



# FOSTER PARENTS SOCIETY OF ONTARIO

The dedicated voice of foster families in Ontario

## HILITES

Conference Edition

Heading Back to School

March 2020

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS MESSAGE

#### Hello FPSO:

This year we are excited to be looking forward to our spring conference; well we were – now we are looking forward to our summer conference. We hope everyone received the Memo regarding the date change for conference. The package is the same only the date changed.

This year we have seen so much change in Child Welfare and many variations in how each CAS is responding to all of this change. However, we know that as much as the only guarantee in child welfare is that things are different all the time – year to year, month to month and case by case. We are endeavoring to once again offer a high caliber of training and education for our 44<sup>th</sup> annual conference.

FPSO recognizes that no matter what changes come; equipped and informed foster parents are always the ideal. Our theme for 2020 is “*Back to school*” with the supporting slogan of “*Fostering best practice and optimal outcomes for children and youth through foster parent training and education*”.

In alignment with this slogan we have assembled a terrific slate of trainers and presenters, on a wide variety of topics.

We look forward to seeing all of you in **August**.

***Together we are stronger***

With highest regard,

**Vanessa Milley**  
FPSO Executive Director

### CONFERENCE CHAIR MESSAGE

#### Heading Back to School

As Conference Chair I'd like to welcome you to FPSO Conference 2020, we're heading back to school. This year's theme is “Heading Back to School” as conference sees us all heading to Durham College's lovely campus in Oshawa. We believe the college is a great new venue for us.

Our program is full of exceptional educational content whatever role you play in caring for and supporting children and youth.

Friday is a whole day of education on the needs of youth ageing out of care and Advocacy 1,2,3 and 4. The morning's focus is aimed at the general population with staff from PAPE Adolescent Services giving us pointers on how to prepare and support our youth as they age out of care. During the afternoon we will be going in depth on special needs youth's services with trainers from ODSP, Community Living and others in the field. We believe we can all work together to improve the transition experience for our youth.

Saturday sees another busy day of exceptional training with trainings on such topics as sensory issues, internet safety, adolescent development and FASD. Because we will have nice wide hallways at our dispersal, we are reaching out to lots of service providers and vendors so they can display what they have to offer. Saturday night after our banquet we are holding a fashion show showcasing some of our young people.

Oshawa is centrally located and offers some interesting places of interest for the whole family. We have really tried to improve the overall conference experience for our members while also being fiscally responsible this year.

**Elaine Pratt**  
1st VP and Conference Chair

## GREETINGS FROM CHILD WELFARE PARTNERS



**Durham Children's Aid Society** is honoured to be a sponsor of this year's FPSO Annual Educational Conference. The FPSO has been a long-standing and dedicated advocate for foster parents and for the children and youth we serve. We are proud to partner with the FPSO at this conference and in our ongoing work.

This year's conference will provide opportunities for you – our foster parents – to enhance your skills, knowledge and competencies to ensure the best care for the children and youth we all serve. It is also an opportunity for you to share your stories, connect with your peers and inspire each other in the difficult work we all do.

We – CAS staff, foster parents, teachers and community partners – must all work together to support the children and youth we serve to help them overcome those challenges and ensure that they reach their full potential.

Welcome to Oshawa, and enjoy the conference!



### Ontario Association of Residences Treating Youth (OARTY)

On behalf of the Ontario Association of Residences Treating Youth (OARTY), We would like to send you a very sincere message of support and good wishes for the FPSO Conference. We hope you will take advantage of FPSO's annual conference to learn, recharge, and network.

The Ontario Association of Residences Treating Youth (OARTY) is a provincial association of private residential services, including residential treatment centres, group homes, foster and treatment foster homes. On any given day OARTY members have 30-35% of children in the child welfare sector in their care. In 2018, OARTY's member agencies provided over 473,172 days of care to 1,746 children and youth and to 356 adults who required residential care.

OARTY supports FPSO's mission to promote and support a whole system approach that will contribute to positive outcomes for children. OARTY believes that foster parents are a valued voice in the system of care and that we need to ensure their visibility and participation at all levels of advocacy.

We share many of the same goals as FPSO, and we look forward to continuing to work together to ensure a transparent, equitable, accountable system that provides high-quality care to ensure positive outcomes. OARTY will continue to explore ways in which we can all work together to ensure a positive future. We are discussing ways in which our two associations can work more closely together, in areas such as advocacy, conferences, and training.

We look forward to thought-provoking discussions that will effect meaningful change as we all work together towards system improvement.

Wishing you a successful annual conference.



### Children's Aid Society of Ontario

The Children's Aid Society of Toronto is honoured to be a sponsor of the 2020 Foster Parent Society of Ontario Conference. We are proud that our foster parents are active and dedicated members of the FPSO. We applaud the advocacy, support and voice they give to the province's foster parents.

