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MAGAZINE



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LETTER FROM THE CEO

Amandeep Kaur CEO, PCHS



Building Stronger Connections, Creating Healthier Communities

June has been an inspiring month for Punjabi Community Health Services (PCHS), defined by collaboration, innovation, and a shared commitment to improving the health and well-being of our culturally diverse communities.

At PCHS, we continue to witness the resilience of the individuals and families we serve. Every day, our staff, volunteers, partners, and supporters work together to remove barriers, strengthen well-being, and create opportunities for healthier lives. Whether supporting seniors, newcomers, youth, families, or individuals facing mental health and addiction challenges, our shared purpose remains the same: to serve with compassion, dignity, and cultural understanding.

This month, we were pleased to meet with the Central Intake Ontario (CIO) – Central Region Mental Health & Addictions (MHA) Hub to showcase PCHS’s culturally responsive model of care and discuss opportunities to strengthen coordinated access for diverse communities. This important conversation reaffirmed the growing recognition of community-based organizations as essential partners in building a more integrated and equitable healthcare system.

We also proudly hosted the inaugural PCHS Affiliates Network meeting, which brought together affiliate organizations from across Canada and Australia.

This milestone reflects our shared commitment to collaboration, knowledge exchange, and the strengthening of culturally responsive services that benefit communities locally and globally.

June also underscored the importance of inclusion and wellness. During Pride Month, we reaffirmed our commitment to fostering a respectful, welcoming environment where everyone feels valued, supported, and empowered to be their authentic selves. We also recognized National Indigenous History Month by honouring the histories, cultures, and contributions of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples and by continuing our journey of learning and reconciliation.

Our Sahra Health Promotion and Prevention Team further advanced community wellness by hosting a Men’s Health Awareness Workshop on preventive healthcare, colorectal cancer screening, healthy lifestyle choices, and personal wellness planning, and by empowering participants with practical knowledge to support lifelong health.

As we enter the summer months, I extend my sincere gratitude to our staff, volunteers, Board of Directors, funders, partners, and community members for your continued trust and support. Together, we are building healthier individuals, stronger families, and more inclusive communities where everyone can thrive.

Wishing you and your loved ones a safe, healthy, and enjoyable summer.



JUNE IS

SENIORS MONTH

By: Jagdeep Kainth, Psychogeriatric Resource Consultant (PRC)

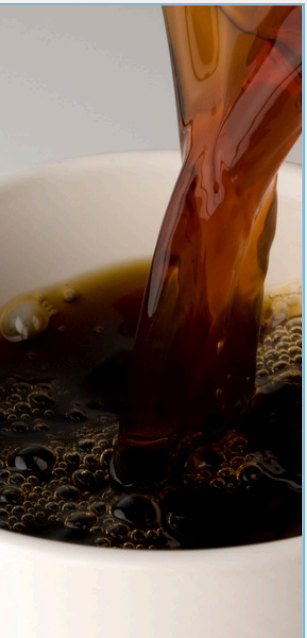
The month of June marks the start of summer, a season of new possibilities. It's a perfect time to celebrate and acknowledge our seniors and their contributions. June is celebrated as senior's month in Ontario. Municipalities throughout the province take the opportunity to recognize seniors in their communities. Seniors' month is not just an opportunity to thank our seniors for all they have done; it is also an opportunity to take steps to look after their health and wellbeing. Each day, our seniors engage in a multitude of wonderful activities that deserve commendation and applause. Whether it is through their work, creativity, or teaching, they make a significant impact on the lives of others. By volunteering their time and support, seniors play a vital role in their communities, assisting fellow seniors, contributing to local schools, organizing fundraisers, and serving those in need. That is why June is dedicated to recognizing and honoring the contributions of seniors in improving the lives of individuals, families, and communities. At Punjabi Community Health Services, our Geriatrics Team has devoted this entire month to celebrating seniors.

This year's Seniors Month theme is **"Let's Get Moving"**, which promotes healthy aging for older adults across the province. Older adults can take steps to improve their health by getting active, eating healthy, and staying socially connected. We have organized special activities within seniors' groups, inviting both internal and external experts to provide valuable information on topics such as healthy eating, diabetes management, hypertension, exercise, dementia, and social engagement.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), by 2030, one in six people worldwide will be aged 60 or older.



By 2050, the number of individuals aged 60 and above will double to 2.1 billion, with the percentage of those aged 80 and above projected to triple by 2050, reaching 426 million. Factors such as advancements in medical care, reduced infant mortality rates, the baby boomer generation, and increased life expectancies have led to this rapid growth of the older adult population.



As we celebrate Seniors Month and recognize the extraordinary contributions of older adults, it is essential to raise awareness about the programs and services available within our community, tailored to the needs of seniors. These initiatives promote healthy aging and reduce the risk of age-related illnesses. Age should never be a barrier to trying new things, making it the perfect time to start a new exercise program or regularly monitor blood pressure and blood glucose levels. Social engagement is equally vital for cognitive stimulation and emotional well-being.



In recent years, many of us have faced limitations beyond our control. However, it is crucial to prioritize our overall well-being—emotionally, physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually. Instead of dwelling on restrictions, let us focus on the actions that we can take to improve the quality of our lives.

