, Liberal opposition leader at the time. He made building supportive housing a campaign promise in next election, which he won. “Everybody was becoming more and more empowered,” remembers

Mark Shapiro, another founding member of the team. Dream Team members now speak at about 10 events a month: conferences, city meetings, hospitals, high school and university classrooms. They've broadened their mandate to broaden minds.

“Students leave their presentation with their mouths hanging open. They had no idea people could live through so much, survive it and be so powerful coming out of it,” says Sarah Harrison, an adjunct professor at Ryerson University who invites Dream Team members to speak to her class on homelessness.

Many students open up in the talks, says Dufresne, and speak about mental-health issues in their own families. “We need a lot more people talking. Then we wouldn't have as much discrimination.”

Merely appealing to people's hearts and minds is often not enough — change requires a crowbar. The Dream Team, represented by the [Human Rights Legal Support Centre](#) (HRLSC), brought complaints to the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal about bylaws in four municipalities including Toronto. In each case, the planning regulations required a minimum distance between group homes — the thinking being that too many people with mental-health issues in one area would be dangerous at worst and bad for house prices at best. All four municipalities have since rescinded their bylaws.

“They are gutsy,” says Kathy Laird, HRLSC's executive director. “They stuck with it. I'm really proud I got to work with them”
At the end of their anniversary celebration, Dawn D'Cruz stood up to present the team's latest work: a Supportive Housing Bill of Rights.

She and other Dream Team members interviewed 82 people living in supportive housing buildings across the city. They discovered disturbing trends. Around 60 per cent reported they'd been threatened with eviction. One in five said they didn't feel safe in their homes. They devised the Bill of Rights to address those issues. Already, the Toronto Mental Health and Addiction Network, which represents 29 housing agencies in the city, endorsed it.

Happy Birthday, Dream Team! Catherine Porter can be reached at cporter@thestar.ca

Volunteer Matters

People and Pets

Pet loving volunteers Are Needed!



Linda really needs volunteers to look after people's pets who are unable to do so because of illness/hospitalization. If you've ever had someone look after your dog or cat while you were unwell, you know how important it is. How about paying the favour forward and doing the same for someone else? If you're interested in volunteering for People and Pets, please call Linda at: 416 824-3435 or email her at her *new* email address: Linda.chamber@bell.net. If you would like to have a look at the website you can at this address: <http://www.peopleandpets.ca/>. Thank you!!

Board Recruitment, Davenport-Perth Neighbourhood and Community Health Centre, Toronto

Deadline: April 1, 2015

More information available on OHPE:

<http://www.ohpe.ca/node/16223>

Things To Do...

Free and Low-Cost Events for March 16th – 31st, 2015

For TTC information call 416 393-4636 (INFO) or visit the TTC website

As changes to events happen from time to time, please call ahead to confirm the time, place and date of the event you wish to attend Thank you!



Arts ~ drop in

Thursday, March 26th from 3:30 pm - 5:00 pm (this event repeats). **Free Arts Drop-in!** Join Lakeshore Arts for a drop-in for all ages. Work with a professional artist and create work that will be displayed in the Smith Zone Gallery on our community wall. Drop-in began Thursday February 12th from 3:30 pm – 5:00 pm and will run for 18 weeks. For more info please email: bebhin@lakeshorearts.ca or call: 416 201-7093. Lakeshore Arts, 2422 Lakeshore Blvd W. All Ages. **Free**

Authors ~ market your book

Thursday, March 26th from 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm. Marketing Your Fiction Book. Join Sharon A. Crawford, author of the Beyond mystery series, and Shane Joseph from Blue Denim Press, for a lively presentation about marketing your fiction book. Sharon will discuss how the synchronicity of series characters and plot affects book marketing, while Shane will outline recent publishing innovations. For more info contact Sharon A. Crawford by email: words@samcraw.com. Beaches Library, 2161 Queen Street East. Adults. **Free**

