

## *LIFE\*SPIN News*

*May 2023*

### **LIFE\*SPIN NEWS!**

*Happy Spring to all of you! This is our on-line newsletter that we send out to all the clients registered for programs, services, and workshops. LIFE\*SPIN has now purged our 2022 data base, so if you have not used one of our programs in 2023, please note that you will not receive the autumn newsletter, but you can always read it on our website.*

*"Control-Click" will open the links below*

### **ADVOCACY**

*LIFE\*SPIN's greatest contribution to London is the creation of a safe place for low-income citizens – families, our disabled, seniors, children and individuals – to find help that is truly needed and a sense of dignity. For more than 25 years, LIFE\*SPIN has been the one-stop-shop to receive knowledgeable specialized assistance for ALL individuals to obtain government benefits to which they may be entitled, such as OAS, GIS, ACSD, Canada Pension Plan, Ontario Works, subsidized housing, and provincial disability supports and benefits. Advocacy is a critical service to the unemployed, the under-employed, those with limited literacy skills, disabilities and mental health challenges. If you would like assistance to fill out these types of applications, please register for an appointment at:  
<https://form.jotform.com/221304055872248>*

*The critical needs you bring to us, help us to define and create resources, programs and services we may offer you. Delivery of these initiatives often involve students from the university community, particularly students enrolled in law, nutrition, social sciences, occupational therapy, information & media studies, as is evidenced in the publications available on our website, ([www.lifespın.org](http://www.lifespın.org)), including:*

*[Wills and Powers of Attorney Fundamentals](#)*

*[Assistive Devices Handbook](#)*

*[Co-op Housing Kit](#)*

### **FINANCIAL BENEFITS WORKSHOPS**

*We have all noticed the rising costs of living, without increases to shelter benefits or basic needs. LIFE\*SPIN's Community Advocate, Nicole Davis, continues to offer workshops that will help inform you what benefits may be available and how to access them.*

*We are hopeful that we can again provide on-site workshops in the near future, but in the meantime, we have planned a full season of zoom workshops just for you. If you have not*

joined us by Zoom yet, here is an instructional youtube video that explains how you join <https://youtu.be/mbbYqiurgeo>

May 24, 2023 @ 11:00 a.m. Discretionary Benefits Workshop ([click to register](#))

*Find out what benefits are available to low-income Londoners for special needs, such as car-seats, essential furniture and beds, certification costs to document learning disorders, funerals, alerting systems for vision/hearing impaired, and much more.*

June 20, 2023 @ 11:00 a.m. Other Benefits for Disabled Londoners ([click to register](#))

*ODSP recipients are able to access other special benefits to improve their quality of life. Find out what they are and how to access them.*

July 25, 2023 @ 11:00 a.m. Health Benefits Workshop ([click to register](#))

*When you are low-income there are a number of health benefits you may be able to access, such as dental, vision, hearing, assistive devices, and extended health benefits when you transition to seniors benefits from ODSP or start a new job. LIFE\*SPIN can assist you if you need help to access these benefits, but you need to know what is available to ask for the help.*

August 22, 2023 @ 11:00 a.m. ACSD Workshop ([click to register](#))

*Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities (ACSD) is one of the supports some of our families need, which you helped us to identify. We have produced a manual to go with this workshop that will help guide you step-by-step to access the supports that your family needs to help you help your child.*

September 19, 2023 @11:00 a.m. "when I'm 64" ([click to register](#))

*When you turn 64-years-old, you must apply for your senior's benefits. A lot of programs change for not only your income benefits, but also access to health benefits, dental, internet, and so much more. Please join us if you are 63-64 year-old or you are assisting a friend or family member who is about to turn 65*

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**THE KEN PALMER MEMORIAL MUSIC BURSARY**

*Deadline is May 19, 2023*

*LIFE\*SPIN and The Forest City London Music Awards, through the Ken Palmer Music Bursary, shows strong commitment and encouragement to young musicians graduating from high school in supporting their post-secondary music education goals at an Ontario college or university. Each year the \$1,000 bursary is awarded to two outstanding graduating high school students. More information is found: <https://fclma.ca/ken-palmer-music-bursary/>*

