



## December 2023 Newsletter

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"Sometimes, a flame can be utterly extinguished. Sometimes, a flame can shrink and waver, but sometimes a flame refuses to go out. It flares up from the faintest ember to illuminate the darkness, to burn in spite of overwhelming odds."

— Karen Hesse

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### December Holidays and Observances

December is a busy, and often stressful, month with many different days of awareness and celebrations taking place. December 1st is [World Aids Day](#), Dec 3rd is [International Day of Persons with Disabilities](#), December 2nd is [International Day for the Abolition of Slavery](#), December 5th is [International Volunteer Day](#), December 6th is [National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women](#), December 10th is [Human Rights Day](#), and more!



To all those celebrating Hanukkah, we wish you a Happy Hanukkah! May you enjoy a season filled with love and light.

To those who celebrate Christmas, Merry Christmas! We hope you have a safe and relaxing holiday season.

To all who celebrate Kwanzaa, may your Kwanzaa be blessed with hope, peace and abundance.

To see what other days of importance or celebration there are in December, [click here](#).

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### What Are the Holiday Blues?

"Feelings of sadness that last throughout the holiday season—especially during the months of November and December—are often referred to as the holiday blues or holiday depression.

The holidays are usually viewed as a time of happiness and rejoicing. But for some people, it can be a period of painful reflection, sadness, loneliness, anxiety, and depression.

Even people who love the holidays can experience the blues during this busy season. The holidays are often a time of high emotion and demands, which can leave a lot of people feeling stressed and exhausted."



## Government of Canada Supports Non-profit Organization to Advance Grief Literacy

"Most people will experience grief, whether related to the death of someone close to them, the loss of their health and independence, or any other significant loss that is deeply felt. It is a response to loss and everyone's experience is unique and valid. It can also be an experience that is difficult to talk about and as a result, people experiencing grief often struggle alone, and are unaware of what services are available to them.

Canadian Grief Alliance 

That is why today [November 16, 2023], the Honourable Mark Holland, Minister of Health, announced \$1 million in funding over two years to the Canadian Grief Alliance, in partnership with the Canadian Virtual Hospice and the Canadian Alliance for Children's Grief, for their Advancing Grief Literacy in Canada project. This funding will support the development of online resources, learning opportunities, and a national awareness campaign to help those grieving and those who support them to better understand their experience, be prepared to respond constructively to their grief, and know how to access available services during difficult times."

You can learn more about this announcement [here](#). To learn more about the Canadian Grief Alliance and their Advancing Grief Literacy in Canada project, [click here](#). To access their public consultation, [click here](#).

## Why Canada Needs a Basic Income Guarantee



"Amid soaring costs of essentials, could a basic income guarantee be the game-changer? Both the market economy and welfare system are falling short, with minimum-wage workers, and people receiving social assistance trapped thousands of dollars below the poverty line. Imagine a transformative solution: a basic income guarantee for every adult, employed or not. Critics may dismiss it as a lofty dream, but Canada has already experimented with basic income models, including a brief pilot program for working-age adults in Ontario."

This panel discussion was presented by Laurier Centre for the Study of Canada on November 20th, 2023. To learn more, [click here](#).

## Hope is Messy. Choose Hope Anyway.

"I often fall victim to hopelessness and nihilism. Sometimes,

when I look at the news, it feels like there is no reason to keep going. Fascism is on the rise. Unchecked gun culture in America kills countless people every year. If climate change doesn't kill us all, global wars will.



When I look at everything going on, it's really easy to feel like there's just no point to anything. Why bother? The world is falling to pieces around us, so why put any effort into anything at all?"

A note from DCO: The author of this article includes their personal views on religion. These views do not reflect the opinions of DCO and may be offensive to some readers.