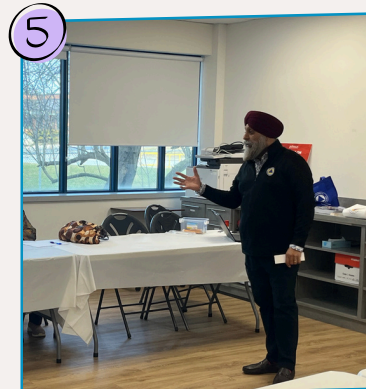
Here are a few suggestions to acknowledge and appreciate the seniors in our lives:

- Write a heartfelt message, send a letter, or make a phone call to check in on a senior.
- Spend quality time with them, enjoying a cup of coffee or tea and engaging in meaningful conversations.
- Volunteer at a retirement or long-term care home, offering companionship and support to seniors.
- Take the time to listen attentively to their stories and seek their wisdom and advice.
- Express gratitude to all the seniors in our lives for their love, support, and guidance, which have shaped us into who we are today.



We extend warm wishes for a Happy Seniors Month and express our deepest gratitude to all the seniors who have showered us with love and contributed to our personal growth!

Celebrating Seniors Month: Seniors Health Education Series



1. Rocky – Exercise & Yoga

- Gentle movement to improve flexibility, strength, and balance

2. Dr. Sakshi – Joint Pain & Arthritis

- Education on pain management and joint health.

3. Credit Valley Family Health Team – Healthy Aging

- Support for preventive care and overall wellness.

4. SHPP Team – Obesity Awareness

- Promoting healthy lifestyle and weight management.

5. Fire Department Team – Fire Safety

- Guidance on emergency preparedness and fire prevention.

ARAO EVENTS IN JUNE

Care, Identity, and Inclusive Community

By: Samandeep Mann and Brahmjot Dhillon



ARAO Team Attends IDAHOBIT Fundraiser Dinner and Show

On May 14, 2026, members of the ARAO (Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression) Team attended the annual IDAHOBIT (International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia) Fundraiser Dinner and Show hosted by Moyo Health and Community Services (Moyo HCS) at the Peel Art Gallery, Museum and Archives (PAMA) in Brampton.

The event brought together community members, organizations, and allies to celebrate diversity, inclusion, and equity while supporting the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. This year's global IDAHOBIT theme, "At the Heart of Democracy" emphasized the importance of creating communities where everyone feels safe, respected and valued.

Guests enjoyed a catered dinner, live entertainment, and a silent art auction featuring inspiring works by local queer and trans artists. The evening provided an opportunity to connect with community partners, learn from diverse voices and reaffirm ARAO's commitment to fostering equity, inclusion, and belonging for all.



ARAO Team Attends Peel Regional Police Pride Month Event

On June 10, members of the ARAO Team attended the Pride Month celebration hosted by Peel Regional Police in partnership with the Rainbow Sauga Alliance.

The event brought together police officers, first responders, community organizations, local leaders, and residents to celebrate Pride Month and demonstrate their shared commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging. Highlights included a Pride flag-raising ceremony, remarks from community leaders and meaningful conversations about allyship, mental health, and creating safe and welcoming spaces for everyone.

A keynote presentation by RCMP Civilian Member Jean Turner offered valuable insights into resilience, wellbeing, and the importance of supporting both first responders and the broader community. The event also showcased Peel Regional Police’s ongoing commitment to inclusion through initiatives such as the Safe Place Program and continued collaboration with community partners.

The ARAO Team was proud to participate in this event, strengthening community partnerships while reaffirming our commitment to building inclusive environments where everyone feels respected, valued and supported.



ARAO Team Participates in Peel Regional Police Race Against Racism

Members of the ARAO Team proudly participated in the 25th Annual Peel Regional Police Race Against Racism on June 13 at Mississauga Valley Community Centre Park.

The annual event brought together individuals, families, organizations and community partners to promote unity, respect and inclusion across Peel Region. Participants completed a 5-kilometre run, walk or stroll while enjoying community information booths, live entertainment and family-friendly activities.

The event also supports diverse student scholarships, helping young people pursue their educational goals.

By participating, the ARAO Team demonstrated its continued commitment to advancing equity, celebrating diversity and fostering a welcoming and inclusive community for everyone.



ARAO Committee Attends National Indigenous History Month Flag Raising Ceremony

On June 15, members of the ARAO Committee attended the National Indigenous History Month Flag Raising Ceremony hosted by the Town of Caledon at Town Hall.

The ceremony celebrated the rich histories, cultures, traditions, and lasting contributions of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. The event featured an Indigenous flag-raising ceremony and a meaningful performance by the Four Colours Drum group, providing an opportunity for reflection, learning and community connection.

Community members, local leaders, and organizations gathered to recognize the importance of Indigenous history while reaffirming a shared commitment to truth, reconciliation, respect and inclusion. Participation in this event reflected ARAO's ongoing commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility and reconciliation, while strengthening relationships with community partners and supporting a more inclusive future for all.



IDEA Caledon Pride Family Picnic

The 3rd Annual Pride Family Picnic in the Park was held on June 27, 2026, at Caledon East Park, bringing together residents of all ages for a joyful celebration of diversity, inclusion, and community. Hosted by IDEA Caledon, the free event welcomed families, friends and community members for an afternoon of connection, learning and fun.

The celebration featured live drag and comedy performances, including a special drag story time led by Sapphyre Poison. Visitors enjoyed arts and crafts, garden games, a scavenger hunt, and interactive activities hosted by the Caledon Public Library. Community organizations also hosted information booths, while Caledon OPP and Caledon Fire and Emergency Services displayed emergency vehicles, providing an engaging experience for children and families.

The event highlighted the importance of creating welcoming spaces where everyone feels valued and included. It also provided an opportunity for community members and organizations to come together in support of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community while celebrating diversity, strengthening connections and promoting a sense of belonging.



