

Happenings

WE BELIEVE IN PEOPLE

Volume 1, Edition 4
(COVID-19) 2020
edition

MOTIVATIONAL CURB SIDE APPEAL

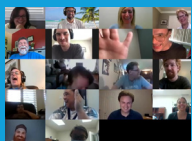
4



RAISE YOUR VOICE COUNCIL

We started the year off right, a sold out venue of 300 people, celebrating at the “Green Heart” dance!

6



STAYING CONNECTED...

CLO turned to technology, specifically ‘Zoom’ to allow face-to-face conversations to continue.

9

THE GREATNESS OF A COMMUNITY



Despite all of the trials and tribulations, we have seen our community pull together like never before.

Community Living Oakville has received many gracious donations during this time and we would like to recognize those for their heartfelt support.

16

A MESSAGE FROM JANET



Thank you for reading this edition of *Happenings*. We are pleased to connect with you again.

The recent past has presented all of us with several new challenges. The Covid19 pandemic has continued to unfold and change how we live our lives, and tragedy in late May brought race based discrimination to the forefront as a critical societal issue that must effectively be addressed. People feel the stress of these un-ignorable issues, and together we strive to create a future that is healthier in every way.

We hope all of you are well, and staying safe. At Community Living Oakville, our number one priority has been the health and wellness of each of the 128 people who are supported through residential services, and our employees. To this end, we have appreciated the support and guidance of Public Health and our government in helping us navigate the need for new protocols and practices.

As people miss the social connectedness that comes from time spent with friends and family, new ways of using technology have enabled us to be together while apart. We now have and use apps that some of us had never heard of. Thankfully, the technology available provides a means of continuing our work, communicating effectively, seeing people we miss, having goods delivered to our doors, and coping with change.

We have been the recipients of kind donations of personal protective equipment. Thank you to the Oakville Community Foundation, PCM Construction, individuals who donated through Canada Helps, or have sewn and delivered masks and the United Way for providing funds to purchase technology for seniors to allow them

to connect with friends and family throughout the pandemic, as well as many useful items for people to enjoy in their homes. Thank you to families who have dropped off dinners on the front porches of homes for people to enjoy, and our Halton partners who all work together to ensure each agency has an adequate supply of personal protective equipment needed at all times. We are very fortunate to belong to a caring community.

I want to express sincere appreciation to our Board of Directors for their support from the outset of the pandemic.

We would normally be gathering and celebrating the success and milestones achieved by our employees in June at an Employee Recognition evening. Unfortunately, that was not possible this year. However, we greatly appreciate the commitment and resilience that is always evident, but now more than ever. Employees have worked hard to ensure safety in homes, and find innovative ways to help each person they support stay connected to friends and family as well as have interesting days.

Our annual golf tournaments have been rescheduled from June to September 24, 2020. We hope to be able to be your hosts again this year, and see you there even if the day looks a little different due to any ongoing restrictions. We will keep you posted as we work with the Royal Ontario Golf Club.

We hope you enjoy reading this edition of *Happenings*, and as always, your input and feedback is welcomed.

Janet Lorimer
Executive Director

IN THIS EDITION

- 3 From a Parent's Perspective
- 4 Motivational Curbside Appeal
- 5 Project SEARCH
- 6 Raise Your Voice Council
- 7 Sarah's Lockdown Success Story
- 7 A Message from a Front Line Staff
- 8 Birthday Celebrations in Dire Straits
- 9 Community Living Oakville launches Online Job Smart Pre-Employment
- 9 Staying Connected while Isolating
- 10 Chef Adam's Recipe
- 10 35th Annual Golf Fundraiser
- 11 Mother's Day 2020
- 12 In the Loop @ Home
- 13 Congratulations Hugo Troccoli
- 13 Years of Service
- 14 Thank You Essential Workers
- 15 In this Together
- 16 The Greatness of a Community
- 17 Thank You #StrongerTogether
- 18 At the Window Looking Out
- 19 Top 10 Ways to Stay Busy during a Pandemic



Click the thumbnail above to watch Katherine demonstrate handwashing techniques. Check out more **In the Loop** videos on Page 12

FROM A PARENT'S PERSPECTIVE



Everyone's daily life changed quite abruptly when COVID-19 came to town. Schools and many businesses closed, travel and social plans were cancelled, many jobs and lives were lost. For months we've been staying home, social distancing, wearing PPE and celebrating special occasions quietly. While I'm guessing that very few like this new normal, most of us understand why these measures are necessary. And understanding has made coping easier.

I've had many sleepless nights since March because my 26-year-old son Ryan, isn't capable of understanding why his life is now different. While he seems to enjoy living within one of CLO's 24-hour care residential homes and has thrived there, coming home for his weekly Sunday sleepover continues to be the highlight of his week. This routine was suspended 3 months ago when the Ministry of Health advised that home visits to family would only be permitted if the family committed to keeping their family member home for the duration of the COVID-19 emergency. While I totally understand this measure, I never thought it would last this long.

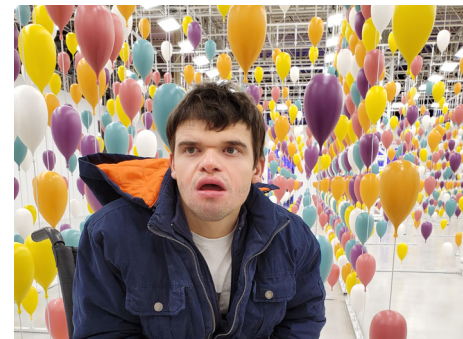
I really miss my son, and while he can't verbalize it, I know he really misses me. It breaks my heart when I'm told that he gives my picture to staff and looks out the window hoping to see my car. He doesn't know that we're in the middle of a pandemic and that his routine has changed in order to keep him safe. All he knows is that his group activities have been curtailed, that he and his housemates are encouraged to spend more time in their rooms, that meals are no longer a group activity,

that the staff are wearing face masks and gloves and that he hasn't seen his mom in a long time. It haunts me that he wonders where I am. I hope he doesn't think that I've left him. I hope he's not sad, stressed, frustrated, bored or lonely. He's completely non-verbal so I can't call and reassure him and staying in touch by Zoom is not an option for us. Unfortunately seeing me on a screen would only confuse and upset him, so it would do more harm than good. Similarly, I can't take advantage of the new 30-minute visits that were introduced on June 1st. If I visited, he would immediately put his shoes on, grab his laptop and expect to be taken home. So I wait, wonder and hope. I ask the staff to hug him for me, which I'm sure they'd love to do, but probably can't due to physical distancing measures.