[Read more...](#)

## Where do I place the sadness?

"I look back at 13 years of parenting. Gone, it seems, in a flash. Moments made up of the banal, the wonder, the stress, the joy, the washing up, the cooking dinners, the tears, toys, and tantrums. Long school holidays, wiping the table, cleaning wee off the floor, reading stories — all under a cloud of sleep-deprived emotions. Holding hands at night, telling them it's okay, listening to their ideas, the pets they mourned, the friends who loved them then moved away, and all the tiny things forgotten in the rain-filled school run mornings with coats too big; blink, too small. Holidays, Santa, birthdays, Easter hunts, wet weekends, board games, cinema trips, walking the dogs, woods, tree climbing, dressing up, superheroes, first steps, first firsts, and much more through the sleepy weeks landing always on Sundays where time is asleep. You feel forever stuck with young children who see you as a god, delivering endless snacks like a hero with a stash of tangerines plucked from the world — a world you control, a tragic mirage, like a rainbow. And then you blink, washing dishes, folding uniform, tidying rooms, picking up action figures, books, Lego. What once was a shiny symbol of where we are, now a museum piece of shadows cast by the child no longer as he stands on the threshold of teenage life."



While Movember has come to an end, it is important to carry on conversations about men's mental health, fatherhood, masculinity, and more. This article shares an important perspective on parenthood and how the passage of time can impact fathers.

[Continue reading...](#)

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## Updates from the Government of Ontario



### Ontario Recruiting More Personal Support Workers into Long-Term Care and Home Care

"The Ontario government is investing more than \$300 million over three years to help thousands of people launch careers as personal support workers in long-term care homes and in the home and community care sector. Recruiting more personal support workers is part of the province's Your Health plan to connect long-term care residents to more hours of direct care and expand home care services.

"Our government is fixing long-term care by training, hiring and retaining thousands of people to provide high quality care for residents," said Stan Cho, Minister of Long-Term Care. "These incentives will help people launch rewarding careers, increase the hours of direct care our residents connect to, and support the staffing needs of rural, remote and northern long-term care homes."

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## Ontario Expanding Rapid Training Programs

"The Ontario government is investing \$5 million through the Micro-credentials Challenge Fund, to help more Ontarians quickly upgrade their skills for good-paying jobs in health care, auto, advanced manufacturing and other in-demand sectors. "Our government is bridging the gap between postsecondary education and the labour market to equip learners with the specific skills employers are looking for," said Jill Dunlop, Minister of Colleges and Universities. "This investment will help institutions create more flexible, industry-relevant micro-credentials that provide learners with a competitive edge in the workforce.""

[Learn more...](#)

## Ontario Investing in Free Training for Racialized and Indigenous Entrepreneurs

"Ontario is investing an additional \$15 million over three years in the Racialized and Indigenous Supports for Entrepreneurs (RAISE) program to provide free access to business coaching, training and grants. The program will prepare more than 1,200 Indigenous, Black and other racialized entrepreneurs, including 450 entrepreneurs in 2023-24, launch and grow successful businesses, creating great jobs for Ontarians, providing goods and services people need and fostering vibrant and inclusive communities."

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## Ontario Training Veterans for In-Demand Careers

"The Ontario government is investing \$4.3 million in four innovative training projects to help 356 Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) members prepare for in-demand jobs and transition to civilian life. Every year, 8,000 Canadian Armed Forces members are released from service.

"Men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces give their all for this country. When the time comes to hang up their uniform, they deserve to know help will be there," said David Piccini, Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development. "Under the leadership of Premier Ford, our government is proud to invest in programs that help our veterans to find well-paying and rewarding careers and build better lives."

[Continue reading...](#)

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## News from and for our Member Centres

We regret to announce that the ONTX text and chat program will be ceasing operations on January 30th, 2024. Text and chat services will remain available until that date, however, they will no longer be accessible starting January 31st, 2024. If you are seeking support alternatives, we encourage you to visit our website at [www.dcontario.org/locations](http://www.dcontario.org/locations) to locate your nearest Member centre, some of which provide their



## The Clyde Mental Health and Addictions Awareness Project

In honour of Clyde and his family, this month we have chosen to highlight [Men's Group](#).



