

Family Alliance Ontario, FAO Quarterly COMPASS

CONNECTING WITH OUR FAO MEMBERS & AFFILIATE FAMILY NETWORKS TO SHARE WHAT'S HAPPENING ACROSS THE PROVINCE



Autonomous Family networks & family directed groups are dedicated to fostering the strengths, dreams, competencies and enthusiasm of their member families to create inclusive, caring lives for everyone.

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FAMILY NETWORKS

What's happening on the Family Network front?

THE PEOPLE'S HISTORY

What's happening with FAO's, Uncovering 'The People's History' Project?

For more information about the project:

Project Coordinator
Vici Clarke

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Project Steering Committee Chair
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GOVERNMENT ADVOCACY

What's happening on the government advocacy front?

For more information on engaging family networks:

Family Alliance Ontario

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ADVOCACY WORK & IDEAS

What's happening in Ontario that FAO thinks should be on both FAO and our affiliate networks advocacy radar?

For more information about FAO advocacy work:

Family Alliance Ontario

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DEFINITION OF FAMILY

A family is a unit of two or more individuals related logically, legally, or emotionally and who through mutual commitment, form a voluntary network to provide a sense of attachment and belonging and the required essential support to achieve well-being through full citizenship.

What's happening on the Family Network front?

FAO was successful in our application for a small amount of Family Network Funding to bring together our affiliate family networks to a Family Network Gathering in September 2018. At this gathering, we were very excited to have 17 family networks from across the province represented by 72 people who attended our weekend.

The volunteers at FAO have been working hard on many of the great ideas and suggestions we received from our members and affiliates over that weekend. One of the key suggestions was increased and better communication with our members and member affiliate networks. Our work on this front will involve hosting online gatherings for members and family networks and a quarterly newsletter.

Additionally, we have been working on a draft word/concept definition document which we hope that we can all eventually agree with so that when we are talking about something we know what each of us mean by these words. A big shout out to the **Toronto Family Network** for submitting their idea for the first definition for 'family'. This document will be an ongoing work in progress which we hope people will continue to add too!

We are approaching the last quarter of the Ministry fiscal year and FAO has connected with the Ministry and offered again this year to help shape some of the processes being put in place for the annualized dollars for Family Network funding to get out in 2019/20 We will continue to stay engaged with the Ministry and in actively promoting the importance of these resources reaching and supporting autonomous family networks and groups in Ontario.

We heard from our affiliates that you wanted FAO to be the "umbrella group" for family networks in Ontario and we are working very hard to meet this provincial leadership goal. The 'we' in FAO is our members and member affiliate networks, FAO is you and you are FAO! If we continue to find ways to work together we will be a force to be reckoned with!

FUTURE ONLINE MEMBER & FAMILY NETWORK MEETING DATES:

Thursday, December 6, 2018

Thursday, February 7, 2018

Thursday, May 9, 2018

Thursday, August 8, 2018

Please contact [Carla O'Neill](#) or [Cindy Mitchell](#) to be added to the invitation list and sent log in information.
SEE CONTACTS PAGE 1

UNCOVERING THE PEOPLE'S HISTORY PROJECT

✦ / Uncovering the People's History Project

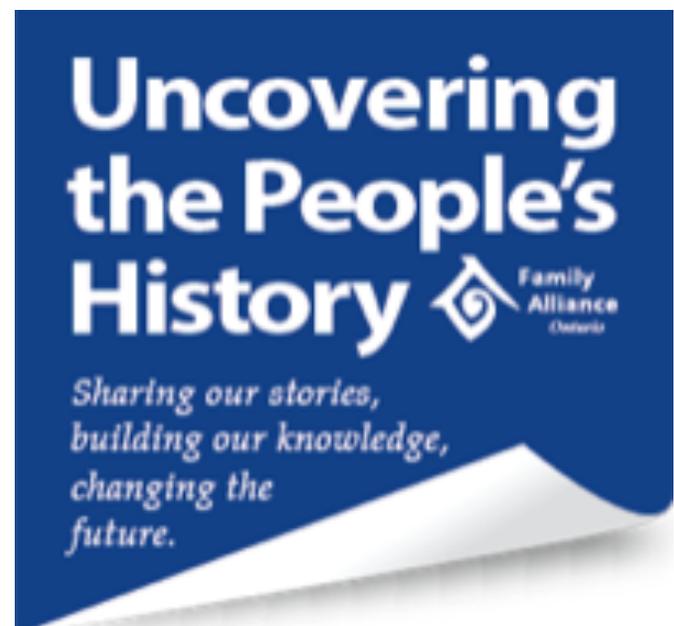
What's happening with FAO's, Uncovering 'The People's History' Project?

