



June 2023 Newsletter

"June is the time for being in the world in new ways, for throwing off the cold and dark spots of life." — Joan D. Chittister

June Holidays and Observances

Distress and Crisis Ontario would like to wish a Happy Fathers Day to all the fathers and father-figures who we hope will be celebrated on June 18th. We know days of acknowledgement often carry grief alongside celebration and would like to remind everyone to be gentle with one another. If you need support, our Member centres and ONTX are [here](#).



June is also Pride Month, National Indigenous History Month, Brain Injury Awareness Month, Canadian Men's Health Month, [and more](#). Information on National Indigenous History Month and Pride Month can be found in the "In other news..." section below.

To see what other days of importance there are in June [click here](#).

For a Queer Community in Los Angeles, This Public Park is a Lifeline - From "Where We Are: A Visual Series" from the New York Times

"On a Sunday afternoon, Rory Manns, 25, strolled into the park, soccer ball in hand. Rory's friends brought blankets, bags of snacks and a charcuterie board. In this sacred space, everyone had an offering to share.



Located to the west of Downtown Los Angeles, the Vista Hermosa Natural Park is a pocket of rolling woodlands that cradle streams and lush meadows. It has always been a space of community, peppered with picnic areas, a playground and an amphitheater. But during the pandemic, when so many other gathering places were closed, its power came into focus for Rory, who is nonbinary and uses they/them pronouns, and the other queer and trans young adults in their cohort."

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The Perfectionism Trap

"As a young university lecturer two decades ago, I taught a course on 19th-century American literature. Though I loved the period, my students were less enamoured. Most would give up on "Moby-Dick" or Ralph Waldo Emerson's "Essays" after only a few pages, then sit in seminars coiled in silence, hoping that I wouldn't call on them.



Roy was different. He was prodigiously well-read and discussed our texts with passionate intensity, which his classmates observed with a mixture of perplexity and awe. At the end of term, most students handed in efficient and entirely unremarkable essays. But Roy came to my office two days before the deadline begging for an extension."

[Read more...](#)

Zarna Garg, the Indian Mom Making the World Laugh

"In the Hindu epic, the Mahabharata, King Drupada sets a tall task for anyone wishing to marry his daughter Draupadi: they must string a bow and shoot a revolving fish five times in the eye — only by looking at its reflection in a bowl of water. If the premise sounds ridiculous today, enter comedian Zarna Garg.



When she felt she had reached a "marriageable" age, she created a filtering process of her own. She posted a personal ad on a "primitive" website for South Asians — during the heyday of AOL in the late 1990s — saying she was ready to get married, was looking for an Indian man who was "brilliant" and "ambitious," and was not interested in friends. She got hundreds of responses, and many men flew to Cleveland to see her because, well, they were excited to speak to a woman directly, not to an aunty or grandma. But one man emailed her from Zurich to ask if she was joking.

Little did he know that years later, the two would marry and Garg, now 48, would make cracking jokes a career. In just half a decade, she has grown her Instagram following to over 650,000, gone viral thanks to actor Viola Davis, written an award-winning screenplay, signed on to star in a film with Karan Soni of Deadpool fame, and is now out with an hour-long comedy special on Amazon Prime Video, One in a Billion. She's on a roll."

To continue reading Zarna's story, [click here](#), this is a gifted article and will require an email address to read. Image from @zarnagarg on Instagram.

A.I. Poses 'Risk of Extinction,' Industry Leaders Warn

"A group of industry leaders warned on Tuesday that the artificial intelligence technology they were building might one day pose an existential threat to humanity and should be considered a societal risk on a par with pandemics and nuclear wars.



"Mitigating the risk of extinction from A.I. should be a global priority alongside other societal-scale risks, such as pandemics and nuclear war," reads a one-sentence statement released by the Center for AI Safety, a nonprofit organization. The open

letter was signed by more than 350 executives, researchers and engineers working in A.I.

The signatories included top executives from three of the leading A.I. companies: Sam Altman, chief executive of OpenAI; Demis Hassabis, chief executive of Google DeepMind; and Dario Amodei, chief executive of Anthropic."

[Continue reading...](#)

Updates from the Government of Ontario



Applications Open! Sign Up Today for Ontario's Learn and Stay Grant

"Beginning [May 16th, 2023], students can apply for the newly-expanded Learn and Stay Grant. The grant provides full, upfront funding for tuition, books and other costs for students who enrol in an eligible nursing, paramedic or medical laboratory technologist program and agree to stay in underserved communities to work after graduation. The program is designed to encourage students to learn and stay locally, helping to bring in-demand health care workers to communities that need them most across the province."