NATIONAL INDIGENOUS HISTORY MONTH: LEARNING, REFLECTION AND RECONCILIATION

By: Samandeep Mann, ARAO Member & IT Assistant



Every June, Canadians recognize National Indigenous History Month, a time to celebrate the rich histories, cultures, traditions, languages and enduring contributions of First Nations, Inuit and Metis Peoples. It is an opportunity to deepen our understanding of Indigenous perspectives, acknowledge the impacts of colonization and strengthen our collective commitment to truth and reconciliation.

There are many meaningful ways to learn about Indigenous cultures and histories. Reading books by Indigenous authors, attending cultural events, participating in healing circles, listening to Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers, exploring museums and exhibits and taking part in educational experiences such as the Blanket Exercise all provide valuable opportunities to broaden our understanding and appreciation of Indigenous Peoples and their diverse traditions.

One such educational experience is the Blanket Exercise, an interactive learning activity developed in collaboration with Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers and educators. The exercise helps participants understand the history of Indigenous Peoples in Canada from an Indigenous perspective by exploring the impacts of treaties, colonization, residential schools, the Sixties Scoop, and the resilience of First Nations, Inuit and Metis communities.

During the exercise, blankets are placed on the floor to represent the lands now known as Canada, often referred to by many Indigenous Peoples as Turtle Island. Participants stand on the blankets and are guided through significant moments in history. As the story unfolds, the blankets are folded or removed to symbolize the loss of land, culture, language and lives experienced by Indigenous communities because of colonial policies and practices.

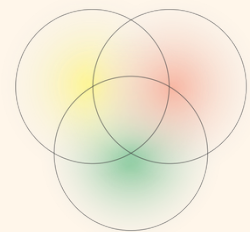
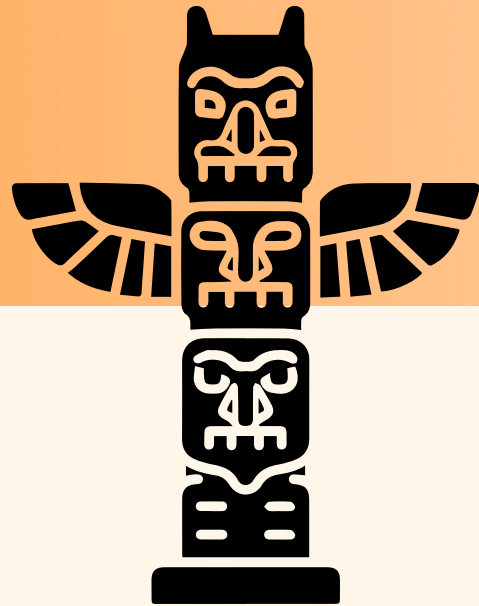
This month, ARAO team members had the opportunity to attend a Blanket Exercise facilitated by Santele's Healing Circles. The experience offered a powerful and engaging way to better understand Indigenous history, culture and lived experiences. Through storytelling, guided participation and thoughtful discussion, participants gained a deeper appreciation of the challenges Indigenous communities have faced, as well as their resilience, strength and ongoing contributions to Canadian society.

The Blanket Exercise concludes with a Talking Circle, where participants are invited to reflect on what they have learned, share their thoughts and engage in respectful dialogue. This creates a safe and supportive environment for learning while encouraging empathy, understanding and meaningful conversations.

National Indigenous History Month reminds us that reconciliation is an ongoing journey built on education, listening and mutual respect. By learning from Indigenous voices and participating in opportunities such as healing circles, cultural events and the Blanket Exercise, we can all contribute to building stronger relationships and more inclusive communities where Indigenous histories, cultures and perspectives are recognized, respected and celebrated throughout the year.

Recommended Resources

- Read books by Indigenous authors, such as Richard Wagamese, Waubgeshig Rice, Jesse Thistle, Tanya Talaga and Thomas King.
- Participate in Indigenous-led events including healing circles, Pow Wows, cultural celebrations and community gatherings.
- Experience the Blanket Exercise an interactive educational workshop that promotes learning through participation and reflection.
- Visit museums and cultural centres dedicated to Indigenous history and heritage.
- Listen to Indigenous podcasts, storytellers and Knowledge Keepers to gain a deeper understanding of Indigenous perspectives.



IMPORTANCE OF MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELLING IN THE ADDICTION FIELD

By: Lt. Col Rajan Basnet (Retd)
Addiction Case Manager

Mental health counselling for people using substances plays a critical role in treating concurrent disorders, identifying underlying psychological issues, and enhancing treatment outcomes. The significance of integrating mental health counselling into addiction treatment programs not only explores the relationship between mental health and substance abuse, but at the same time provides evidence-based counselling approaches and is considered beneficial for comprehensive, integrated care. The outcomes demonstrate that mental health counselling significantly enhances recovery rates, reduces relapse and promotes long-term wellness for individuals struggling with addiction.

Addiction has now become a complex issue affecting millions of people worldwide and is no longer restricted to substances and alcohol only. People have an addiction to online gambling, excessive use of social media, and even workaholism is an addiction. Research has shown that around 50-60% of individuals with substance use disorders also experience other mental health-related conditions such as depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder and PTSD (SAMHSA, 2019). It can also be said that addiction doesn't exist alone.



The traditional addiction treatment models often focus more on substance quitting without addressing underlying mental health issues. Many of those inappropriate approaches might result in high relapse rates, inadequate treatment outcomes, continued or intensified psychological suffering, increased risk of self-harm or suicide and poor quality of life even after undergoing treatment.

Mental health counselling is one of the proven practices, which addresses the root causes of substance abuse, simultaneously helps to treat co-occurring disorders, uses evidence-based therapeutic procedures leading to visible recovery and improves outcomes with long-term results.

