



Please take a few moments to complete the online survey
(by May 13th)

<https://bit.ly/3vCDQbZ>

We want to hear from you!

Have ideas for a community program or questions about services and supports we provide? There are lots of ways to connect.



info@quadcounty.ca



FACEBOOK PAGE:

Quad County Support Services



WEBSITE:

quadcounty.ca



EVENTS:

quadcounty.ca/events

Spring Brings Many Changes

Like many of you, I love seeing my garden come to life in the spring. It's amazing watching the bulbs I planted in the fall sprout up and turn into a rainbow of colours.

While it can take time to plant and cultivate a garden, the end rewards are well worth the effort.

I can't help but thinking of my garden when looking at updating our strategic plan – which is the roadmap for where our organization is heading. We're now in the cultivation stage of our annual update. The goal of this process is to review our current focus and assess what changes are needed so we can continue empowering people with developmental disabilities to reach their full potential.

I want to thank the many dedicated people who volunteered to be part of the reference group that will work on updates to our strategic plan. This group will include representatives from our board, frontline staff and leadership.

We also want to hear from you!

Please take a few moments to complete the online survey (<https://bit.ly/3vCDQbZ>). The survey invites you to comment on QCSS' Strategic Statements (mission, vision, values, and strategic objectives), and to offer recommendations to strengthen the organization. Your feedback will be used to update these Strategic Statements. The survey will be live until May 13.

Linda Long, Executive Director





Staffing changes

Spring has also brought some staffing changes. We saw the retirement of Teri Walsh who has worked for Quad County Support Services since May 1996. She was an amazing support to Cheryl, who always looked forward to the fun and interesting things they did together. Thank you, Teri, for your years of service!

We also said goodbye to Madison Stocking who has helped support administration over the last few months. We wish her well on her new adventure.

May is Community Living Month

May is Community Living Month. This is a time where people from across Ontario celebrate the many successes of creating inclusive communities for people with developmental disabilities.

As part of the month's activities, Quad County Support Services is participating in the **Shine a Light on Community Living** initiative through Community Living Ontario. **Join us as we will be lighting up Southwest Middlesex at the Glencoe train station on May 6th 8:30 p.m..**

We'll also be lighting up our administration offices and hope that other businesses will join in the fun.

When homes, businesses and municipal buildings brightly display the Community Living colours of blue and green throughout the month of May, it sends a powerful message of inclusion that shines throughout the province. The Shine a Light campaign is one of the many events and activities taking place throughout the month that will create awareness around inclusion for people with intellectual disabilities.

Watch for photos from this event on our Facebook page and in the summer newsletter.



Go Jeff! Shave for the Brave

Jeff Giles, a longtime staff member and recent retiree, is participating in Shave for the Brave, raising money for Young Adults Cancer Canada. Thanks to Kosta for helping Jeff get \$80 in pledges (and growing)!

www.youngadultcancer.akaraisin.com/ui/9E9F00AE95D141B8B4E2CD9A1460E339
Donate, search Jeff Giles

Self-Advocates Corner

We're excited to be a part of the [Respecting Rights training programs](#). This six-week virtual training session helps self-advocates develop the skills to have their voice heard.

In April, our self-advocates watched Time for Change, a music video created by self-advocates about their rights. Following a group discussion, individuals took part in role playing about making choices in our lives.

Thanks to our staff member, Erin Ellison, who's assisting with this program. We appreciate the partnership with Arch Disability Law Centre and Southwest Collaborative Communities in hosting this series of workshops.

We look forward to more workshops under this program!

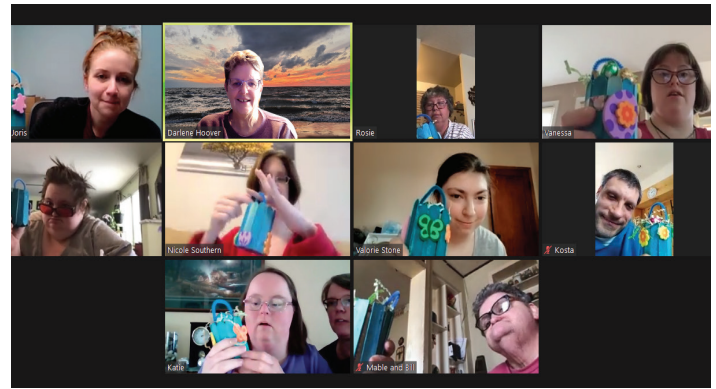


COVID update

With changes to COVID restrictions, we're looking forward to the gradually reopening of community activities while continuing to be cautious. At Quad County Support Services, we're proud that we've been able to have kept COVID out of the homes we serve for the duration of the pandemic.