Since CLO supports 128 people residentially, I know that not being able to see their loved ones has been hard on hundreds of others. So, when I was asked to write this article, I reached out to other parents for their thoughts, as Ryan shares his home with 4 others – Scott, Julie, Thorne and Harrison.

Like Ryan, Scott is also non-verbal and doesn't understand many words. His mother told me that "it has been a long three months without being able to see my son. I normally communicate with him

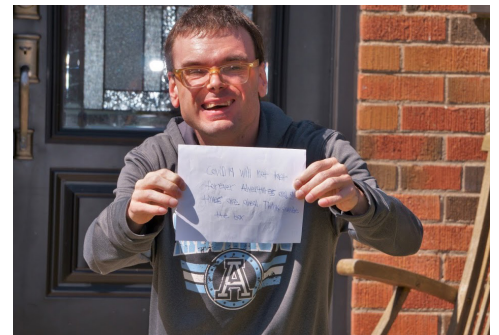


through hugs, kisses, and whispers in his ear, which I have not been able to do. We have done some face time so I can see him, but I think it just confuses Scott even more. He hears my voice, but he can't figure out where his mom's voice is coming from. It makes me even more sad. So, I choose to look at the positive. He is safe, he is being well taken care of, the home has avoided any illness, and he has a wonderful assistant who just adores him. Scott and I are very fortunate".



Julie's parents shared that "sometime in the middle of April, Julie developed some potential symptoms of COVID-19. In an abundance of precaution, she was put in quarantine in her room. On the second day she was tested but unfortunately it was 10 days before we found out the results were negative, and she sat in that room all by herself for nothing. It blew me away how maturely Julie accepted the quarantine. She did not put up a fuss or display any behavioural problems and accepted everything that even I would have found difficult.

(continued on page 17)



MOTIVATIONAL CURBSIDE APPEAL

Change can be difficult, and when that change to routine is accompanied by limitations on where people can go, staying positive is especially challenging. In late March, Community Living Oakville decided to work together to spread cheer within the community by creating and hanging banners with positive and motivational thoughts.

What started with a small idea of spreading hope, became a friendly competition where people worked together to showcase their creativity and artistic skills. What resulted were inspirational messages of “CLO Strong”, “Teamwork makes the Dream Work”, “We can do This” and “Thank You Front Line Workers”. These banners were draped over porches and hung in front windows so that members of the community could see them as they walked and/or drove past.

This Curbside Appeal project is just another way that our amazing community has come together during these trying times!

PROJECT SEARCH

It has been a remarkable inaugural year for Project Search; a year full of challenges and successes both large and small. From the outset of the program launch on September 3rd, 2019, it was clear that the young interns were eager to learn and ready to invest in the program and in themselves.

September was an optimistic time when this busy group of enthusiastic students gathered in a classroom with bare walls. As everyone got to know each other, the discussions quickly became interesting and lively and the walls began to fill up with charts, lists, ideas, and tips about the world of employment and life in general. Students began to reflect on how each of us can impact the well-being of others through the work we do in our lives. One student observed that helping others is the key to “unlocking our motivation” and the classroom walls continued to reflect that notion.

Within weeks, we could see students becoming comfortable in the new environment where barriers began to crumble. Interns anticipated the start of real-life internships where they would gain hands-on learning experience in the workplace alongside a team of mentors, skills trainers, and a special education instructor. That team too, grew stronger every day as the tight collaboration was necessary to move forward. It was clear that Project Search had quickly begun to fulfill its mandate of providing real work experiences in a safe and supportive manner for students (interns) to develop marketable job skills. These skills in turn would lead to meaningful competitive employment in the community upon completion of the program.

Following a successful first internship, we thought it was appropriate to hold a mentor and manager appreciation event. Departments within Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital – Halton Healthcare, were presented with a framed document and small gift with a personal note attached. This token was to express just how important they have been to student success. One intern wrote, “Thank you for making me feel welcomed and part of this community.”

This sense of community at Halton Healthcare is important and became key to interns understanding their role in the patient experience. Understanding our broader role in the mission of any workplace is important and interns quickly saw the impact they have on a patient’s story no matter how insignificant they might have thought their role was. This was part of the growth we saw in the interns as they transitioned into a second internship.



Some other highlights during these months included:

- Participating in real job interviews for their second internships.
- Representing Project Search and raising awareness of the program at six Halton Secondary Schools and presenting to Community Pathways Programs.
- Involvement in an informational video produced by the Halton District School Board to celebrate the success of the program.
- Being part of an exciting Global News story with Susan Hay.

With each internship, students expanded and built on their new skills while growing in confidence and self-esteem. Little did we know at the time, that the increased resilience would be severely tested after March break with the news that we would not be able to physically return to the hospital.

Down but not out as Covid-19 physically separated us, we pressed on by once again adjusting the program to fit a new digital reality. New tools and strategies became essential to the program so we could meet regularly and continue the learning in a new way. We shifted our focus from the practical hands-on to the theoretical and conceptual. We further accelerated job searching skills and learnt how to revise resumes, write cover letters, practice interview skills, and research various employers. Groundwork was laid to liaise with departments that previously expressed interest in hiring interns. Priority was also given to ensure Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) Employment Supports were in place earlier than expected. This led to the natural transition and involvement of the employment team at Community Living Oakville, as they would now become a critical part of the process going forward with job development.

(continued on page 7)

SPONSORED BY:



RAISE YOUR VOICE COUNCIL

What a year 2020 has turned out to be...

We started the year off right, a sold out venue of 300 people, celebrating at the “Green Heart” dance- hosted by the Raise Your Voice Council and the Voice Committee (Community Living North Halton (CLNH)). Everyone danced late into the night to the mixed celebration of Valentine’s Day and St. Patrick’s Day. A big shout out to all the volunteers and special thanks to Justin Moy from Green Pink & Yellow Productions who shot and edited the amazing video!

It was one of our biggest turnouts to date! Little did we know that a short 4 weeks later, we would be physically distancing, and not be able to be within 6 feet of anyone besides those in your household...

Planning was well on its way for the Survivor themed COVE conference, as well as the “Get to Know Us” event with plenty of meetings conducted along with self-advocates at CLNH but unfortunately, due to the pandemic these events remain cancelled. However, we do plan to have COVE in the future when it is safe to do so!

In light of the Covid19 situation and our inability to conduct meetings in person, we were all-eager to continue in some way and agreed that going virtual would be a good solution until restrictions were eased.

The Raise Your Voice Council has connected through the virtual world and our first meeting was a great success. The council has come up with some creative ways to keep social aspects of the council going. The first being a virtual “Name That Tune” with a focus on Pop music!