Creativity ~ ignite it

Monday, March 23rd from 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm, register by: Friday, March 20th. **Creativity Workshop for Adults, Part 1.** In this 2-part workshop, adults will learn practical techniques to ignite their creativity, imagination and innovative thinking. Through creativity exercises and activities such as memoir, creative writing, storytelling and visualization, they will explore their imaginations and get over creative blocks. It is for all people who have an interest in the creative process. Eatonville Library, 430 Burnhamthorpe Road. For more info contact Peggy Ho: 416 394-5270 or email: eaprograms@torontopubliclibrary.ca. **Free**

Monday, March 30th from 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm - register by: Friday, March 27th. **Creativity Workshop for Adults, Part 2.** In this 2-part workshop, adults will learn practical techniques to ignite their creativity, imagination and innovative thinking. Through creativity exercises and activities such as memoir, creative writing, storytelling and visualization, they will explore their imaginations and get over creative blocks. It is for all people who have an interest in the creative process. For more info contact Peggy Ho by email: eaprograms@torontopubliclibrary.ca or by phone: 416 394-5270. Eatonville Library, 430 Burnhamthorpe Road. Adults. **Free**

Dog Therapy ~ dog lovers

Wednesday, March 25th from 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm, register by: Tuesday, March 24th. **Dog Therapy.** Come out and have fun with a friendly dog. Meet Holly from St.John's Ambulance and her owner Craig for laughs and some puppy lovin'! For more info contact Dena Amara by email: amara.dena@gmail.com. Northern District Library, 40 Orchard View Blvd (from the front entrance, turn right to the elevators, 2nd floor, Room # 224). All Ages. **Free**

Garage Sale ~ indoor

Sunday, March 29th from 10:00 am - 2:00 pm. **Swansea Town Hall Indoor Garage Sale.** Come find some treasures or contact us to book and rent a table of your own to sell! 3 Floors of amazing finds, including the HUGE Swansea Seniors Association Sale in 3 rooms on our Ravine level! For more info and to download registration form go to: <http://swanseatownhall.ca/sth/?p=208>, email: frontdesk@swanseatownhall.ca or phone: 416 392-1954. Swansea Town Hall, 95 Lavinia Avenue. All Ages. **Free Admission**

Shakespeare ~ scientific discoveries

Monday, March 30th from 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm. **The Science of Shakespeare.** William Shakespeare lived at a remarkable time, a period we now recognize as the first phase of the Scientific Revolution. New ideas were explored, medieval thinking was giving way to modern thought. In this illustrated talk, award-winning journalist Dan Falk will explore Shakespeare's interest in the scientific discoveries of his time and how he incorporated these new ideas into his plays. For more info phone: 416 394-5120. Richview Library, 1806 Islington Avenue. Adults. **Free**

Shuffleboard ~ fun and relaxing

Tuesday, March 17th at 1:00 pm (this event repeats). **Shuffleboard.** Come out and play a fun and relaxing game of shuffleboard, all levels are welcome. For more info contact Navina or Susan by email: franklinhorner.navina@gmail.com or by phone: 416 252-6822. Franklin Horner Community Centre, 432 Horner Avenue. Adults. **\$3 non-members, \$2 members**

Vegetarianism ~ quick 'n healthy

Tuesday, March 31st at 8:30 pm. **Vegetarianism 101: Easy steps to eating less meat.** Interested in making healthier, more sustainable and more compassionate food choices? The Toronto Vegetarian Association will give you some tips and tools for going vegetarian or reducing your consumption of animal products, and answer all those commonly asked questions like where do I get my protein and what's a quick meal I can pull together on a work night? Free vegan snacks! For more info contact vegetarians of High Park by email: highpark@veg.ca or visit the website: <http://highparkveg.wordpress.com> or phone: 416 544-9800. Jane/Dundas Library, 620 Jane Street. All Ages. **Free**

To subscribe to The Bulletin call the Consumer/Survivor Information Resource Centre of Toronto at: 416 595-2882 or email us at: csinfo@camh.ca.

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