[Learn more...](#)

Ontario Increasing Homelessness Prevention Support for Indigenous People

"The Ontario government is investing an additional \$2.9 million for the Miziwe Biik Development Corporation – for a total of \$10.4 million annually – to support homelessness prevention efforts in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) through the province's Indigenous Supportive Housing Program (ISHP).

This funding is part of Ontario's historic \$202 million increase in homelessness prevention funding through the 2023 Budget, for a total of \$695 million annually. Of this total, approximately \$41.5 million is being distributed through the ISHP: \$10.4 million through Miziwe Biik Development Corporation and \$31.1 million through Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services (OAHS). The remaining \$653.9 million is being distributed to service managers across the province through the Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP)."

[Continue reading...](#)

Ontario Launches Free Job Training for People with Disabilities

"The Ontario government is investing \$6.5 million to support five innovative projects to help more than 3,770 people with disabilities find meaningful jobs with businesses in their communities. These projects will connect jobseekers to careers in a variety of sectors, including health care, information technology, retail and hospitality. More than 2.6 million people in Ontario live with a disability, which can significantly increase risk of unemployment."

[Learn more...](#)

Ontario Now Requires Naloxone Kits in At-Risk Workplaces

"The Ontario government is now requiring at-risk employers to ensure their workplaces have a life-saving naloxone kit on hand and workers trained on how to use them. As of April, more than 1,000 free nasal spray naloxone kits have been distributed to businesses around the province through Ontario's Workplace Naloxone Program, while businesses may also obtain their own kits. In 2022, over 2,500 people died from opioid-related causes in Ontario."

[Continue reading...](#)

News from and for our Member Centres

Our upcoming Annual General Meeting and Conference - *Networking Reimagined: Member Reunion* has now been pivoted to a virtual event. More information and an updated event flyer to follow. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to us by email at info@dcontario.org.



The Clyde Mental Health and Addictions Awareness Project

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

NEXTGENMEN

"Next Gen Men is a small-but-mighty Canadian nonprofit whose work is dedicated to one ambitious thing—to change how the world sees, acts and thinks about masculinity.

We bring together perspectives from across North America, across genders, and across backgrounds to talk about why we all have a stake in the future of masculinity.

At Next Gen Men, we are champions of hope, and workers for change. Find us in your community, your classroom, your workplace, online, across Canada, the U.S. and anywhere you find our community."

In other news...

National Indigenous History Month

June is National Indigenous History Month in Canada, a time to recognize the rich history, heritage, resilience and diversity of First Nations, Inuit and Métis.

[Learn more here...](#)



Celebrate Pride in Toronto and beyond

"Ontario's 2SLGBTQ+ communities show their pride each summer to celebrate diversity and love in all its forms and to honour the tremendous achievements made to expand inclusivity and equality for 2SLGBTQ+ people."



[Find events in your area...](#)

'I miss my mom a lot': A young man with autism writes a letter to his mother, a PSW who died of COVID-19

"On April 10, 2020, my mother, a personal support worker, was admitted to the hospital after contracting COVID-19. She later died in the ICU on May 7. I was devastated. I found myself alone in the world with my 13-year-old sister, not knowing what to do.



This was during the lockdown and before any COVID vaccines existed. It was a scary and chaotic time, and I was in disbelief — I still am to this day. I know a lot of people think things are back to normal now and the pandemic is over. But they've got to understand that nothing is back to normal for the people who have lost loved ones.

In the short film Love, Leymo, I share my perspective about growing up as an autistic kid with my mom by my side to support me and advocate for me, and how that's all changed now that she's gone. But it's not just about my tragedy."

[Watch the documentary...](#)

DCO Updates

Learning Forum Update

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 volunteers and staff continue to receive high registration numbers. We will be hosting our next SOV webinar in July with June being dedicated to our AGM and conference.



Website

To learn more about Distress and Crisis Ontario, our member organizations, and current news and events, check out our website at dcontario.org. We are currently undergoing an update to our website to ensure we continue to provide the best services possible.



Podcast

Our podcast, "DCO Discourse..." continues to feature a variety of mental health topics with new episodes being released every

Monday. In May we focused on youth mental health, grief, and moving through loss.

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.



Thank you for supporting Distress and Crisis Ontario. [Click here](#) if you would like to donate through 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

Post-AGM - June 29th, 2023 at 4:00PM

Events

Networking Reimagined: Member Reunion
June 29th and 30th, 2023



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