This year's conference will once again offer our foster parent community and its partners, the opportunity to come together to share and learn. With a focus on the best outcomes for our children and youth in care, we know this year's conference will be a valuable experience for all those who attend.



### Child Welfare PAC Canada

Thank you to all the foster parents out there working hard to give kids like we were a chance for a bright future. The Child Welfare PAC recognizes your efforts and that you are truly on the front lines of the child welfare system. Our team consists of 100+ engaged volunteers with lived experience in care and allies. We come from academia, research, business, medicine, advocacy, the arts, law, and politics. Our team is also active within sub-communities to which we belong. This includes newcomers,

LGBTQ+, Indigenous peoples, people with disability challenges, Francophone, a range of ethnicities and all ages - with in care experience. We know government policy can support our youth better.

Please contact us to join our efforts to: increase access to post-secondary; strengthen privacy legislation; support trauma informed service; and advocate for evidence-based policymaking - [info@childwelfare.com](mailto:info@childwelfare.com)

Looking forward to hearing from you!



Ontario's Adoptive Parents Association

### Adopt4Life—Ontario's Adoptive Parent Association

The 2020 FPSO's conference programming is a wonderful opportunity for families supporting permanency - whether through fostering, kinship, customary care, or adoption - to join and learn together. We are proud to support the FPSO conference and look forward to engaging with this vibrant community. We are delighted to see this year's emphasis on equipping parents/caregivers with the knowledge and tools to support youth and teens in accessing the resources they need in order to thrive,

before and during adulthood. At Adopt4Life, we see everyday the importance of foster parents' role in children's lives, not only while they are living under your care, but also supporting successful, permanent transitions into their adoptive, kin or customary care families. The bond children so often develop with their foster families is essential, and helps them on their journey to healthy attachment with their new family.

Our community is **#StrongerTogether**

Adopt4Life—is a community of people with lived experience of adoption, kinship and customary care, that strengthens and empowers parents and caregivers to achieve permanency for children so that they reach their full potential.

CONFERENCE DETAILS

**Welcome to Durham College Residence!**

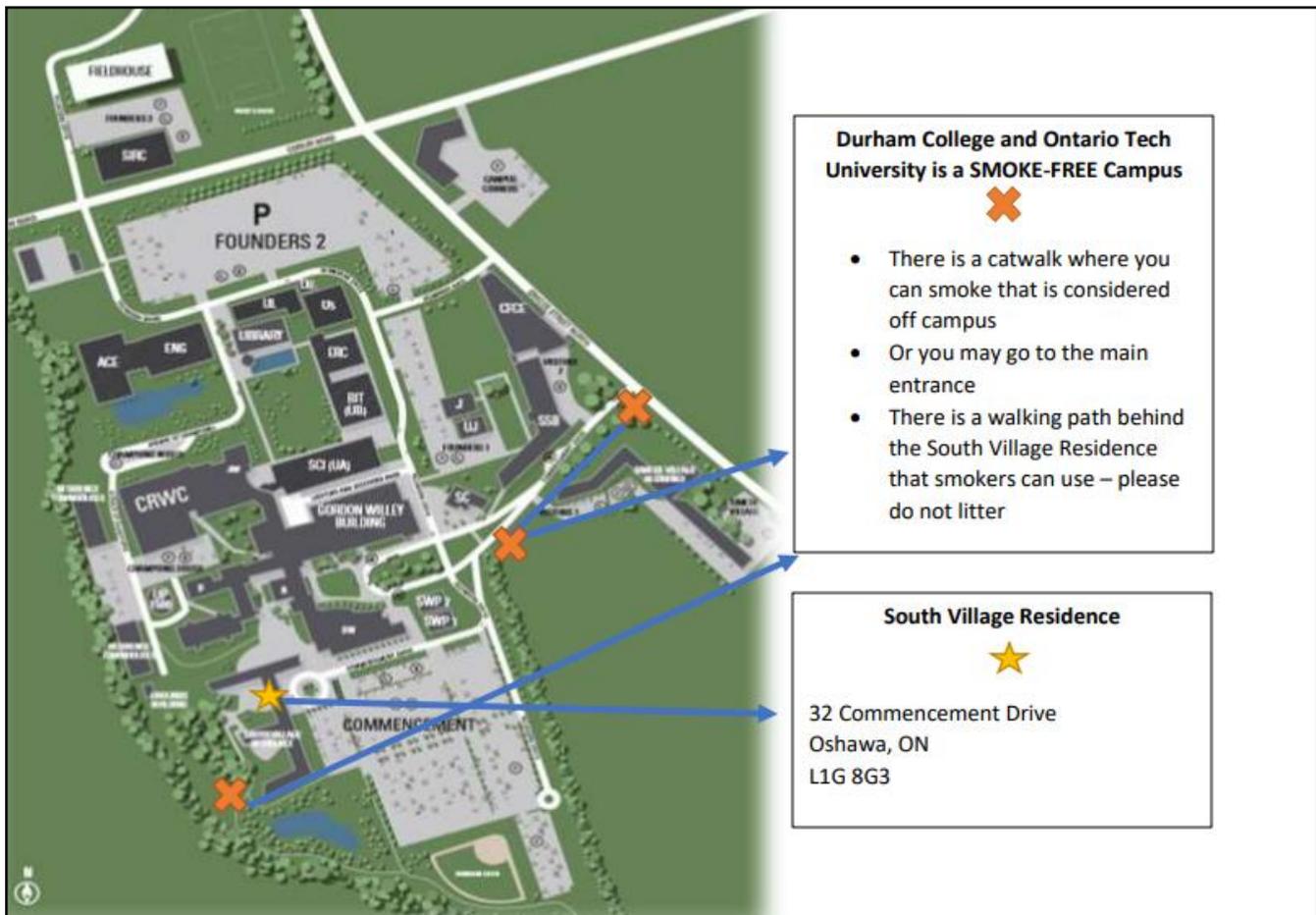
This residence is just like a hotel, except all of the guest rooms are suites. Each suite has one bathroom, one kitchenette, and two separate bedrooms each with their own locking doors. Each bedroom has a double bed. The facility and guest rooms are clean and bright. This arrangement is ideal for friends sharing or for a family with little ones who need to retire early. The facility was very excited to let us know they have all new linens and towels and we are one of the first groups that will use them. The facility also has a number of accessible rooms if you should need one.