Understanding the Connection Between Addiction and Mental Health

We must understand the dual diagnosis phenomenon; the simultaneous presence of mental health and addiction conditions exists in many cases. Which can be bi-directional, i.e. mental health leading to addiction (Individuals with depression may use substances as a coping mechanism) and addiction leading to mental health issues (Chronic substance use might alter brain functioning).



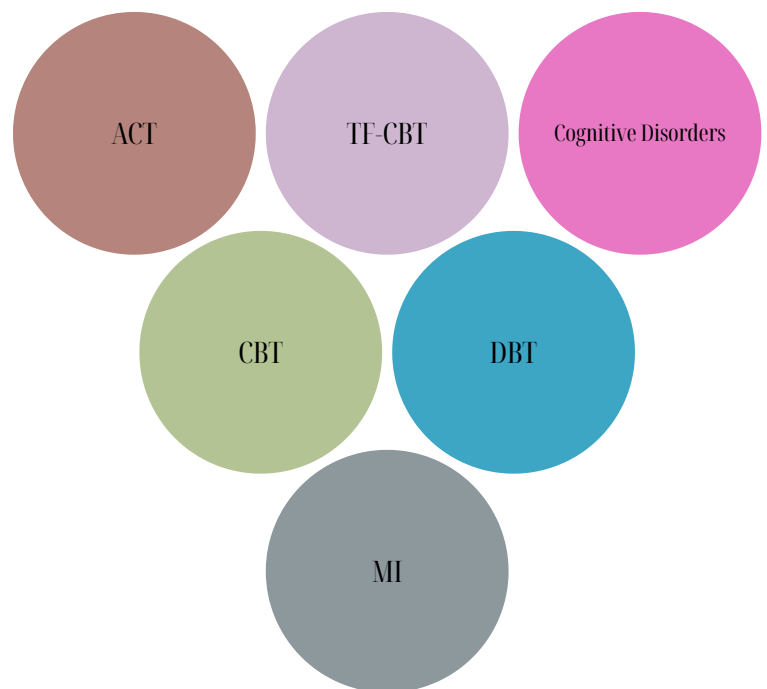
Moreover, understanding the neurobiological relationship between the brain's reward system and addiction and mental health is also essential. Dopamine dysregulation is a factor in both depression and addiction. Mood regulation is impacted by long-term drug usage because it disrupts brain circuits. Depression and addiction susceptibility are both influenced by stress hormones like cortisol. In both cases, impulse control and emotional processing are affected by dysfunction of the prefrontal cortex.

Role of Mental Health Counsellors in Dealing with Addiction

Before counselling intervention, a mental health counsellor performs critical diagnostic functions through psychiatric evaluation to identify underlying mental health conditions, conducts a biopsychosocial assessment to examine biological factors (genetic predisposition, medical history), explores psychological factors (trauma, cognitive patterns, coping mechanisms), and understands the cultural/environmental context.

After going through the various assessment processes, counsellors develop integrated treatment plans addressing specific addiction type and severity, identified mental health conditions(s), the individual's strengths and protective factors, the social support system they resort to, medical/physical health concerns and trauma history. Now, to implement the appropriate counselling intervention, counsellors employ **various models**:

- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)
- Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)
- Motivational Interviewing (MI)
- Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (TF-CBT)
- Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)
- Management of Concurrent Disorders





Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)

Through the behavioural analysis, the counsellor identifies thought patterns triggering substance use, develops coping strategies for cravings, addresses distorted thinking associated with the existing mental health condition, like depression/anxiety and builds problem-solving skills implementing CBT.

Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)

With the help of this therapy, the counsellor teaches clients various skills for emotional regulation, develops distress tolerance techniques, and improves interpersonal effectiveness.

Motivational Interviewing (MI)

Motivational interviewing is a counselling method that helps people resolve ambivalent feelings and insecurities to find the internal motivation they need to change their behaviour. It is a practical, empathetic, and short-term process that takes into consideration how difficult it is to make life changes (Exploring Counselling Types for Effective Addiction Treatment, 2024).

MI is a collaborative, goal-oriented communication style intended to strengthen personal motivation and commitment to change. The counselling process focuses on strengthening intrinsic motivation for change, resolving ambivalence about treatment, establishing the therapeutic alliance, and supporting sustained behavioural Change.

Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (TF-CBT)

It is an evidence-based, short-term treatment designed for children and adolescents who have experienced trauma. Mental health counselling adapts this to address PTSD and trauma symptoms, reduce trauma-related triggers for substance use, and process traumatic memories safely. This is more applicable for trauma-informed addiction treatment.

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)

ACT is an action-oriented psychotherapy that teaches clients to accept unavoidable difficult emotions and commit to actions that align with their personal values. The ultimate goal is to promote "psychological flexibility," the ability to live a meaningful life while effectively navigating challenges, develop values-based living, manage difficult emotions without substance use, and address co-occurring mental health conditions.



Management of Concurrent Disorders

Addiction and Mental health counsellors play a pivotal role in managing concurrent disorders by coordinating holistic, integrated treatment plans. They serve as a link between patients and psychiatrists, closely tracking how psychopharmacology interacts with substance use, supporting medication adherence, and continuously monitoring psychiatric stability.

Benefits of Mental Health Counselling in Addiction Treatment

Mental health counselling is essential in addiction treatment as it goes beneath the surface to address the root causes of substance use. It helps to recognize the client's personal triggers and swap out destructive habits for healthy coping strategies, which provides individuals the emotional resilience they need to handle various stressors, repair their relationships and prevent relapse over the long haul. Among the many benefits are the following.

