



## October 2023 Newsletter

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"There is something so special in the early leaves drifting from the trees - as if we are all to be allowed a chance to peel, to refresh, to start again." — Ruth Ahmed

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### October Holidays and Observances

Thanksgiving in Canada falls on Monday the 9th this year. We encourage our readers to join us in exploring how we can bring awareness to the colonial history of Thanksgiving and recognize Indigenous traditions that preclude the origin of Thanksgiving as we know it. You can read more below.



October 10th is World Mental Health Day, the theme of which this year is "Mental Health is a Universal Human Right". More information is provided below.

October is also Women's History Month, Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and includes Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day, Purple Thursday for brain injury awareness, and more.

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

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### The history of Thanksgiving — An Indigenous perspective

"As an Indigenous youth born in Toronto in 1995, I always had mixed emotions regarding Thanksgiving. In my immediate family, the celebration of Thanksgiving was like many others celebrating the holiday in Canada: turkey, stuffing, cranberry sauce and comforting mashed potatoes. A typical holiday meal — when we could afford it.



As a child, I was awed by the food, and the houses decorated cozily with fall fruits and paper turkeys I'd made in class. To my younger self, the celebration meant welcoming the beautiful fall season and all it had to offer.

Despite the happy little smiles on the paper turkeys, I would eventually discover that there were ominous layers to the festivities. While my family's ways were "traditional" in regards to a modern Thanksgiving, there were many people in the community that would consider us untraditional culturally. Many members of the community carried an

opinion of hostility and resentment towards the holiday."

The above article was written by Kaleb Meeks for Pelham Today and can be read in full by [clicking here](#).

## World Mental Health Day 2023

World Mental Health Day 2023 is an opportunity for people and communities to unite behind the theme "Mental health is a universal human right" to improve knowledge, raise awareness and drive actions that promote and protect everyone's mental health as a universal human right.



Mental health is a basic human right for all people. Everyone, whoever and wherever they are, has a right to the highest attainable standard of mental health. This includes the right to be protected from mental health risks, the right to available, accessible, acceptable, and good quality care, and the right to liberty, independence and inclusion in the community.

[Read more...](#)

## Canadians short on access to care for mental health and substance use

"About 1 in 5 Canadians experience mental illness each year. Many must wait to get the care they need, while others don't get any care or don't get enough — with young people particularly hard hit by lack of services. Mental health and substance use disorders were already leading causes of disability in Canada for adults and children when COVID-19 disrupted lives and brought new levels of isolation, stress, fear and grief.



For those reasons, the Government of Canada and the provinces and territories made it a shared health priority to get Canadians faster, equitable access to the high-quality mental health and substance use services they need. This includes working with the Canadian Institute for Health Information and other data partners to develop and report on indicators to measure progress over time.

In this section we look at:

- Mental health and substance use services available for youth, age 12 to 25
- Whether the care needs of Canadians who have a mental health disorder are being met
- How long Canadians wait for mental health counselling"

Read the Canadian Institute for Health Information's report [here...](#)

## The Magical Weight Loss Drug No One is Talking About

"Several years ago, after a car accident, Shreya Mehta (name has been anonymized)\* began to experience intense chronic pain. It left her unable to keep up with her usual routine and diet. Very quickly, she gained 25 pounds. Unable to recognize herself and accept her situation, she dubbed it 'the end of the

road.' For years, she had struggled with her body image. Now, it all felt insurmountable. Then, suddenly, there seemed to be hope. In June 2021, the FDA approved a version of semaglutide, a drug that could reduce one's weight by as much as 15% — just by taking an injection. It seemed too good to be true.



It wasn't. In nine months, Mehta\* lost all the weight she had gained. 'I've changed nothing,' she said. 'I probably eat a lot more sweet stuff now — a lot more sugar, a lot more candy, a lot more dessert. It's a wonderful drug [that] has worked well for me.' She plans to continue with it forever if she can, hopefully losing another 10 to 15 pounds, explaining that, if you had the choice, 'Why would you ever be fat again?'

Semaglutide, whose brand names include Ozempic, Rybelsus, and Wegovy, has become increasingly popular in recent months as the first FDA-approved drug for chronic weight management. The drug, which can cost thousands per month, is a proven treatment for obesity and diabetes. But it has also become known as a quick, magical fix for those hoping to slim down. In a world where the media is schlepping the 'return' of the 'heroin-chic' body and where celebrities like Kim Kardashian lose 16 pounds in three weeks to fit into a dress that Marilyn Monroe once wore, is semaglutide just another rich person's tool to pathologize fat bodies? Or is it a much-needed treatment for those disproportionately affected by diabetes, heart disease, and other comorbidities? For experts, the answer — for now — is mixed."