The Raise Your Voice Council is a group of self-advocates who aim to promote greater awareness of the rights of people with developmental disabilities. The council is appreciative of the financial support from Oakville Community Foundation specifically the Petrus Fund and the Alexander and Bernice DeMaio Foundation Fund that has generously approved a recent grant to continue the important work of the council.

Please visit link below to watch the Raise Your Voice Council Green Heart event:

<https://youtu.be/U-n2izJvxuc>



Visit the Raise Your Voice Council Facebook page (www.facebook.com/raiseyourvoicecouncil) for the latest information and photos from past events.

Would you like to join the Raise Your Voice Council or have any questions?

Talk to any of our members or email Hugo Troccoli at hugo.troccoli@oakcl.org



PROJECT SEARCH (CONT'D)

To say the year has been 'marked by change' would be an understatement, but we look forward with optimism to a summer of planning and preparation, as well as excitement for our next launch of Project Search in September of 2020. We anticipate forging ahead into 2021 with a new group of enthusiastic students full of promise and we have already begun getting to know one another.

We look forward to seeing the current students graduate and succeed in their transition to work after completing Project Search. It is our greatest hope that their newly acquired skills and increased independence will continue as they find meaningful employment in the future. With that said, we are excited to announce and to celebrate with Lucas – the first intern to secure employment (and did so even before the program was finished). Lucas excelled in his Food Services internship. As he was eager to work in this area in the future, we were so pleased to hear that he secured a position within the Food Services department at Halton Healthcare's Georgetown Hospital. We are confident that this is just the first of many success stories for our Project Search Interns.

It's seems appropriate to end with the thoughtful words we received from Lucas's parents on his first day of his new job:

"We want to take this opportunity to thank you for all your hard work with Lucas this year. Today he started his new job and it wouldn't have happened without everyone's support and commitment to him! He has started a new milestone in his life today and has made a big step toward his independence. Thanks to all of you and Project Search. We will forever be grateful."

Visit www.projectsearchcanada.org for more information about Project SEARCH Canada

SARAH'S LOCKDOWN SUCCESS STORY

What do you do when you move into a new home and one month later you are told to #stayhome? Well there are 2 things that you can do. You can go into a slump or you can decide to take the bull by the horns and make the best out of an uncharted situation. For Sarah, she opted for the latter. She figured there was no better time to work on a healthier lifestyle.

Sarah moved to her new home in February - right before words like Covid-19, hand sanitizer and social and physical distancing became part of our regular verbiage. She had big plans when she moved, however many of those plans had to be put on hold while the world adjusted to a new normal. She wanted and needed a plan to break the monotony of staying home. Sarah reached out to her support team for help with creating a plan at improving her lifestyle.

What better way to keep the mind fresh, than to move a little more and eat healthy. Sarah started her health journey by developing a walking schedule. First it was on the treadmill that she has at home. As the days went by, her duration increased as did her speed. When the nicer weather came upon us, Sarah ventured outside. As every



week went by, she could see and feel her progress. Sarah slowly started increasing healthy options in her food choices. She is now feeling a pep in her step.

As Sarah was also feeling a little isolated from her friends, she decided to purchase a tablet and is a regular on Zoom sessions. Now, she can connect with her friends and her boyfriend Greg despite times of physical distancing.

Sarah feels good about her success and can't wait to return to some of the activities she enjoys such as swimming and bowling. Covid-19 changed so much in her life and some changes can still be difficult however, Sarah was able to find small victories in the midst of it all.

Next up, tending to the backyard vegetable garden!

A MESSAGE FROM A FRONT LINE STAFF

Community Living Oakville has always given amazing support to its staff members whenever there is a need. However, in my opinion the organization has gone above and beyond during this COVID-19 pandemic.

The organization has shown great support in many different ways by ensuring the people we support and their staff are safe in all of our programs. They did this by ensuring our programs have enough PPE supplies, dropping off food and household items, receiving encouraging phone calls every weekend from different managers. This has gone a long way and is much appreciated. Working together we have become a more united team.



On behalf of staff and the people we support, we say thank you in all different forms: 'Medaase', Ese adupe, Merci beaucoup, Gracias, THANK YOU. Keep it up because your on-going support has been noticed and it is much appreciated!

Thank you,

Akua

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS IN DIRE STRAITS



COVID Birthdays. The new uncelebration – anyone celebrating a birthday during this time of social restriction has the honour and distinction of having a ‘COVID Birthday’ – a social landmark traditionally celebrated, but these days a mark of a birthday (un) acknowledged in isolation. That was unacceptable to James Montague – a social activist who was determined not to have these vital moments slip silently by.



A great day for a great guy!

Who would think drive-by birthdays would be the way to go? The 2020 pandemic provided an opportunity to push creativity beyond limits. Neighborhoods and communities everywhere refused to be silenced and participated in birthday drive-by's to bring joy and acknowledgement to every individual – especially during these challenging times.

James Montague had a vision - to facilitate birthday drive-by's for the people supported at Community Living Oakville. This was organized in collaboration with the Canadian National Rail Police as part of an initiative to contribute to community and support people. A welcome gesture when some days can be bleak and uncertain.

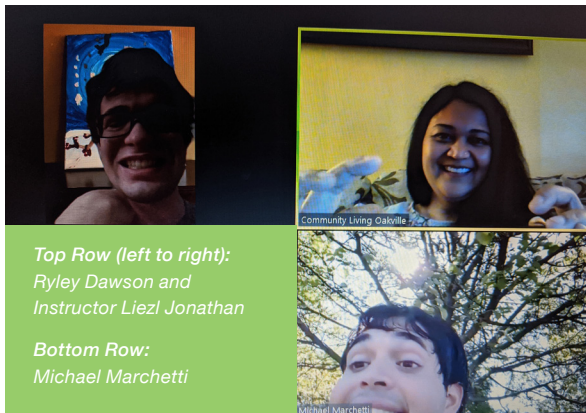
Kaitlin Nesbit, Greg Kozak, Julia Kostecki and Harvir Singh were all fortunate to witness a car parade on their birthdays. Friends and families joined in the procession. How exciting – getting the ‘head of state’ treatment, as cars drove by with signs, posters, balloons and celebratory props to honor each of them on that special day. The celebration was topped off with a gift from the CN Rail Police - Kaitlin got an assortment of colorful bouquets and some more gifts from her family and friends.



Harvir got a surprise visit from the Emergency Medical Services as well – despite his health being tip top. This visit was captured in a picture with the paramedics who were just as eager to help out and brighten people's days. As they left they put on their lights and blared the siren as a birthday bonus – taking his special celebration from gloom to ‘over the moon’!