Improved Effective Treatment Outcomes

This all-encompassing strategy directly lowers substance use impulses by concurrently treating co-occurring mental health conditions, giving people improved coping skills to manage and avoid relapse triggers successfully.

Enhanced Recovery Quality

By fostering improved emotional well-being and better social functioning, individuals are empowered to achieve greater employment stability and cultivate stronger family relationships. Ultimately, this holistic care plan approach supports greater life satisfaction and long-term fulfillment. Pursuing targeted personal growth and recovery leads to positive life-changing benefits.

Reduced Relapse Rates

Mental health counselling plays a critical role in relapse prevention by helping individuals identify high-risk situations, such as emotional triggers and depressive episodes and develop structured relapse prevention plans. Through targeted therapy, individuals learn effective coping strategies for difficult emotions and receive the ongoing support and monitoring necessary for long-term stability. This approach addresses the underlying depression and anxiety that frequently fuel relapse cycles.



Suicide Prevention

Effective suicide prevention for individuals with co-occurring disorders requires a comprehensive, multi-layered approach. It begins with continuous risk assessment and monitoring to catch warning signs early, paired with immediate safety planning and crisis intervention during high-risk moments. Stabilizing acute distress often involves targeted medication management for suicidal ideation. For long-term healing, individuals need ongoing psychological support to process deep-rooted issues. This holistic framework directly addresses underlying feelings of hopelessness and despair, offering a pathway toward sustained recovery. Up to 90% of suicide attempts involve substance use; mental health counselling significantly reduces this risk.

Holistic Well-Being

Holistic mental health counselling supports the whole person by balancing psychological and emotional regulation with physical self-care and strong social relationships. It also guides individuals through their vocational goals while honouring spiritual and existential values.

Ultimately, this comprehensive approach integrates all areas of life to help people discover deep personal meaning and lasting well-being.

Cost-Effectiveness

Integrating services provides significant economic benefits across multiple sectors. It lowers long-term treatment costs and reduces expensive hospitalizations and emergency visits by ensuring continuous care. Furthermore, it boosts workplace productivity, decreases the burden on social services and minimizes costly legal complications.

NUTRITION & GUT HEALTH AWARENESS: NOURISHING YOUR GUT FOR LIFELONG HEALTH

By: Tanya Vyas, SHPP Community Health Ambassador

Nutrition and gut health are vital connections between healthy eating and digestive wellness. As research continues to uncover the importance of the gut microbiome, the trillions of microorganisms living in our digestive tract. Health professionals are increasingly recognizing that gut health influences far more than digestion. It plays a significant role in immunity, nutrient absorption, and overall well-being. Promoting gut health through nutrition is therefore an important public health strategy for preventing illness and supporting healthy communities.

According to the Canadian Digestive Health Foundation (CDHF), the gut microbiome helps break down foods that the body can't digest on its own, particularly dietary fibre. These beneficial microorganisms also contribute to the development and regulation of the immune systems and help protect against harmful bacteria and pathogens. A healthy and diverse microbiome is now considered a key component of overall health.



For a prevention perspective, one of the most effective ways to support gut health is through a balanced, fiber-rich diet. Health Canada recommends regularly consuming vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and protein foods, while choosing plant-based proteins more often and making water the beverage of choice. These foods provide nutrients and dietary fiber that nourish beneficial gut bacteria and promote digestive regularity.

Prevention goes beyond food choices alone. The gut microbiome is influenced by lifestyle factors including physical activity, sleep quality, stress management, illness, and medication use. Maintaining healthy habits across these areas can help preserve a balanced gut environment and support immune function. The CDHF describes the gut as a “gatekeeper” of health because it acts as a barrier that helps determine what enters the body and what is kept out.

Nutrition and gut health awareness serve as a reminder that small, consistent lifestyle changes can have a lasting impact. Choosing fiber-rich foods, staying hydrated, being physically active, and prioritizing sleep are simple but powerful steps that support digestive health and disease prevention. By investing in our gut health today, we can build a stronger foundation for lifelong wellness.

THE LASTING IMPACT OF FAMILY DYNAMICS ON MENTAL HEALTH

By: Jessica Rakhra, Peer Support Worker – Rapid Response Saving Lives



A child's home is often their first experience of love, safety, and emotional connection. However, for many children, home can also become a source of fear, conflict, and trauma that shapes their emotional well-being long into adulthood. Family relationships play a major role in influencing emotional development and behaviors during childhood (Buka et al., 2022). While supportive family environments can foster resilience and healthy coping skills, abusive or conflict-filled homes can negatively affect mental health across the lifespan.

Childhood maltreatment, including emotional, physical, and sexual abuse as well as neglect, has been strongly linked to long-term psychological difficulties (Leeb et al., 2011). Norman et al (2012) found that children who experience abuse are at a higher risk of developing depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and personality disorders later in life. Many survivors of childhood abuse also struggle with low self-worth and difficulties forming healthy relationships.

Trauma can additionally shape the way individuals view themselves and others, often leading to harmful thinking patterns known as cognitive distortions (Leeb et al., 2011). For example, individuals who experienced abuse may blame themselves for situations outside of their control or constantly expect rejection from others (Leeb et al., 2011). These thought patterns can contribute to anxiety, shame, and emotional instability throughout adulthood (Leeb et al., 2011).

Mental health challenges can also arise when children witness ongoing parental conflict. Exposure to arguments, hostility, or intimate partner violence may negatively affect a child's emotional and social development (Hess, 2022). Studies have found that children exposed to parental conflict may experience reduced self-esteem, aggression, loneliness, and difficulty forming healthy relationships (Hess, 2022). Over time, these experiences may contribute to depression and social isolation (Hess, 2022).

