

January News: Update #1

Lanark Leeds & Grenville Special Needs Strategy Proposal Development Table

Hello Community of Lanark Leeds and Grenville,

Happy New Year! We are pleased to be sending our first News Update from the local Special Needs Strategy Table. If you would like to receive future updates, please add yourself to our mailing list as described below.

What is the Ontario Special Needs Strategy?

In 2014 the Ontario government launched the Ontario Special Needs Strategy for Children and Youth. The goal of the strategy is to improve the system so that it is more accessible, coordinated and centred on the needs of families. For more detail, see <http://specialneedsstrategy.children.gov.on.ca>.

What has happened locally so far?

In Lanark Leeds and Grenville a Proposal Development Table, made up of all relevant service providers formed in November 2014. Its task is to propose plans by October 2015 for how to improve the local system so that families will:

- Have their children with special needs identified and supported earlier;
- Experience fewer duplications of referrals and assessments;
- Have a Service Planning Coordinator to help them connect with the right services and supports for their children with multiple and/or complex special needs; and
- Receive seamless and effective speech-language therapy, occupational therapy and physiotherapy services for their children as they move into and through school.

The Table has met twice so far. We have just engaged the services of a facilitator, Christine Peringer. We are working to finalize our membership -- to add family advisors and fill other gaps.

How can I learn more?

More information will be coming soon as we develop our plans for family and front-line worker consultation. Please let us know if you would like to be on our mailing list to receive future News Updates (like this one) and information about meetings or other ways to provide input into the plan. Our email is: llgspecialneedsstrategy@gmail.com.

Wishing you a happy 2015,

Table Co-chairs

Margaret van Beers, Director, Child Development Centre, Hotel Dieu Hospital

Paula Perrault, Principal of Special Education, Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario

Gillian Jackson, Manager, Children's Services Developmental Services of Leeds & Grenville

Donna Davidson, Director, Lanark Community Programs, Lanark Renfrew Health & Community Services