Ironic how social isolation can bring us together and even though we are apart, we are closer than ever. As human beings, we need a sense of belonging, and that sense of belonging is what connects us to many relationships we develop. Community is, where we find comfort in difficult times and being cut off from community could have had unfathomed social side effects. Fortunately, people are social and that desire and benevolent spirit will not be stifled; affirming community is where we strike the balance between physical and mental fitness.

COMMUNITY LIVING OAKVILLE LAUNCHES ONLINE JOB SMART PRE-EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM



The Covid-19 pandemic has forced many of us to stay home to prevent the spread of the virus. As a result, education has changed dramatically, with the distinctive rise of e-learning, whereby teaching is undertaken remotely and on digital platforms. While wanting to provide various learning and activity choices to access at home, Community Living Oakville decided to create an online pre-employment option. The 6-week program is designed for individuals entering the workforce, ready to find employment when restrictions are lifted and wanting to make use of their time at home.

Participants learn workplace etiquette, conflict resolution, resume and LinkedIn profile creation, networking, job developing, building social skills as well as many other helpful employability related skills. They also gain experience in both telephone pre-screening interviews and video interviews.

We wish our very first virtual Job Smart graduates Aiden, Michael and Ryley success in their employment goals!

The online Job Smart program will continue to be available for interested candidates. Please contact andrea.lee@oakcl.org for more information and start your journey to employment success!

STAYING CONNECTED WHILE ISOLATING

Community Living Oakville (CLO) strives to provide meaningful daytime activities for people we support. In mid-March, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Community Living Oakville closed its day services and adopted provincial guidelines restricting participation and access to many community locations. These restrictions and day program closures, however, would not stop CLO from finding a way to continue to bring people together.

As with many other businesses, CLO turned to technology, specifically 'Zoom' to allow face-to-face conversations to continue. Initially, there was a one-hour daily morning chat where people could come to catch up on their day, ask questions, spread positivity, etc. The response was so positive, other staff and people supported decided they wanted to host activities they felt passionate about. Three months later Community Living Oakville has a weekly calendar offering a variety of activities, including scavenger hunts, 'name that tune', Bingo, fitness sessions, cooking classes with our very own Chef Adam, and even ukulele lessons!

These Zoom sessions have hosted many guest speakers. Pam Damoff, Oakville MP, joins in every Wednesday to answer questions about what is happening in Oakville, provide community updates and to remind us to 'take one day at a time'. We have had Appleby College students join in and host a craft session and for Police

Week, Officer Lana Boland and Officer Brandon Boland joined us. We were very fortunate to host some athletes on our Zoom sessions, including Canadian Figure Skater and Olympic Gold Medalist Gabrielle Daleman as well as Milton MP and Kayaker Olympic Gold Medalist and two-time World Champion Adam van Koevorden.

On May 14th, we had Dr. Temple Grandin, renowned author and advocate on Autism awareness, share coping strategies as well as give advice on how to overcome challenges. Dr. Grandin stressed importance of focusing on one challenge at a time, and working on that challenge "step by step".

Dr. Al Condeluci, consultant, trainer and advocate for self-advocates with disabilities and families also joined in on a Zoom session. Dr. Condeluci answered questions and gave advice on how advocates can bridge the gap between people supported and valued roles in the community. Dr. Condeluci emphasized importance of building valuable friendships and relationships and stressed that the value in these relationships is the basis of Social Capital.

These activities and Zoom sessions are filled with jokes, sharing stories, laughter and a camaraderie affirming physical distance will not prevent us from staying connected!

CHEF ADAM: 20-MINUTE BUTTER CHICKEN RECIPE



This quick 20-minute butter chicken is creamy and packed full of flavour. It's simplified and cooked all in one pan and goes great with a side of rice or naan!

Prep Time: 5 minutes
Cook Time: 15 minutes
Total Time: 20 minutes
Servings: 4

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon oil
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 medium onion diced
- 1 teaspoon fresh ginger finely minced or grated (or use paste)
- 2-3 cloves garlic finely minced or crushed
- 1 ½ pounds about 2-3 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into ¾-inch chunks
- 4 tablespoons tomato paste or 8 oz can of tomato sauce
- 1 tablespoon garam masala
- 1 teaspoon chili powder or paprika, adjust to taste

- 1 teaspoon Fenugreek; I use powder, but seeds or mustard seeds can be used too, optional*
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 1 cup heavy cream (or sub for half & half or yogurt for low fat)
- Hot cooked rice and naan for serving

Chef Adam takes to Community Living Oakville's zoom sessions with cooking lessons every week! He shares with us this easy and delicious butter chicken recipe. Give it a try!



Instructions

1. Heat a large skillet or medium saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the oil, butter, and onions and cook onions down until lightly golden, about 3-4 minutes. Add ginger and garlic and let cook for 30 seconds, stirring so it doesn't burn.
2. Add the chicken, tomato paste, and spices. Cook for 5-6 minutes or until everything is cooked through.
3. Add the heavy cream and simmer for 8-10 minutes stirring occasionally. Serve over Basmati rice or with naan.

35TH ANNUAL GOLF FUNDRAISER

Now that courses have reopened, planning for our annual golf tournament has resumed! Certain format changes will be required thanks to COVID-19 (that will comply with all provincial guidelines), but this annual fundraiser is guaranteed to be just as much fun!

For those who are unfamiliar with this event, two golf tournaments take place on the same day – a ladies only 9-hole in the morning and a “mixed” 18-hole in the afternoon. Both will be taking place at Royal Ontario Golf Club and are scramble format, so all skill levels are welcome! Registration fees are \$125 and \$250 respectively which includes your cart, plenty of food, some prizes and a partial tax receipt.

It is our hope that you'll be able to join us “on the greens” on September 24th! If you can, please consider bringing a friend or foursome, as filling this year's tournament may be a bit of a challenge. We really need the communities financial support, as many of our day service activities rely heavily or completely on fundraising.

Registrations are now open for both golfers and sponsors (opportunities start at only \$500) and complete refunds will be available if we end up not being able to proceed.

Please e-mail golf@oakcl.org with any questions you may have or contact **Brenda Kerr at 416-268-3080**. Additional information can also be found on our website (at www.oakcl.org). Just ask if you would like to receive a registration form!



MOTHER'S DAY 2020



Mother's day is celebrated globally across 46 countries to express respect and love towards mothers. The day is a tribute to honour the contribution of mothers, acknowledge their efforts and maternal bonds and the vital role of mothers in our society.