FAO's The People's History project was thrilled to be invited and subsequently approved to merge our project with the Inclusion Press project. Both project submissions were significantly underfunded and with the merger FAO is now able to achieve the goals approved for both projects.

On October 29th, 2018, our project was launched in the first area of Ontario. In Durham Region where we are collaborating with the Durham Family Network, (DFN). The DFN has been growing in many new directions to meet the needs of Durham families. One of their new directions is to have an online presence and we are pleased that they have taken up FAO's offer of a free webpage on FAO's new website.

The Peoples History project will be working with the DFN and the Durham community to identify and meet people, survivors, families and others in Durham Region who wish to share their stories of their experiences of the institutional 'care model' in Ontario. The next four months in Durham will involve meeting with and spending time with people to capture their stories in ways that respect and honor extremely difficult life experiences. We anticipate holding our first project gathering in the Durham Region area in April or May 2019.

The People's History Project is designed to foster an understanding around Canada's poignant history of institutionalization for people experiencing a disability. The project strives to deepen the broader public's understanding of the impact of the institutional care model, on people, their families, their loved ones and the community on whole.



What's up in Ontario that FAO thinks should be on the advocacy radar for all of us?

Most families across Ontario are now aware that the Ministry is working to 'modernize' the developmental sector and a new organization has been created called Passport One. I think we would all agree that modernization is important however this new organization is experienced by families as yet one more layer of bureaucracy families have to navigate in order to access the supports we need for their loved ones to have a bit of a life!

The government has committed to provide new people entering the Developmental Services (DS) sector with an initial \$5000 in Passport funding for this tidbit of a life! For many, accessing this \$5000 in Passport funding entails knocking on the door of and navigating up to four different layers of DS sector bureaucracy.

To navigate the first layer, these brave families knock on the door of the Developmental Services Organization (DSO) where they are told they get to tell their story one time and along with that story comes lots of paperwork. Next, they go to the Passport Office and knock on that door and there they get to complete more paperwork aka contracts which are several pages long! Many families at this point become overwhelmed and/or frightened and they seek the help of a transfer payment agency to assist them and to broker this new funding, and here yet again they complete more paperwork/contracts and in turn pay as much as 10% of their \$5000 in fees for this service/bureaucracy. Finally, families now get to go to the newest bureaucracy developed by the Ministry called Passport One and again they get to complete yet more paperwork!

It is astounding how these four layers of bureaucracy can make a measly \$5000 so difficult to manage that it takes agencies supporting families to navigate it! FAO is working on a graphic to demonstrate how ludicrous this is and show the bureaucratic nightmare families are forced to go through for what is now a paltry \$4,500.

With our graphic, we can all say to Premier Ford can you please, "*plan smarter, spend smarter and work smarter*" we 'the people', Ontario families and people with developmental disabilities, would really welcome some "*efficiencies and prioritizing*" to get the funding, the full \$5000 directly to the people!

In addition to the 'layers of bureaucracy' advocacy I would like to suggest that 'we' FAO and our affiliate family networks, especially the ones supporting younger families begin to advocate strong, hard and collectively for the Ministry to get SSAH reimbursements back to families in a timelier fashion. This program has been around for almost three decades and families are still waiting a month or more for reimbursement! Some families including my own in the past, would forgo support to our child in order to insure we could pay for rent and food. What about modernization of SSAH, which is the first, the oldest and the most efficient direct funding support program in Ontario that gets funding directly to the people?

FAO would really welcome working together on some of these advocacy idea's.

I hope you enjoy our new newsletter, **FAO Quarterly COMPASS**

Look for our next issue in April 2019!

Wishing you and your family all the best of the holiday season!



Cindy Mitchel