"Men want to overcome challenges and grow, but they don't have the right people around them to help them grow. Despite having friends, family & coworkers around each day, most men don't get to talk about what's on their minds. It doesn't matter if you're facing something super heavy or if you just want more social time with the guys, our men's community will help you get over your challenges faster and you'll enjoy the social time."

### In other news...

#### The launch of 9-8-8

Starting November 30th, 2023, people across Canada will be able to call and text 9-8-8, a new three-digit service, for help when they need it most. 9-8-8 will be for anyone in Canada who is thinking about suicide, or who is worried about someone they know.



#### Best winter experiences in Ontario

Ontario is incredible to visit all year round, but it's especially enchanting to travel here during the winter. Whether you want to experience snow for the first time, try out some classic winter sports, or relax with hot drinks in a cozy café, there's something for everyone to love about spending your winter holidays in Ontario. Pack a ski jacket or winter coat, so you'll be protected from the cold and ready to enjoy all the wonders of Ontario's winter season.



[Here](#) are the top must-do winter experiences in Ontario.

### DCO Updates

#### Learning Forum Updates

Important updates and refreshes continue with our Learning Forum content. We now have many new and updated modules uploaded to our website with more on the way very soon.



#### Spirit of Volunteerism Committee

Monthly SOV webinars for Member staff and volunteers are held on the second or third Wednesday of each month from 12:00PM - 1:00PM EST. Upcoming webinars are as follows:

- December 13th, 2023 - Holiday Preparedness; Open Mic Discussion
- January 17th, 2024 - Post-Holiday Letdown and "Winter Blues"





Registration links are shared via email with Member leadership in the weeks leading up to each webinar, and are now being shared on our new Spirit of Volunteerism Community available to all Learning Forum users on Thinkific.

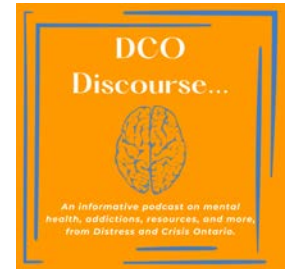
## Website

To learn more about Distress and Crisis Ontario, our member organizations, and current news and events, check out our website at [dcontario.org](http://dcontario.org). We are currently undergoing an update to our website to ensure we continue to provide the best services possible which is set to launch this month.



## Podcast

Our podcast, "DCO Discourse..." continues to feature a variety of mental health topics with new episodes being released every Monday. In November our Marketing and Communications Manager, Katelyn Doyle, shared a series on Food Security with guest Anne Anderson. Anne is not only a community pastor, leading the thirdspace alternative worshipping community, she also actively participates in teaching contextual ministry courses and guest lecturing in various academic programs, started the Distro food program at Laurier, and is also a PhD candidate in Martin Luther University's PhD in Human Relationships program with a specialization in Pastoral Leadership. They talked mainly about food insecurity and what that looks like for post secondary students, but there was still quite a bit of other crossover in their conversation.



Click our logo to the right to listen. If you have any feedback or requests for future content, please [click here](#).

## Becoming a Member

If you are interested in becoming a Member of the Ontario Association of Distress Centre, currently operating as Distress and Crisis Ontario, please [click here](#) to read our Member Benefits Package. Any questions can be sent to us by email at [info@dcontario.org](mailto:info@dcontario.org).



Thank you for supporting Distress and Crisis Ontario. [Click here](#) if you would like to donate through [CanadaHelps.org](http://CanadaHelps.org), or [click here](#) to purchase a Blue Jay Poster, as shown to the left, through ONTogether and support us that way.



## DCO Upcoming Events and Schedule of Meetings

### Board Meetings

Friday Jan 12, 2024 at 10:00am EST  
Friday Apr 19, 2024 at 10:00am EST

### SOV Webinars

Upcoming members-only lunch and learn webinars for staff and volunteer responders are as follows:

- December 13th, 2023 - Holiday Preparedness; Open Mic Discussion
- January 17th, 2024 - Post-Holiday Letdown and "Winter Blues"



## Distress And Crisis Ontario

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