To acknowledge the mothers of all people we support, Community Living Oakville hosted a Tea party in 2019. It turned out to be a fantastic, memorable occasion, which unfortunately didn't make it this year due to the pandemic and social restrictions. Nevertheless, we decided to make it special for people by having a Zoom party or FaceTime with mothers, accompanied by handmade cards and flowers. Mothers were taken by pleasant surprise – being a mother happens 365 days a year but on this one occasion we stopped and paid our respects and acknowledgment.

Comments from people we support who participated include:



"I was so excited to see my family through my front window! My mom came, my dad, my sisters and their husbands and even one of my sisters brought her dog! I was very excited to see my new baby niece Charlotte. I bought my mom flowers and made her a card. I did the same for my sister Sara because it was her first mother's day! I had a great time seeing my family. My mom sang some Disney songs with me, which she knows we always really enjoy." -**Michael Whelan**



"This mother's day was a little different. Normally I see my mom every other weekend. On special occasions, I would celebrate with her at her home. This mother's day my mom came to my home. When I heard she was coming I got excited, moved the couches from the front window and waited for her there with the card I made and flowers. She came to the front window with doughnuts for me and my friends. I really enjoyed talking to my mom...especially about things we will do together when we can finally spend the weekend together." -**Zachary Brazil**



"On mother's day, I went to my mom's home to do a 'porch drop off'. I gave her the card I made and the flowers I bought her. She really loved this and the picture of the two of us, in the card. It was a happy occasion and I could tell how happy she was to see me." -**Jason Nhu**

"On mother's day I went to my parents' home to drop off flowers and a card I made for her. I enjoyed that I chose the flowers for her. This was a special time because I miss my family a right now. Later we were on a video call and she told me how much she loved her gift." -**Timothy Wallace**

"I was able to buy a gift for my mom. On the day I went to my mom's house where I dropped off the gift and a card at the door. A while later, my mom came out to thank me and we spoke for a bit, maintaining a safe distance." -**Whitney Lichasz**



Click thumbnails to watch videos



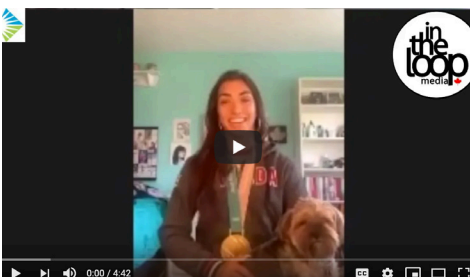
Greg from In The Loop media gets some great advice from Dr. Temple Grandin who shares a story about how she overcame her fear of public speaking.



Erinn demonstrates some important health and safety tips during our virtual meeting.



The In The Loop Media team paired up with New Central Public School, and Green Pink and Yellow productions to create a project prior to the Covid-19 pandemic.



Gabrielle Daleman is a Canadian figure skater. She is a 2018 Olympic gold medalist in the team event, the 2017 World bronze medalist, 2017 Four Continents silver medalist, 2014 CS Autumn Classic champion, and two-time Canadian national champion.



IN THE LOOP @ HOME

In The Loop Media had to adapt to a world crisis in March when orders came down from the government to self isolate to prevent the spread of the Novel Coronavirus Covid 19.

Luckily for us, In The Loopers had already conducted a few meetings with Zoom prior to the pandemic and our members were also all well versed in using and learning new apps. This allowed them to adapt quickly and begin sessions on day one when we were no longer able to be physically together. We immediately began meeting and our group grew as people were looking for ways to prevent loneliness and social isolation. More importantly, we were looking to find ways to pivot the focus to news items that had a “good news for a change” spin to them.

Some of our members wanted more, therefore we offered In The Loop @ Home - a new virtual program designed for people using social media with a focus on:

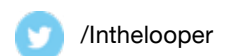
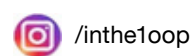
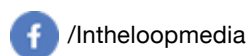
- Understanding the latest social media apps for iPad, iPhone, and android devices
- Creating positive content
- Learning about internet safety
- Boosting self esteem
- Thinking creatively
- Improving oral communication
- Enhancing collaboration skills

At first we offered 2 sessions a week but that filled up so quickly that we needed to offer another few sessions! Currently there are 2 teams sharing positive quotes, telling jokes, practicing interviewing skills, and most importantly learning how to support and be kind to each other. This resulted in strong collaboration and creating some amazing work which will be transformed into personal portfolios!

Our first 6 week workshop has ended, however since many people enjoyed these sessions so much, they decided to sign up once again where they aspire to level up! We will also be adding a few more members to the teams who will bring some fresh perspectives and skills that we are excited to explore further.

“When life gives you lemons, alter their DNA and make super lemons.” ;)

If you are interested in registering for In The Loop Media please contact Jenny Parisi, Day Service Manager at jenny.parisi@oakcl.org



CONGRATULATIONS HUGO TROCCOLI!

On March 3rd, 2020 The Ontario Developmental Services HR Forum was held in Toronto. During this forum, the Direct Support Professional Leadership Award is given to celebrate employees who embody outstanding services and supports. Direct support professionals nominated for this award are also able to demonstrate how their philosophy and work practices advance the goals of the Provincial Network HR Committee.

This year, the leadership award entitled ‘2020 Direct Support Professional Make A Difference Everyday Award’ went to Hugo Troccoli! Hugo was awarded \$500 for his achievements during a wonderful dinner and celebration. He has been an employee at Community Living Oakville for 6 years and has held various positions. Most of you probably recognize Hugo for his involvement in In The Loop Media (Community Living Oakville’s very own media team) or in his role supporting youth in transitions who are graduating from high school.

Through a nomination video and letter submitted by the people he supports, work colleagues and management, people were eager to share their admiration and experiences with Hugo.

Hugo’s genuine passion for his job and eagerness to provide the best services possible to the people we support is commendable. Please join us in congratulating Hugo Troccoli and watch the nomination video: <https://vimeo.com/386296745/b00dc4981a>



Here are just a few of the heartfelt comments:

- “Hugo got me out of my shell.” (Joel Layne)
- “Hugo teaches me to do new things.” (Katharine Thompson)
- “Hugo takes us on crazy adventures that I never thought we would go on.” (Duncan Rouse)
- “Hugo inspires us to spread positivity in our community.” (Greg Kozak)
- “Hugo has wholeheartedly invested in his mission to promote and encourage the people he supports to bring out the best in them through his positive attitude and determination.” (Micah Mouskos)

YEARS OF SERVICE

Over the years, our organization has grown and developed into one of the most respected organizations in the province. Community Living Oakville employees work collectively and diligently at supporting people to achieve a “good life” and meaning throughout their day. Staff at all levels and departments work together to provide people with the best possible support. This would not be possible without the dedication of our employees.