We have also this year for the first time offered a wider variety of packages; with single, double, triple and quad occupancy; so, there is a package for a wide variety of budgets. the facility does have strict regulations on persons in suites - the number can not exceed 4 - with the exception of a baby in a portable crib - which you will need to supply.

Durham College is centrally located in north Oshawa which is close to Hwy 407. The Residence is right next door to the campus classrooms where we will be spending our days of training. The Executive team who toured the facility are really enthusiastic about holding the conference at the college.

We have two days of excellent training lined up with something for everyone. It will indeed feel like you are back in school learning valuable skills and gathering pertinent information to take home and help you in your work caring for your children and youth. However, school wasn't all work and no play so we have some fun lined up for everyone too.

Looking forward to seeing you all E.P.



**Durham College and Ontario Tech University is a SMOKE-FREE Campus**

✗

- There is a catwalk where you can smoke that is considered off campus
- Or you may go to the main entrance
- There is a walking path behind the South Village Residence that smokers can use – please do not litter

**South Village Residence**

★

32 Commencement Drive  
Oshawa, ON  
L1G 8G3

## CONFERENCE SCHEDULE AND EVENTS

<b>Tuesday, August 18</b>	1:00pm - 8:00pm	Executive Committee
<b>Wednesday, August 19</b>	1:00pm - 9:00pm	Directors Meeting
<b>Thursday, August 20</b>	9:00am - 11:30am 12:00pm - 1:00pm 1:00pm - 9:30pm 5:00pm - 6:30pm	Directors Meeting Lunch PAD Meeting Dinner
<b>Friday, August 21</b>	7:00am - 9:00am 9:00am - 12:00pm 12:00pm - 1:00pm 1:00pm - 4:00pm 6:00pm - 7:30pm	Breakfast Workshops Lunch Workshops Dinner
<b>Saturday, August 22</b>	7:00am - 9:00am 9:00am - 12:00pm 12:00pm - 1:00pm 1:00pm - 4:00pm 5:30pm	Breakfast Workshops Lunch Workshops Celebration Dinner
<b>Sunday, August 23</b>	7:00am - 9:00am 9:00am - 12:00pm	Breakfast AGM

Friday	<b>Silent Auction</b> 4:00pm - 6:00pm 7:30pm - 10:00pm
Saturday	4:00pm - 5:30pm <i>*item pick up following Celebration Dinner</i>
Thursday	<b>Hospitality Suite</b> 9:30am - 10:30am
Friday	4:00pm - 6:00pm 7:30pm - 10:00pm
Saturday	4:00pm - 5:30pm 8:30pm - 10:30pm
Friday	<b>Wellness Room</b> 4:00pm - 6:00pm 7:30pm - 9:00pm
Saturday	4:00pm - 6:00pm
Friday	<b>Vendors Fair</b> 11:30am - 5:30pm
Saturday	11:30am - 5:30pm

Complete conference schedule will be posted at registration.