To continue this momentum, we continue to closely follow Ministry guidelines and best practices. This includes mandatory mask wearing for staff and visitors, a COVID vaccine policy for staff, and reminding people to stay home and get tested when feeling unwell, even mild symptoms.

We thank everyone for their ongoing patience as we navigate the challenges of living in a global pandemic.



Community Thank You!

A big thank you to the following individuals and organizations for your contributions to Quad County Support Services over the last few months.

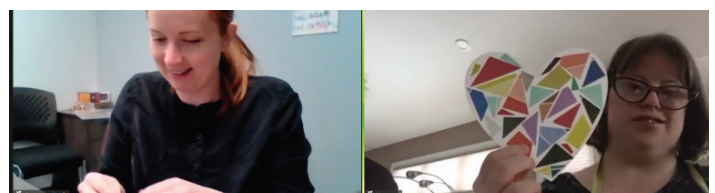
Glencoe Public Library - thank you to Courtney who runs a monthly craft group that many of the individuals we support enjoy. We appreciate that Courtney and the staff assemble the kits which make it so much easier for us to deliver. We would also like to thank the staff of the library for welcoming Erica who is loving the volunteer work that she gets to do

CB Creative Concepts - Christina Bertrand is always coming up with new ideas for fun activities to share with the individuals we support.

"Working with individuals at QCSS is some of the most rewarding work that happens here at CB Creative Concepts. Sometimes it's the little things that matter the most (the ones you don't see). The individuals and staff are always happy to do the activities, are supportive of each other and put themselves up to the challenge each and every time."

It gives me great joy to see my small project have so many different twists to it - to make each one so creative and unique. A true meaning to crafting.

Thank you to Quad County Support Services for allowing CB Creative Concepts to be a part of craft night once in a while.



Spotlight:

Find more pictures on our Facebook page and follow us to be part of the Quad County community!



FACEBOOK PAGE:
Quad County Support Services

*We're regularly posting on Facebook photos!
We encourage you to follow, comment and help
grow our Facebook 'Quad Community'.*



Personal Journey:

As part of Autism Acceptance Month, we are sharing a story written by Matthew Wayne McFadden about his personal journey

My name is Matthew Wayne McFadden. I have Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

I was born in a hospital in London 18 years ago. I think I was desperate to get out of my mom. My mom said I did a lot of screaming at the top of my lungs when I was a small baby. I guess you could say that I had a “ruff” start. (Badum Bum Bum).

My family did try to get me into some sort of therapy and my mom did try to get me to taste new things, though again as a child, I didn't react well to new things or new surroundings. One time when I was still young, while my family was chatting to each other, I somehow sneaked out the door and went to the neighbour's backyard just to play on the swing.

Mom and dad decided to bring me to Aldborough Public School. I think I was three when I started junior kindergarten. I was excited, my energy bloomed like I was in my own domain. And as time passed, I grew up to be about 5 years old, my attitude did change a bit, but I also found some friends on the way. Time went by.

In my teenage years it was time for me to graduate from my public school. I graduated from public school and I

came to Glencoe District High School.

In 2020, when COVID 19 hit across the world. I wasn't aware at the time of its dangers. The 7-month torturing lockdown was difficult for my mental health. I realized how much being with people mattered to me. I soon made an online friend - Justin. Through the lockdown we wrote emails.

I soon realized we had common interests. One of our common interests was dinosaurs. I soon thought of something on my mind, something about the animals in Jurassic world, one of which was a hybrid. The Indominus rex.

I decided to start creating my own versions of dinosaur hybrids. I made so many of my hybrids, I lost count. I realized I was a strong advocate for the animals and the environment.

As I grew up, I knew I had something to give in my heart of gold in my soul. I had something to give, I had creativity. Despite being a kid with autism, I would use my creativity for some events.

And it worked. I started writing fantasy stories.

In 2021, I began doing the video announcements at school. People at school



have told me that I make their day with my upbeat announcements. I made some more friends. I started to believe that I had potential to follow my dream of becoming a voice actor. With the help

of some funding, I have since started acting lessons.

I think Autism allows you to be more creative and somehow it can change the path of your life and you can end up in some different places. It makes you have a unique behavior that comes with some challenges.

I find that I am always concerned about how people will react to my Autism. :(

My main priority is to be able to fit in with the crowd, to have friends and be accepted for who I am. I see now that I can have that. My dream is to be a little creative in some unorthodox fashion. Now more than ever I am excited to see what comes next for me.