Due to the current circumstances, we will not be able to celebrate our staff and their years of service this summer in person as we have in previous years. We will be postponing our years of services celebration until a time when it is safe for us to all meet together.

We want to send thanks to you, our dedicated staff, our visionaries, our leaders and our advocates for your tireless work. At this time; your career milestone, we honour you for the part you play through your dedication and commitment to Community Living Oakville and the people that you support.

We would like to acknowledge the following employees who celebrated their Years of Service Milestone during the 2019-2020 fiscal year. We look forward to celebrating with you in person soon!

[Click here to watch video](#)

5 Years

Chelan Williamson	Residential
Aimee Doughty	Residential
Danahi Suarez-Vila	Day Services
Asha Aggarwal	Residential
Francisca Sarpong	Residential
Rajdeep Gill	Residential
Esther Osarogiuwa	Residential
Hugo Troccoli	Day Services
Sherry Coleman	Residential
Isaac Chakuma	Residential
Sabrina Troisi	Residential
Sandra Omorodion	Residential;
Sheila Gifford	Residential
Tyson Buckley	Residential
Andrea Lee	Manager
Alexandra Hoeck Murray	Director

(continued on next page)

YEARS OF SERVICE (CONT'D)

We would like to continue to acknowledge the following employees who celebrated their Years of Service Milestone during the 2019-2020 fiscal year. We look forward to celebrating with you in person soon!

10 Years

Joyce Hammond	Residential
Vanetta Edwards	Residential
Desiree Dos Santos	Residential
Akua Nkrumah	Residential
Leisagay Lewis	Residential
Sherene Myers	Residential
Julie Bisbicos	Manager

15 Years

Steve Zamora	Residential
Rapinder Dhillon	Day Services
Stephanie Butcher	Day Services
Leanne Abbott	Day Services
Lala Desousa	Residential
Allison Chapelle	SIL
Jennifer Dance	Manager
Kim Moncada	Manager

20 Years

Raymond Desrochers	Residential
Mary White	Manager

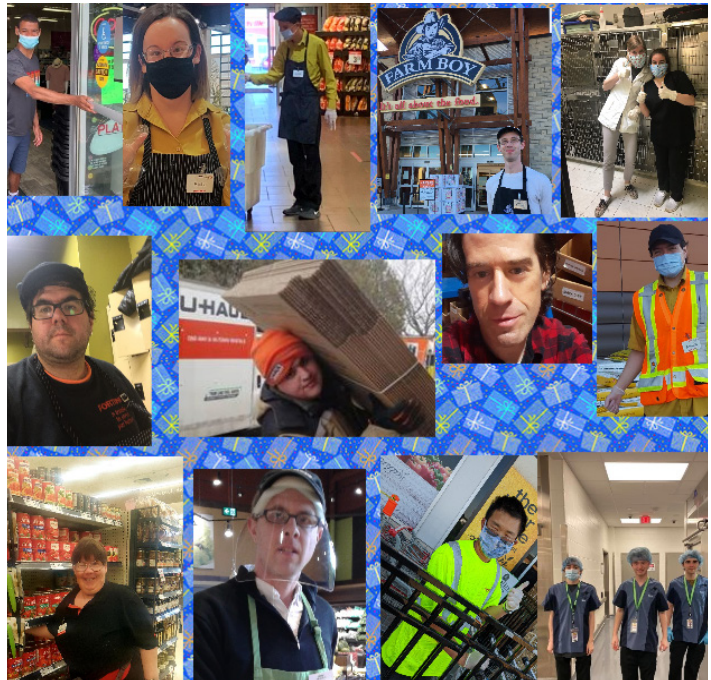
25 Years

Beverly Kerr	Day Services
--------------	--------------

30 Years

Toby Goldenberg	Day Services
Mary Jo Nunes	Day Services
William Strong	Day Services
Farkhanda Nawaz	Residential
Shannon Coles	Director

THANK YOU ESSENTIAL WORKERS!



Community Living Oakville would like to say THANK YOU to all essential workers and recognize those supported via CLO's Employment Team. Thank you to all for your dedication and hard work in keeping our community safe and healthy!

Essential workers who are employed at Fortino's throughout Oakville and Burlington work hard to ensure that the store shelves are stocked, carts are sanitized and customers are keeping safe while shopping.

Thank you to the Fortino's employees:

Antonio Sanchez, Juan Pisano, Ulisis Santos, Elisha Donaghey Johnston, Nick Ulmer, Nick Palumbo, Curtis Walker and Daniel Ferreira

Another big thank you to these front line workers at various locations in Oakville:

Stephanie Bullock at the Animal Hospital of Oakville

Patrick Sequiera at U-Haul

Wallace Kelly at Plato's Oakville

Veerle Janssens at Ikea and Zara

Kandice Jansson at Princess Auto

Anthony Brosky at Glen Abbey Golf Course

Peter Coffey at MD Charlton Law Enforcement/Military Supply Company

Andrew McClure at Farm Boy Burlington

Nick Palumbo, Luc Groguen, Curtis Walker, Jared Sander and Lucas Hilario at Halton Healthcare Hospitals

Carlos Cardoso and Andrea Slodichak at Fresh Co.

Jason McLaughlin and Candy Baigorria at Sobeys

Luke Meed, Dylan Que and Alexandre Abgrall at Longo's

Mary Ann Bailey at Metro who also celebrated her 20th year anniversary while working during the pandemic.

Mahir Ibrahim, Brayden Hamer and Bruno Salumbo at Real Canadian Superstore

On behalf of all of us at Community Living Oakville, we would love to extend our thanks and gratitude to those working hard during the pandemic.

THANK YOU!

IN THIS TOGETHER!

The month of May is usually recognized and celebrated province-wide as Community Living Month, in which awareness regarding our sector is raised and inclusion for the people we support is promoted. This year, due to the pandemic, the Community Living Month campaign had to be delayed.

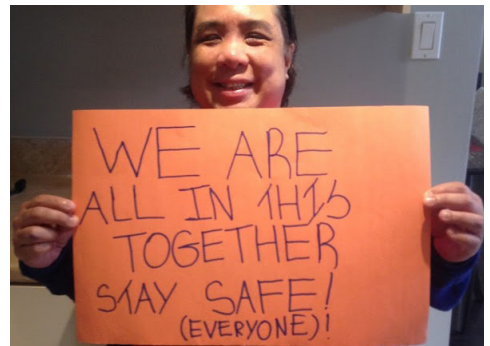
Although the campaign itself was postponed, Community Living Ontario joined with multiple agencies, including Community Living Oakville, to create a photo montage to demonstrate that we are “In this Together”. At Community Living Oakville, staff worked alongside the people we support to create banners, paintings and crafts that showed that we are all united, using the hashtag #InThisTogether.