### Come experience Oshawa and the Durham Region

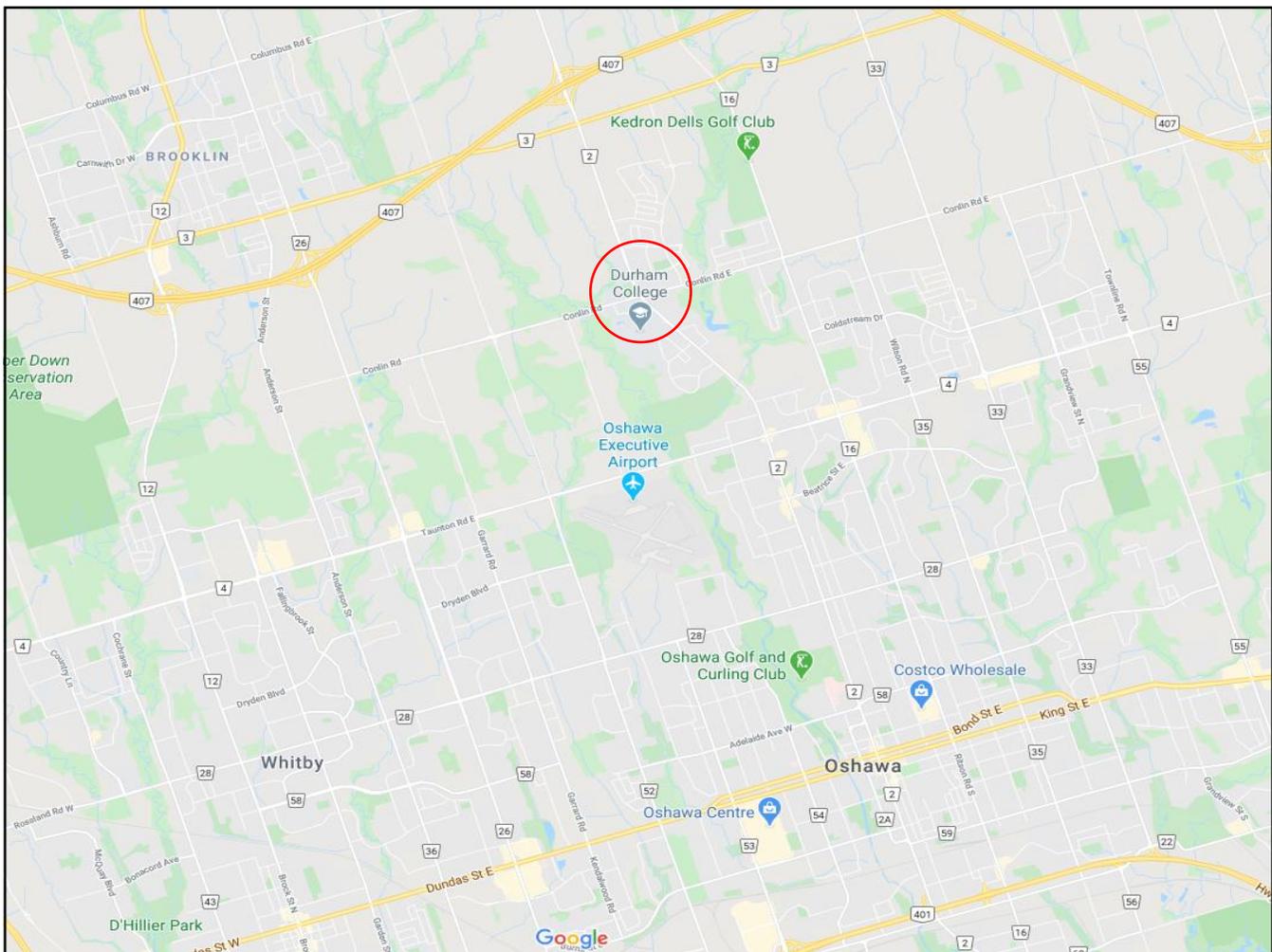
Durham has a great deal to offer families visiting the area such as:

- **Reptilia** where you can see snakes, crocodiles and huge tortoises.
- Perhaps history is more to your taste, **Parkwood Estate** was the home of Colonel Robert Samuel McLaughlin, he started the McLaughlin Motor Car Company in 1907, one of the first major automobile manufacturers in Canada, which evolved into General Motors of Canada. Durham is also home to the **GM Car Museum**.
- At Bowmanville there is the **Ontario Falconry Center** where you can book ahead and spend an hour learning all about falcons, owls, eagles and kestrels. This is a huge hit with the kids and adults too as you also get to hold one.
- Should you have a desire to experience sky diving there is an **I Fly** centre nearby in Whitby where you have the experience indoors in a safe environment.
- Ajax has a large brand-new casino, just 30 mins away.
- As Durham is also a farming area, there is lots of farmers markets and stores such as **Willowtree Farms** on Hwy 21, Port Perry.