In contrast, supportive and loving family environments can act as protective factors against emotional difficulties (Butler et al., 2022). Caring and emotionally available caregivers help children develop resilience, coping skills, and emotional security. Creating safe and supportive family environments is essential not only for improving children's well-being today, but also for breaking cycles of trauma and building healthier generations for the future.

ALZHEIMER'S & BRAIN AWARENESS MONTH

By: Ramanpreet Kaur, SHPP Community Health Ambassador

June is recognized as **Alzheimer's & Brain Awareness Month**, a time dedicated to increasing awareness about Alzheimer's disease, other forms of dementia, and the importance of maintaining brain health. As Canada's population continues to age, promoting brain health and understanding cognitive disorders has become increasingly important.

Dementia is an umbrella term used to describe a range of symptoms that affect memory, thinking, and the ability to perform everyday activities. Alzheimer's disease is the most common type of dementia, accounting for approximately 60–70% of cases worldwide (World Health Organization [WHO], 2025). According to the Public Health Agency of Canada, more than 700,000 Canadians are currently living with dementia, and this number is expected to increase in the coming decades.

Brain Health and Dementia Risk

Although age is the strongest known risk factor for dementia, it is not an inevitable part of aging. Regular physical activity, healthy eating habits, social engagement, quality sleep, and managing chronic conditions such as diabetes, obesity, and high blood pressure may help reduce the risk of cognitive decline.



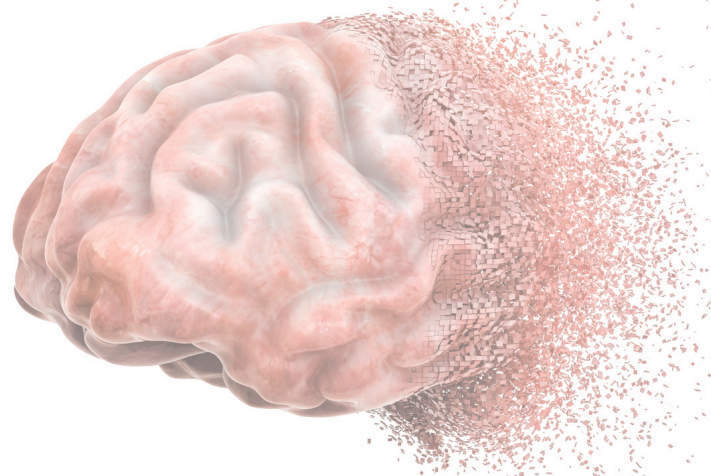
Recognizing the Signs

Common symptoms of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias may include:

- Memory loss that affects daily life
- Difficulty completing familiar tasks
- Confusion with time or place
- Challenges with problem-solving and decision-making
- Changes in mood, behavior, or personality

Early assessment and diagnosis can help individuals and families access appropriate treatment, support services, and future care planning.

Alzheimer's & Brain Awareness Month serves as a reminder that supporting brain health is important at every stage of life. By understanding the risk factors and recognizing early signs of cognitive decline, individuals can take proactive steps toward maintaining their overall well-being.



PTSD AWARENESS DAY

By: Savita Saini, SHPP Prevention Specialist

Every year on **June 27, PTSD Awareness Day** shines a light on a mental health condition that affects millions of people worldwide. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a serious mental health condition that can develop after experiencing or witnessing a traumatic event such as a natural disaster, accident, violence, military combat, or the sudden loss of a loved one.

While it is normal to feel stressed or upset after a traumatic experience, PTSD occurs when these feelings persist for months or even years, interfering with daily life. People living with PTSD may experience flashbacks, nightmares, severe anxiety, difficulty sleeping, mood changes, or a constant feeling of being on edge. These symptoms can impact relationships, work, school, and overall well-being.

One of the biggest challenges surrounding PTSD is the stigma associated with mental health. Many individuals hesitate to seek help because they fear judgment or believe they should be able to “move on” from their experiences. However, PTSD is not a sign of weakness—it is a recognized medical condition that deserves understanding, support, and treatment.

The good news is that recovery is possible. Effective treatments such as cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), trauma-focused therapy, support groups, and medication can help individuals manage symptoms and improve their quality of life. Early intervention and access to mental health resources can make a significant difference in the healing process.



PTSD Awareness Day encourages us to educate ourselves, support those affected, and foster conversations about mental health. By listening without judgment, offering compassion, and promoting access to professional help, we can help create a community where individuals feel safe seeking support.

Mental health is just as important as physical health. This PTSD Awareness Day, take a moment to learn more about the condition, check in with loved ones, and remember that healing begins with understanding. Together, we can raise awareness, reduce stigma, and support those living with the invisible wounds of trauma.



SOUTH ASIAN INTERNAL SUPPORT NETWORK (SAISN) EVENT

Advancing Cultural Understanding in Public Service

By: Manprit Duhra – Case Manager &
Prakriti Dobhal- Case Manager

On **May 27th, 2026**, the PCHS Mental Health team visited Halton Regional Police Headquarters to share their knowledge and expertise at the South Asian Internal Support Network (SAISN) Event.

In celebration of South Asian Heritage Month, PCHS successfully delivered a dynamic 90-minute session in partnership with a regional police service, marking a significant step forward in building meaningful collaboration and advancing inclusive public service practices.

The session highlighted key themes such as the diversity of South Asian communities, the importance of representation, and the role of cultural understanding in communication and mental health response. Its greatest success was in how these insights were received and valued by participants. The ability to connect these concepts directly to real-world policing contexts created a strong foundation for ongoing dialogue and learning.