The photo montage, put together by Community Living Ontario, displays the true spirit of the people we support, their families and staff. It is a reminder that even when things are difficult, we all pull together and work toward ensuring the health, safety and well-being of everyone.

On May 15th, the CN Tower showed its support to Community Living organizations, by lighting up in Blue and Green.

To view the Photo Montage video please visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ligD6dzKGko> and remember that we are all #INTHISTOGETHER!

 [Click here to watch video](#)



THE GREATNESS OF A COMMUNITY

As we know, the COVID-19 pandemic has challenged us all in varying ways; truly making 2020 a year we will never forget. Despite all of the trials and tribulations, we have seen our community pull together like never before. Community Living Oakville has received many gracious donations during this time and we would like to recognize those for their heartfelt support.

As we continue to ensure the safety of all of the people we support and our staff, personal protective equipment has been an essential requirement in our workplace. We would like to thank PCM Construction of Oakville for the donation of 300 face shields. We would also like to recognize Canada Sews, June Ashwell, Kayla Campbell and the various community members and support groups in Oakville for the donation of handmade masks. Each of these masks have been sewn with care and have been provided to our staff. In addition, we would like to thank Habitat for Humanity for their donation of over 1000 gloves. All of these items have contributed in maintaining the health and safety of everyone at Community Living Oakville.


Aside from personal protective equipment, further donations have been made to uplift spirits and assist people we support to connect with others virtually. We would like to thank the United Way Halton and Hamilton for their Emergency Fund, allowing for the purchase of tablets in order to connect seniors through virtual programming. In addition, thanks to United Way for donating countless items through their Community Donation Program to the people we support including gardening supplies, housewares such as coffee makers, juicers, mixers, pots and pans, computers and ukuleles to name a few. We would also like to recognize Best Buy for their donation of Google Nest Hub Max Smart Displays, allowing people to stay connected. The people we support have also been treated by the generous bakers at Cobs Bread located at 3450 Dundas St. Burlington with donations of fresh bread. Donations of buns, loaves of bread and savory and sweet scones have been a pleasant treat. Thank you also to our friends at CharterAbility for their donation of various gift cards which put a smile on people's faces. Your generosity brightened people's day. On behalf of Community Living Oakville, we would also like to thank the Town of Oakville for their donation of flowers and to our longstanding volunteer Marlyne Van Exan for planting beautiful urns in front of our main building.

"The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members." Coretta Scott King

PCM Construction donates CLO - please see video link here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wq2r149J5e0>



 [Click here to watch video](#)



THANK YOU #STRONGERTOGETHER

This has been an unprecedented time as we all cope with living and working through a global pandemic. The people we support have experienced significant change as day services closed, activities were cancelled, for some, a loss of employment or volunteer position and most significantly, not being able to visit in person with family and friends. Staff have also experienced significant changes including increased demands at home with children out of school, loss of income, as many had to give up secondary jobs during this emergency and the anxiety that accompanies leaving the safety of home every day to come to work.

Work now includes following screening protocols, enhanced cleaning, wearing PPE, navigating new ways to accomplish daily activities, teaching people we support about Covid-19 and new safety skills like physical distancing and frequent handwashing.

Our staff have risen to the challenge!

You will read in this newsletter about some of the wonderful and innovative activities people are doing while at home including gardening, music lessons, art, hikes and virtual connections with family, friends and special guests. There have been amazing opportunities for people to “meet” and share both the challenges and uplifting messages about life during the pandemic. Our staff have also continued to support people with employment as they perform their essential work in the community at grocery stores and Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital.

Every day, each shift, our staff come to work with a positive outlook and determination to keep the people we support and each other safe.

Thank You to all of our staff for your dedication, commitment and for facing these challenging times with humour, courage and compassion.

You are appreciated and truly are **#CLOstrong!**

**WE ARE NOW
HIRING
JOIN OUR TEAM**

Community Living
Oakville

To apply, please submit resumes to:
resumes@oakcl.org

FROM A PARENT'S PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

At that point, she didn't even have a TV in her room and managed to occupy herself with picture and colouring books, puzzles and lots of staff visits in full PPE. She has shown me another side that I had no idea she had, and I found it reassuring to know that one day, when we are not here anymore, that she will do just fine. I am so proud of my baby and so thankful to all the wonderful staff at the house. I know they did everything to make her content and comfortable and I couldn't have asked for anymore". With that being said, her Dad added that "this pandemic is killing me. I miss my daughter. My heart is empty without her".

Harrison's parents feel that "the hardest part about the pandemic is not being able to explain to Harrison why he is not allowed to visit us or go to a restaurant. These are the small joys that normally will make his week. We send him a little gift every



day to make sure he knows that he hasn't been deserted, but it is definitely not the same as being able to give him back the activities and time together that he cherishes. As parents, our biggest fear has always been what might happen if we are not here anymore. We are so grateful that the staff at CLO have done an amazing job taking care of Harrison, especially through this pandemic, and the peace of mind that it gives us is immeasurable".

We are all so relieved and proud of the fact that Community Living Oakville remains 100% virus free. So, while we miss our kids terribly and know that they miss us, we agree that there is a silver lining. They are safe and have endured this prolonged separation much better than anyone expected. We greatly appreciate that the staff have been working tirelessly to keep everyone both healthy and happy, which I'm sure has not been easy. They are all angels who care for our kids when we can't. And perhaps most importantly, we've been given hope that after we're gone, our children might be ok without us, which is a true gift.



If you have any questions about sponsorship, registration, volunteering or to be added to the email list for future CLO events, please contact Alison Fay via alison.fay@oakcl.org.

AT THE WINDOW LOOKING OUT – SOCIAL ISOLATION

Social Isolation has long been a part of society and like most aspects of civilization – people relying on our service have more experience and are a little further along this road than most. This became apparent in a conversation with Warren, Melissa and Sarah. Transport is one example where people face barriers, almost none of the people we support know the convenience of ‘just getting in their own vehicle and driving’ where they want to go. Life with any disability can be fraught with barriers most take for granted. So what does one more societal limitation mean to people in our care?

The pandemic answered that question and presented an opportunity to ask the experts – how they were coping with this difficult time. Satwinder remains with her family but clearly she is ever present. Everyone misses her and she misses her home and friends, but her family (well her dad) felt not seeing her during this time would be too much. Melissa longs for the social time when they just played cards or pooled their efforts to complete an activity together. But in true form, that empowered Melissa to cope with this unexpected intervention – she started initiating activities she enjoys and previously shared social time on her own.