## CONFERENCE LOCATION

The Durham College residences are located at: **32 Commencement Drive, Oshawa, L1G 8G3**

- From Highway 401** Take Highway 401 to Simcoe Street;  
Head north on Simcoe Street for about 11 km; and  
Turn left at the Commencement Drive entrance.
- From Highway 407** Take Highway 407 east to the Brock Road exit;  
Continue east on Brock Road, also known as Highway 7, which turns into Winchester Road at  
Baldwin Street;  
Follow Winchester Road to Simcoe Street; and  
Turn right on Simcoe Street and the Commencement Drive entrance is the second entrance on  
the right, a short distance after the Conlin Road intersection.
- From Highway 12** Following Highway 12 south;  
Turn left and head east on Highway 7; and  
Turn right onto Simcoe Street and the Commencement Drive entrance is the second entrance  
on the right, a short distance after the Conlin Road intersection.



## 2020 WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

## FRIDAY - ALL DAY WORKSHOP OPTIONS

9:00a – 12:00p Attend Workshop, 12:00p – 1:00p Lunch, 1:00p – 4:00p Continue Workshop

101 Advocacy Level One	
<b>Presenter</b>	Vanessa Milley
<b>Session Summary</b>	<p>This workshop is an introduction to Advocacy. This full day course is designed to provide a comprehensive foundation for those considering becoming an advocate, those already advocates; as well as those interested in applying the advocacy principals and training to their own role as a foster parent.</p> <p>We will examine child protection issues and the responsibilities of the agencies, as well as explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The role of the communicator/advocate during an allegation or complaints procedure</li> <li>• The needs of the caregivers involved in an allegation</li> <li>• The types of supports and resources they will require.</li> </ul> <p>When you take this workshop, you will have the tools you need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up an Advocate program within your own FPA/FFA.</li> <li>• To maintain your local area advocacy program.</li> <li>• To participate in your local area as an advocate.</li> <li>• To advocate for your foster parent peers</li> <li>• To advocate for and protect yourself.</li> </ul>
<b>Biography</b>	<p>Vanessa Milley is the FPSO Executive Director and has served on the FPSO Board for the past 11 years. Corporate Secretary for 7 years and FPSO Governance and Policy Chairperson for over 10 years. Vanessa is an active foster parent having received over 152 children in her home. Vanessa is an experienced advocate with 20 years' experience providing advocacy support to foster parents, and is privileged to have been able to train the FPSO Advocacy One training for the past five years.</p>

102 Advocacy Level Two	
<b>Presenter</b>	Esther Frost
<b>Session Summary</b>	<p>An allegation and the investigation that follows is one of the most stressful things any foster parent will have to deal with. The Advocacy Two training focuses on the trauma of an allegation and investigation process on the foster family. How an advocate can help mitigate the stresses and support the foster family through the trauma. The workshop also addresses the risks of vicarious trauma for the advocate and how to recognize the signs of trauma and burnout. This workshop is recommended for Advocates who have taken Advocacy One and are interested in growing their skills.</p>
<b>Biography</b>	<p>Esther has been a Registered Psychotherapist with Children's Mental Health for 24 years. Initially supporting youth in various group homes then shifted to supporting families with young children in Kindergarten and Grade 1 at risk of suspension. For the past 13 years Esther has spent her career supporting Early Years children and families in their homes by offering services such as parenting support, counselling and links to assessments. For 19 years Esther has also been a full-time foster parent, most frequently to teenagers, most of whom have long placements with Esther and her husband Kirk. for the last year, Esther has shifted from Children's Mental Health to starting her own counselling private practice. This choice was partly to support her high needs foster children from home while still staying connected to the field of mental health.</p>

**103 Advocacy Level Three**

<b>Presenter</b>	Mary Auld, MSW RSW
<b>Session Summary</b>	This workshop will focus on investigations conducted by child welfare agencies. We will discuss changes in policies surrounding investigations, as well as the types of maltreatment being investigated. We will review Ontario's eligibility spectrum, safety assessment, and risk assessment tool. There will be focus on evidence-based practice in child welfare.
<b>Biography</b>	Mary manages the Intake Team of Toronto Children's Aid Society. She brings to this training years of experience investigating allegations both within the agency and out in the community.