This article comes from the online publication *The Juggernaut* and can be read by [clicking here](#), an email address will be require to view the full article.

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## Updates from the Government of Ontario



### Ontario Supporting Victims and Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence, Domestic Violence, Human Trafficking and Child Exploitation

"The Ontario government is investing more than \$4 million across the province to help support victims and survivors of intimate partner violence, domestic violence, human trafficking and child exploitation. The funding is being delivered through the Victim Support Grant (VSG) Program. The VSG Program is part of Ontario's Guns, Gangs and Violence Reduction Strategy and complements the province's \$307 million Anti-Human Trafficking Strategy, 2020-2025 and Combating Human Trafficking Act, 2021."

[Continue reading...](#)

### Ontario Supporting Affordable Home and Job Creation

"Today [September, 28, 2023], the Ontario government introduced the Affordable Homes and Good Jobs Act, which, if passed, would make it cheaper and easier to build affordable homes, provide certainty to municipalities and help more Ontarians find an affordable home based on their household income. This would help support measures made through the government's housing supply actions plans and its commitment to help communities across Ontario build at least 1.5 million homes by 2031.

The proposed change would update the definition of affordable housing units that would qualify for development-related charge discounts and exemptions. This approach reflects the ability of local households to pay for housing and recognizes the diversity of

housing markets across the province. It also supports the government's efforts to lower the cost of building, purchasing and renting affordable homes across the province."

[Learn more...](#)

## Ontario Promoting Cyber Security Awareness Month to Keep People Safe Online

"Ontario is raising awareness about the importance of online safety by joining the international community in recognizing October as Cyber Security Awareness Month. As a global leader in the digital space, Ontario is always working to strengthen our cyber security practices and protect the data entrusted to us by our people and businesses.

Thanks to our Cyber Security Centre of Excellence, the government is able to provide guidance, best practices, and education on cyber security to our many valued partners across the broader public sector. This ensures that our schools, hospitals, municipalities, and even children's aid societies, have the best and most reliable access to every resource Ontario has to offer to prevent and respond to cyber threats and attacks."

[Continue reading...](#)

## Ontario Doubling Career Fairs to Help More Young People Enter Skilled Trades

"The Ontario government is expanding its successful skilled trades career fairs, now in its second year, to even more cities with more exhibitors and twice as many participating students. Ontario will need over 100,000 new skilled trades workers this decade to help build the province, making it crucial for more young people to have the opportunity to unlock their potential in the trades. The new cities with career fairs this year are Hamilton, Windsor, Sault Ste. Marie, Oshawa and Dryden.

"Last year's career fairs were a phenomenal success, giving thousands of students and their families exposure to the many career opportunities in the skilled trades," said Premier Doug Ford. "As we make historic investments to build roads, transit, hospitals, schools and other critical infrastructure, these expanded fairs will help us attract more young people into the trades and develop the skilled workforce our growing province needs."

[Continue reading...](#)

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## News from and for our Member Centres

We are pleased to welcome and introduce Katelyn Doyle, our newest addition to the team as the Marketing and Communications Manager. Katelyn comes from a background in theatre/film and the arts, graduating from the University of Windsor with a bachelor's in fine arts. Her experience as an artist has given her the ability to craft compelling narratives and communicate effectively, making her a valuable asset in shaping DCO's messages and engagement. She is currently working on our social media pages and is looking forward to more opportunities to connect at greater lengths with all of you! Katelyn is absolutely thrilled to be here, and she's eager



## The Clyde Mental Health and Addictions Awareness Project

In honour of Clyde and his family, this month we have chosen to highlight the [World Federation for Mental Health](#).



"The World Federation for Mental Health is an international membership organization founded in 1948 to advance, among all peoples and nations, the prevention of mental and emotional disorders, the proper treatment and care of those with such disorders, and the promotion of mental health."

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### In other news...

#### Halloween Safety Tips

"With witches, goblins, and super-heroes descending on neighbourhoods across Canada, the Canadian Red Cross offers parents some safety tips to help prepare their children for a safe and enjoyable trick-or-treat holiday. Halloween should be filled with surprise and enjoyment, and following some common sense practices can keep events safer and more fun!"



[Read more...](#)

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### 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 are held on the second Wednesday of each month. Information on October's webinar will be sent out to Member leadership.



#### 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 September we explored topics such as suicidal ideation, active listening, and asking for help.

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

Thursday Oct 12, 2023 at 10:00am EST  
Friday Jan 12, 2024 at 10:00am EST  
Friday Apr 19, 2024 at 10:00am EST

### SOV Webinars

Members-only lunch and learn webinars for staff and volunteer responders are held on the second Wednesday of every month at 12:00pm EST.



## Distress And Crisis Ontario

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