Warren references the virus – he acknowledges the infection affects Mexico and other countries. Being the big picture thinker he is, Warren realizes this virus has an international impact or maybe he simply realizes it will interfere with his passion – regular vacations in Mexico. Warren enjoys learning new skills – he recently received a new tablet that opened up new prospects. His beloved newspaper is online – he learned to play solitaire and even does online bowling.

Sarah fights back tears when she mentions the loss of what she valued most – her independence. She enjoyed attending her own appointments but now – she can no longer do that. There are so many rules and practices she has to check to be sure she’s following the proper guidelines. Grocery shopping and visits to the stores have been curtailed. Sarah understands why this has to be, but the experience of the isolation has been restrictive.

As I glance at the coffee table to my left I

notice ‘The Juicer Bible’ – a book about extracting juice from fruit. Sarah explains it’s from the gift from the United Way Halton Hamilton – a juicer. It was a welcome interruption of the gloom of COVID – but more importantly it awakened a new skill and passion – juicing. She explains what keeps her going is new avenues of learning and expression. “There are many YouTube videos that can help with new skills and learning,” she adds.

All three people explain that it is important to have an outlet when things get difficult. Just sitting on the porch, watching the neighborhood pets parade by the home. Appreciating fresh air and exercising by walking around the block. Despite the complaints about COVID; not seeing her boyfriend or missing family, Melissa has been staying active by going for walks and gets in about 10 to 11000 steps a day. Burning off energy is important – and Sarah muses it’s odd...she’s had more energy than ever before. This is such a bizarre time. At this point, no one would be surprised if we saw snow flurries in summer.

Like the welcome little gifts, Sarah’s juicer or Warren’s tablet – Melissa dotes on the basketball net she received from her mom. Another thoughtful and impressive surprise. In this time when we seem to have so much time, the net meant she could enjoy being active and shooting hoops with Suzanne. These may ordinarily be items we take for granted, but people celebrate the basics and do not take even the simplest pleasures for granted. Staying active helps Melissa to keep busy and have fun; taking her mind off working at work at Burger King or wondering how her sister in Australia is doing.

Warren interjects and asks me about people he customarily sees at Community Living Oakville’s main office – “how are they?” He misses the old routine. Familiarity. Confidence – empowerment. He speaks about golf and football and realizes the seasons are changing but this is weird and elusively different – like Fall without the leaves changing.

In this new characterization, there is a fresh familiarity – we became acquainted with virtual calls. Melissa has become proficient in using Zoom to stay connected to people, and although she states that

she prefers face-to-face interaction, she loves being able to use technology to see friends and familiar faces. She misses seeing people in person, and like everyone is in conflict between the old and the new customs.

Melissa, Warren, Suzanne, Linda and Sarah remind us - with the isolation some days are good – some a little longer. You have to create new definitions and shared experiences. Suzanne laughs hard as a thought flashes through her mind: “sometimes we just sit outside on the porch, eat popsicles and watch the neighbours go by. Well...it’s a nightly ritual before I go home.” Warren nods in agreement and Melissa smiles broadly. (Sarah had to exit to FaceTime a friend on the porch).

Sometimes people receiving our support are the voice for people who may not articulate their experiences as well. But they share that kindred bond of service. Hopefully the perspectives of Melissa Satwinder, Sarah and Warren give a voice to their peers. Circumstances can be challenging but not too bad – all is not lost and people are finding ways to stay engaged. Everyone also enjoys and appreciates a little surprise once in a while – A little bit of Christmas - not only in December.

Some Strategies Warren, Melissa and Sarah found “helpful”:

1. Remember the people who are important in your life - keep in touch
2. Have reliable communication apparatus and explore new ways to communicate
3. Get outside – enjoy the porch – the passing people can be your own reality tv show
4. Stay as physically active as you can
5. Get creative! Be creative! Find a creative outlet
6. Educate yourself or learn something new
7. Create new routines
8. Keep in touch with people you care about (See #1 &2)
9. Take breaks when things get tough
10. Watch the neighborhood pets go by



TOP 10 WAYS TO STAY BUSY DURING A PANDEMIC

Do you see the glass as half full or half empty? What about before the COVID-19 pandemic? Since the outbreak, it is hard for even the most optimistic among us to stay positive. Everywhere you look there is evidence of a pandemic, people wearing masks, physical distancing, empty schoolyards, sanitizer, toilet paper being wiped off the shelves and many amazon orders showing up at your door... It seems odd to be talking about being positive in such times, yet staying positive is a core ingredient to your mental health. How do you keep your mind busy, your body active and stay positive during these unprecedented times?

At Community Living Oakville, people have found innovative ways to keep busy, be active and stay positive. We are all in this together, so we reached out to see what people are doing to keep busy during Covid-19.

Here are our top 10 ways to stay busy:

1. Go For walks, FaceTime my friends -Melissa Reid
2. Backyard renovations, building a new deck, keeping my kids busy -Lauren Flammini
3. Gardening, planting flowers, shooting hoops -Chanel Delorey
4. Research my favourite bands- Hello Walk off the Earth! FaceTime my girlfriend, research special guests on Zoom for In the Loop Media -Adam Spicer
5. Knitting, going for walks, learning to play the ukulele -Ulli Schonrock

6. Tell jokes and dance! -Samantha Rose
7. Stay in touch with friends, my brother and of course my girlfriend- Hi Annie! -Marty Copland
8. Creating new art, connecting with family and friends virtually, writing out song lyrics to sing, researching new recipe's to try -Michelle Francis
9. Talking and laughing with my boyfriend- Hi Marty! Learning new dance moves, singing - I am into Love & Hate by Michael Kiwanuka right now -Annie Moore
10. Being in nature, walking through the neighbourhood -Michael McCarney

Bonus #11 – Online shopping and watching the delivery van pull up while we try to remember what we ordered! - Robin, Michelle, Stella, Annie and Ulli

These certainly are unprecedented times! While talking with people it's clear; the majority agree that it is nice to slow down. Although people are still busy...it is a different busy.

The gardens are planted, the decks are built, the basketball net has been put up, people are connecting more with family and friends and new hiking trails are being found- with breathtaking waterfalls. People have found ways to find calm and know that we are all in this together - six feet apart.



301 Wycroft Road
Oakville, ON L6K 2H2
905.844.0146
www.oakcl.org

Charitable Business
#0175265C
BN107790552R001