**104 Advocacy Level Four**

<b>Presenter</b>	Landy Anderson
<b>Session Summary</b>	<p>This one-day workshop is designed for advocates with 3 to 4 years of experience as an advocate. The goal of this workshop will be to answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is an appeal?</li> <li>• What should be appealed?</li> <li>• Why should decision be appealed?</li> <li>• When should appeal be launched?</li> <li>• Where should appeal be launched?</li> <li>• Why an advocate is so important for foster parents who are facing a serious investigation (without police charges). Helping the foster parents make informed decisions in regard to their investigation and to help them to understand what to expect going forward with a review.</li> </ul> <p>This workshop is designed to equip the advocate with an understanding of the role of the advocate, meeting management/dispute resolution techniques and an opportunity to explore legal and ethical issues around advocacy.</p>
<b>Biography</b>	<p>Landy is a former Foster Care Supervisor with over 30 years of experience in child welfare. She has worked as a child protection worker, supervisor and senior manager in several Children's Aid Societies in Ontario for various departments, such as Community Services, Intake, After Hours, Family Services, Placement, Kinship Care, Customary Care, Foster Care and Adoption. Landy is a former Treatment Foster Parent and Licensed Group Home Operator. She has supervised staff operated group homes and foster care departments for various child welfare agencies including Indigenous Children's Aid Societies. Landy holds a Master of Education – Focusing on Urban Aboriginal Education. Additionally, Landy teaches at her local community college. She has published a book entitled The Foster Parent Survival Guide: How to Navigate the Child Welfare Matrix.</p> <p>To learn more about Landy visit her web site <a href="http://www.fosterparentsurvival.com/">http://www.fosterparentsurvival.com/</a> or visit her YouTube cooking channel by searching Landy Anderson &amp; Cookie's Kitchen!</p>

**Submissions are open for: Lifetime Achievement and Foster Parent of the Year Awards**

These awards recognize a Foster parent or Foster Family that has demonstrated exceptional accomplishments in the field of fostering. Submissions will be divided into either category by the committee for the Foster Parent of the Year and Lifetime Achievement award. Please note: Each FPA/FFA/or agency may submit (2) nominations.

**Criteria:**

- Foster Parent/Family must be in good standing with FPSO
- Cover sheet must be attached including the name, address, email address if applicable, and telephone number of the Foster Parent/Family being nominated, and the name, contact address, and phone number of the FPA/FFA/Agency making the nomination.
- Maximum of two (2) typewritten pages outlining the background of the nominee(s) must also be submitted.
- Only two (2) submissions per FPA/FFA/Agency.

105 Youth Workshop	
<b>Presenter(s)</b>	PARC DSO ODSP Community Living
<b>Session Summary</b>	<p>This full day of training will focus on youth as they transition out of care, how can we support them to achieve success at a most critical juncture of their lives.</p> <p><b>PARC:</b> Our first presenters are from The Pape Adolescent Resource Centre Team who will help us understand the needs of youth as they transition to independent living. The mandate for PARC is to empower youth to help themselves and each other through their transition to self sufficiency, with the acknowledgement and recognition of their own personal power. PARC encourages personal and emotional growth., which may take the form of improved relationship skills, personal development and empowerment. PARC is a safe place develop or get support in the area of education, employment, tenancy and life skills.</p> <p><b>DSO:</b> The Developmental Services of Ontario is responsible for helping adults with developmental disabilities access services and supports in their communities. They work with a variety of ministry-funded agencies to help connect people with disabilities to services and supports. In this training we will learn about time lines, when should we begin to plan for DSO support, how does it work and who is eligible. We will also learn about the supports they offer such as the Passport Funding. The Passport Program helps adults with a developmental disability be involved in their communities and live as independently as possible by providing funding for community participation services and supports, activities of daily living and person-directed planning. The program also provides funding for caregiver respite services and supports for primary caregivers of an adult with a developmental disability. Also, we will touch on the RDSP which is a long-term savings plan that helps Canadians with disabilities and their families save for the future</p> <p><b>ODSP:</b> If the youth in your care has a disability, they may be eligible to receive support through ODSP. During this presentation we will cover who is eligible for ODSP, how to access these supports, when the application process should start, who can start the process and what supports are available. ODSP offers financial assistance to help the youth with essential living expenses, benefits including prescription drugs and vision care and help to find. Employment, how to keep a job and how to advance your career.</p> <p><b>COMMUNITY LIVING:</b> is a non profit organization dedicated to support the achievement of personal outcomes for people with developmental disabilities. They will educate us during this presentation on the services they provide to youth transitioning into their program and also the supports they offer caregivers who care for these young adults.</p>

**Lifetime Achievement and Foster Parent of the Year Awards  
must be postmarked by July 15th 2019 and sent to:**

FPSO Head Office  
340 Kingsway  
Welland, Ontario  
L3B 3N9

Please see full participation guidelines and rules at [www.fosterparentssociety.org](http://www.fosterparentssociety.org)

**SATURDAY – REPEATING WORKSHOP OPTIONS**

Two session times available. These workshops repeat: 9:00a – 1200p **OR** 1:00p – 4:00p