The session was met with strong engagement and positive reception from the Halton Police, with participants expressing that the content was both highly relevant and impactful to their day-to-day work. The discussions resonated deeply, particularly in relation to building trust with diverse communities, strengthening cultural awareness, and improving service delivery. This alignment reinforced a shared commitment to fostering more inclusive, responsive, and community-informed policing practices.

Importantly, this engagement has opened the door to continued partnership. The Halton Regional Police expressed clear interest in future opportunities to collaborate, recognizing the value of ongoing education and relationship-building in this space.

Overall, this initiative brings the PCHS mission to life by delivering relevant, impactful programming while also establishing long-term relationships that extend beyond a single event. The momentum generated through this session demonstrates strong potential for continued collaboration and growth.

COOL DOWN & UNWIND: A FUN-FILLED WATER DAY

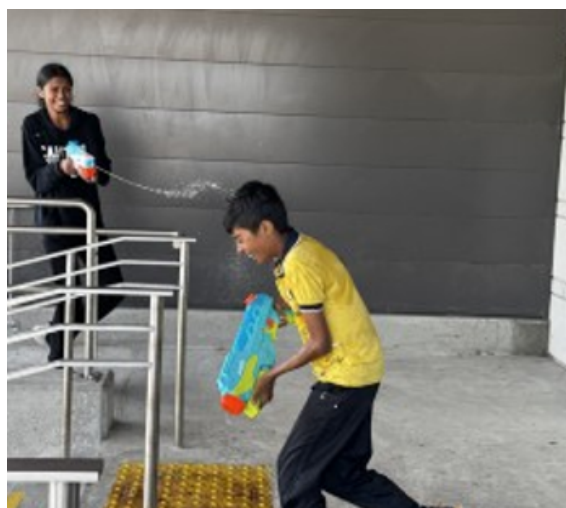
By: Michelle Yousofi – Youth Worker

Our Cool Down & Unwind Outdoor Water Day was a great success and gave youth the chance to enjoy the warm weather while having fun with their peers. The day was filled with laughter, teamwork, and plenty of ways to stay cool.

Youth took part in exciting water balloon fights, water gun battles, and a variety of outdoor games. These activities encouraged teamwork, friendly competition, and positive social interaction while helping participants stay active and engaged throughout the day.

The event gave youth an opportunity to make new friends, build confidence, and create positive summer memories in a safe and welcoming environment. Everyone showed great teamwork and sportsmanship while enjoying the different activities.

To keep everyone refreshed, participants enjoyed pizza, drinks, and freezes throughout the day. The frozen treats were especially popular and helped everyone cool down between activities.



Overall, the event was a fun and successful day that brought youth together to enjoy the outdoors, stay active, and make lasting memories. The smiles and excitement seen throughout the day showed just how much the participants enjoyed the experience.



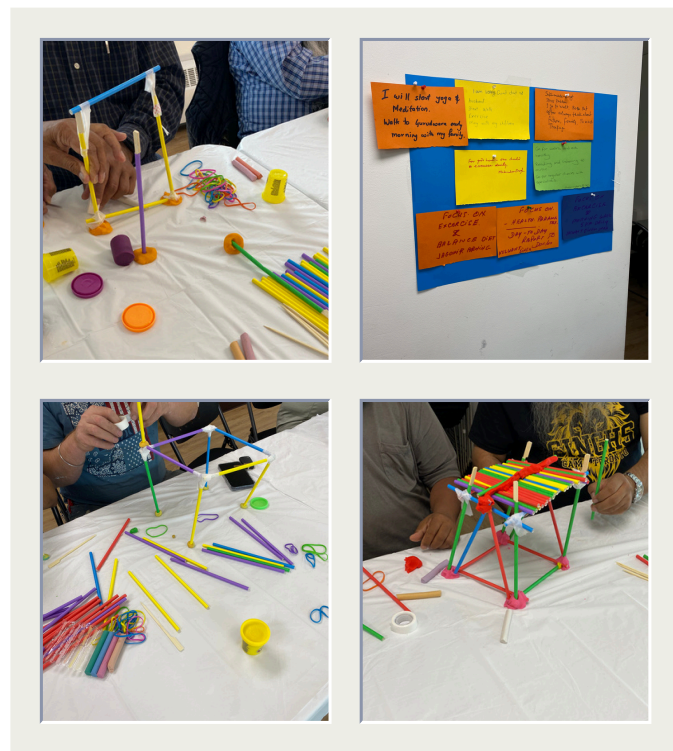
CANADIAN

MEN'S HEALTH MONTH

By: Fariha Muqueet, SHPP Prevention Specialist



In recognition of Men's Health Month, PCHS hosted an engaging workshop to raise awareness about the importance of men's health. The workshop encouraged open conversations about overall well-being. Participants took part in a paper airplane relay challenge. The activity demonstrated how small adjustments can lead to better outcomes, just as small, healthy changes can improve overall well-being. Participants also worked together to build 3D structures. This hands-on activity encouraged creativity, teamwork, and problem-solving while promoting self-care and meaningful engagement. The workshop also included a presentation on healthy eating, preventive care, navigating wraparound supports, and the importance of colon cancer screening. Together, these sessions encouraged men to take proactive steps toward improving their health and well-being.