<b>201 FASD - Building a Better response</b>		9:00a – 1200p <b>OR</b> 1:00p – 4:00p
<b>Presenter</b>	Sheila Burns, FASD Specialist, M.S. & Associates Inc.	
<b>Session Summary</b>	Sheila is passionate about the importance of providing practical, research-informed insights that can guide a parent’s caregiving journey. She provides research-based FASD information to ensure professionals, caregivers and community partners receive current, accurate and system-sensitive information that contributes to optimal outcomes for individuals living with FASD. It is her vision that professionals, caregivers and community services understand FASD and have tools to deliver informed and effective practice so individuals with FASD can participate fully in their communities.	
<b>Biography</b>	<p>Sheila has been a FASD instructor and consultant since 2002 sharing extensive knowledge of this complex neurodevelopmental disorder with compassion and hope. Her practice includes supporting caregivers, educators, child welfare and mental health agencies across Ontario, advancing FASD awareness, prevention and effective intervention.</p> <p>Her efforts toward building a better response to FASD prevention and effective intervention has included leadership roles in FASD Ontario Network of Expertise (Network Chair and the Justice and Diagnostic Capacity Action Groups) and participation on the Ministry of Children and Youth Services FASD Expert Group. She received the Law Foundation of Ontario Community Leadership Fellowship to conduct FASD-related research and develop curriculum and authored status and action reports to inform the provincial response to FASD.</p>	

<b>202 Internet Safety</b>		9:00a – 1200p <b>OR</b> 1:00p – 4:00p
<b>Presenter</b>	Ashley Samtez	
<b>Session Summary</b>	With the rapid development of technology over the last two decades, the gap of understanding between generations as it pertains to the usage of the internet and social media platforms has never been greater. Ashley will speak about the dangers of some of the most popular social media apps available today, including Snapchat and TikTok. She will focus on how scarily easy it is for people with basic research abilities and the right online software to collect an alarming amount of data. Ashley will also be talking about children becoming addicted to the internet and the effect it has on them. Additionally, she will speak about the importance of kids and adults working together to better understand the dangers lurking on each social media and taking reasonable precaution in protecting oneself from those perils.	
<b>Biography</b>	Ashley Sametz is an expert in cyber-security and currently works for Blackberry as a Security Communications Manager as well as working with law enforcement to ensure online safety, especially relating to children being exposed to human trafficking, sexual predators and terrorism recruiters Ashley has had 15 years working in intelligence and investigations: 5 years with TD Bank, 3 with Waterloo and York Regional Police as a crime analyst, 5 years with BlackBerry and 5+ years consulting on threat, risk and terrorism. Ashley has a criminology degree from University of Ottawa, and a terrorism certificate from University of St Andrews. Recently Ashley began teaching Cyber Crime for Police Foundations at Conestoga College. She is a single mom to a 5 year old boy who will probably never use the internet ;)	

<b>203 Is This the Hill I Want To Die On?</b>		9:00a – 1200p <b>OR</b> 1:00p – 4:00p
<b>Presenter</b>	Jackie Robertson	
<b>Session Summary</b>	<p>How many of us as parents have gotten stuck in this dilemma in our parenting days? Due to our fears, frustrations and desperations; we have all been caught in these power struggles. This is especially true in the adolescent stage of parenting.</p> <p>In adolescent development; teens <b>MUST</b> master a few rather challenging tasks of developing an identity which involves individuation and independence in order to later fully launch to adulthood from their home. However; this is a huge learning curve that our adolescents have little to no mastery yet. Thus; the challenging times of parenting adolescence as they learn and navigate this arena with parents. Home becomes the life laboratory for them to experiment and learn which results in meltdowns, arguments and challenging behaviours.</p> <p>The teens we have also experienced developmental trauma which further complicates the adolescent development stage. This can often result in an even more tumultuous roller coaster ride.</p> <p>This workshop will explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adolescent Development Stage</li> <li>• Developmental Trauma and how it impacts adolescents</li> </ul> <p>Connection before correction (PACE model and healing through relationships)</p>	
<b>Biography</b>	<p>Jackie Robertson is a registered psychotherapist, clinical case consultant (TFC), educator/trainer with extensive experience working with parents, children and youth dealing with various life experiences, personal, and familial issues. She brings over thirty-two years of experience in adolescence mental health and child welfare, with focused work in mental illness, trauma, attachment and adoption. She works with teens and families (Biological, foster, kinship, kith ship, and adoptive parents) and is passionate about helping families becoming healthier.</p>	