PCHS in the Community



PCHS Geriatrics and SHPP Staff at the City of Brampton outreach event



PCHS Mental Health Team at the South Asian Internal Support Network Event



SHPP Team at Roots Wellness Fair

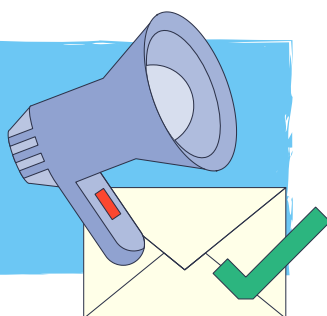


SHPP Team at the Living with Wellness Festival

PCHS at the Living With Wellness Arts Festival 2026



PCHS was proud to attend the Living With Wellness Arts Festival 2026, a two-day celebration of wellness, arts, culture, community, and connection. Our team engaged with community members, shared health promotion resources, and connected with attendees through meaningful conversations.



WELCOME

NEW STAFF



Anjali Singh
Social Worker-Case
Management – Canada
Summer Job Program



Har Kaur
Social Worker-Case
Management – Canada
Summer Job Program



Rakshita Singh
Case Manager, Mental
Health Program



Khushi Issar
Office Administrative
Assistant - Canada
Summer Job Program



Derrick La
Office Administrative
Assistant - Canada Summer
Job Program



Harvinder Singh
Program Support Worker-
Meals Delivery & Wellness
(Langar on Wheels Program)



Karman Gill
Case Manager, Sahara
Better Families
Program




Bijal Soni
Settlement Counsellor
(NSP)



CLIENT


T E S T I M O N I A L S



I am very thankful for the support I received, especially from Wellbeing Navigator Pooja Vohra. She was always available to guide me and provided help at every step, from documentation to employment support. Her approach was kind, patient, and understanding, and she always took the time to listen to my concerns. Because of her support, I feel more confident and settled in Canada. I truly appreciate all the help and guidance I received during this process. - **Settlement Program**




Madalsa Mittal, Employment Specialist at PCHS, provided outstanding support for my job search journey in Canada. She was professional, knowledgeable, and responsive to my needs, offering valuable guidance and encouragement every step of the way. Her dedication and expertise have greatly boosted my confidence towards securing employment. - **Settlement Program**



Paint Night Workshop

July 15, 2026
3:30PM-5:30PM



Come join us for a relaxing and creative workshop focused on mental wellness, self-expression, stress relief, and the joy of painting! 

Event Features



Wellness Education



Refreshments



Music and Mingling



Painting Activities



Community Resources

An Evening of Art, Fun, and Relaxation



Location: 60 West Dr Brampton,
ON L6T 3T6, Room 101



(437)-243-3735



supportline@pchs4u.com



Scan QR Code
to Register or call
437-243-3735



Launching the Recruitment Phase of the Peel Families Diabetes Prevention Program (PFDPP)

The Peel Family Diabetes Prevention Program (PFDPP) is a one-year, research-based initiative led by Institute of Better Health (IBH) at Trillium Health Partners in collaboration with community partners including WellFort CHC and Punjabi Community Health Services.

The program is now in its recruitment phase, seeking South Asian and Black African/Caribbean family dyads living in the Peel Region who may be at risk of developing Type 2 Diabetes. The study aims to better understand how culturally responsive, community-based health and wellness coaching can support diabetes prevention within diverse families.

Participants (one caregiver aged 18+ and one youth aged 14–25) will engage in a 12-month program that includes health and wellness coaching, group support sessions, motivational messaging, and educational resources focused on healthy eating, physical activity, mental well-being, and lifestyle change. Families in the research study will also contribute to evidence-building on effective, community-driven prevention strategies and receive an honorarium for their participation in research activities.

This initiative represents a collaborative effort to strengthen culturally grounded approaches to chronic disease prevention and promote long-term health and well-being within communities across the Peel Region.

For more details, please refer to the flyer on the next page!

COMMUNITY TYPE 2 DIABETES PREVENTION RESEARCH-BASED PROGRAM

We are looking for Family Participants!

The **Family and Child Health Initiative (FCHI)** at the **Institute for Better Health, Trillium Health Partners (Mississauga)**, alongside several Peel-based community organizations such as **WellFort and PCHS** are conducting a one-year research-based program to help prevent Type 2 Diabetes among Black, African, Caribbean, and South Asian families living in the region of Peel.

This research-informed program looks at how health and wellness coaching can help families reduce their risk of Type 2 Diabetes. We are looking for **70 Black, African, and Caribbean families and 70 South Asian families** who live in Peel Region to take part.

Who Can Participate?

- A family group with one family caregiver aged 18+ and one youth aged 14–25 living together
- Self-identify as either Black, African, or Caribbean, or South Asian
- Can participate in the research-informed program for 12 months
- Can speak, read, and understand English well

Participants will receive an honorarium for each hour of research data collection visits.

Interested in Participating as a Family Pair?

Contact us at:

+1 437-231-6951

hamna.khan@thp.ca

Or click on this link:

<https://ibhresearch.thp.ca/surveys/?s=WHYHNTNPXAAWMNNN>

Or scan this QR :



Please feel free to share this participation opportunity with clients, colleagues, and friends who may be eligible and interested.

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Hardeep Mann CPA
PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION

Community Supporters

Jaswinder Bassan





PCHS Locations

Head Office

2980 Drew Road, Unit 241
Mississauga, ON L4T 0A7

Brampton Office Location

60 West Drive, Unit 202 and 101,
Brampton, ON L6T 3T6

Community Door

7700 Hurontario St, Unit 1300,
Bampton, ON L6Y 4M3

Malton Youth Hub

3545 Morning Star Drive, Jonathan
Davis Centre, Mississauga, ON L4T
1Y3

Different Spokes:

8 Nelson Street West
Brampton, ON L6X 1B7

Southfields Community Center

225 Dougall Ave.
Caledon, ON L7C 3M7



905-677-0889



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