<b>204 Supporting Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder and Related Disorders</b>		9:00a – 1200p <b>OR</b> 1:00p – 4:00p
<b>Presenter</b>	Cathy Vey, OTReg(Ont). Occupational Therapist	
<b>Session Summary</b>	<p>This workshop will include information about Autism Spectrum Disorder, including challenges with sensory processing. Participants will gain an understanding of the various needs of children with ASD, and services available in our community. They will also learn practical ideas and strategies for helping these children build independence, and participate joyfully in meaningful daily activities.</p>	
<b>Biography</b>	<p>Cathy Vey is an occupational therapist from Bowmanville Ontario. She graduated from Dalhousie University's school of Occupational Therapy in 2005. Since then she has worked as an occupational therapist in a variety of settings including children's treatment centres, schools, childcare centres, and homes. She has worked with children of all ages with a variety of physical and developmental needs. She sees on a daily basis the amazing work that foster parents do, and she is so pleased to be able to join you and share some information about supporting children with special needs.</p>	

### Fashion Show

For this year's entertainment we have decided to try something new, a "fashion show" with some children who are in foster care as well as children that have been involved with different societies/agencies. A young lady from Windsor /Essex County area successfully held a fashion show this past fall with all of her own designs and the proceeds going to W.E.C.A.S. She had graciously offered to be part of the FPSO conference bringing with her some new designs & ideas along with the help of some seamstresses and donations of clothing from various merchants.

A live auction will be held following the fashion show featuring a number of donated items and garments featured in the fashion show; with all proceeds going to support FPSO.

We are still looking for some young male models(boys) to walk in our show.  
Please contact us at [FPSO@fosterparentssociety.org](mailto:FPSO@fosterparentssociety.org) if you know someone who may be interested.

**SATURDAY – WORKSHOPS RUNNING ONCE**

Workshops will run either *only* in the morning 9:00a – 12:00a **OR** *only* in the afternoon 1:00p – 4:00p.

205 Welcoming Gender and Sexual Diversity as a Foster Parent: LGBTQ2SIA Affirmation that Promotes Youth Health and Wellbeing		AM session only 9:00a – 12:00p
<b>Presenter</b>	Rogue Witterick	
<b>Session Summary</b>	This participatory workshop explores the language around gender and sexual diversity and effective strategies for welcoming, understanding and supporting gender and sexuality diverse young people. We'll audit our own level of understanding, review active witnessing and listening and identify strategies to help young people navigate homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. We'll talk about how to be an informed ally, support a young person coming out and take actions to reduce the risks of negative mental and physical health outcomes that can accompany discrimination stress.	
<b>Biography</b>	Rogue Witterick (they/them pronouns) is a parent, youth advocate, writer and violence prevention consultant, working as a Facilitator of transformative conversations about gender and sexuality. Rogue's two decades of anti-oppression facilitation and activism are multi-sectoral with provincial and national scope. Rogue's work has often focused on children, youth and families – both directly and in working with organizations that are youth and family serving. Rogue has coordinated learning systems, curriculum design, facilitation and implementation for organizations like the 519, the YMCA and Red Cross. In 2011, Rogue's family was the subject of international media attention when they offered their newest baby freedom from sex assignment. For published works, check out GUTS and Chasing Rainbows: Exploring Gender Fluid Parenting Practices. Contact Rogue at RogueWitterick@gmail.com	

206 If I Knew Then What I Know Now		PM session only 1:00p – 4:00p
<b>Presenter</b>	Vanessa Milley	
<b>Session Summary</b>	This workshop recognizes the value of foster parents learning from foster parents; as well as the lessons we learn from the children themselves. The Child Welfare System is ever changing as are the needs of the children and youth the system serves. Together we help each other navigate the system and aim to continue to function in a way that supports ideal outcomes for the children we all care for. This workshop will cover a wide variety of information and observations that may help you in your role within this complicated system.	
<b>Biography</b>	Vanessa Milley is a foster parent with 30 years of parenting experience. Vanessa has three biological daughters, an adoptive son and daughter, plus has had the privilege of parenting 152 foster children of varying ages and challenges. Vanessa is also an active leader within the Fostering community and has been for nearly 20 years. Vanessa will tap into not only her own knowledge and experience but also that of her peers and colleagues.	

**Vendor Fair**

On Friday and Saturday, we are opening up our conference hallways to vendors and service providers from 12:00pm 5:00 pm both days so they may promote what they have of interest to our members. Responses are already trickling in from people as diverse as an infant car seat expert to the youth team at the Ombudsman's office, and March of Dimes.

We would love to have a good number of people displaying things like weighted blankets, child related crafts, books or services and supports. If you know of anyone who would be an interested vendor and who appreciate the opportunity to have this exposure at \$20 a table/ 1 day and \$30/2 days please ask them to contact me at: [elaine\\_pratt@me.com](mailto:elaine_pratt@me.com)