## **FREE STORE**

*The Free Store is now open two days a week until June 21. The store will be closed during the summer and re-open on September 5th. Construction on our corner makes it difficult for our families to come from all over the city, with bus stops a fair distance away. More information on the Free Store is found on our website: <https://www.lifespın.org/free-store>*

*You still register on-line at <https://form.jotform.com/221305775229254> You only need to register once, however if you have not shopped in 2023 you will no longer receive our email updates regarding other programs and highlights, as the database for 2022 is now closed.*

*Shoppers are welcome to shop every Tuesday 10:00 am -2:00 pm and Wednesday 3:00-7:00 pm. Come and shop with us!*

## **FOOD SECURITY**

*Our food security this winter will largely be impacted by how much food we grow in Canada this summer. There are a few ways you can improve the Food Security of your family:*

**LIFE\*SPIN's Children's Gardening Program** ([click to register](#))

*Registration closes May 31st*

*Our program is specifically designed to benefit children by teaching them to meet some of their own nutritional, health, and learning needs. Pocket Sized Farms is a great opportunity for your child to learn new things, develop new skills, and have fun!*

*Environmental stewardship, nutrition and literacy are the fundamental core of this indoor/outdoor learning experience. We will start the year with a potluck for families to come together, go for a swim, pick up seeds, and craft materials for the first two weeks of the summer program. Campers will join us on-line in the mornings to do craft projects together, explore new topics, read stories and share our garden activities with each other.*

*This program is for children aged 7-12 years-old, but we invite all family members to join us on our weekly outings to parks and natural areas, accessible by bus. We will have treasure hunts, play games, eat healthy delicious snacks, win prizes, and send our campers home with craft materials for the following week.*

*This is an opportunity for us to increase residential food gardens and come together as a community. If you would your children (aged 7-12) to participate in our summer program, please complete the registration form and we will be in touch with details of our first gathering to meet and pick up materials.*

*For previous participants ~ please note the private facebook group is only for current registrants. If you are not registered for 2023, you will be taken off the page on June 1st.*

**LIFE\*SPIN's Community Food Box** ([click to register](#))

*As food costs continue to rise, we know that many of the families we serve are struggling to feed their families nutritious food, especially fresh produce.*

*The Community Food Box Program is for low-income Londoners who are at high-risk of bad health outcomes from exposure to Covid and for those who struggle with shopping, due to age or mobility.*

*With generous support from On the Move Organics (OTMO) and their regular customers, as well as donations from LIFE\*SPIN donors, we are able to provide a limited number of free boxes of fresh fruits and vegetables to our community.*

*We are now taking orders for the June/July deliveries.*

*We will send one box to each low-income household registered, over the course of the two months. OTMO will be delivering by postal code areas and they will email you before they deliver. As orders are added to their regular delivery routes, we cannot tell you when your order is coming.*

*If you are unable to receive the delivery, we will make sure the food goes to another family in need. \* Please check the address/buzzer you entered, before you submit the form  
\* if you can't be home for the delivery, please leave a note on your door for the driver. This should provide a neighbour's contact information, so they can receive it for you.*

**GROW FOOD**

*Here are some compelling reasons why you should consider starting your own garden this year:*

*Growing your own fresh fruits and vegetables is a great way to stretch your food budget. Homegrown vegetables provide readily-available nutrition (every day a vegetable is off the vine it loses its health benefits).*

- 3. No harmful chemicals are sprayed on your veggies.*
- 4. It would provide fresh air and outdoor exercise for the whole family.*
- 5. Forges bonding experiences for family and community members.*
- 6. Allows you to control your food supply and be more self-sufficient.*
- 7. Gardening is a great activity to help relieve stress and improve sleep quality.*
- 8. Reduces your carbon footprint.*
- 9. Statistically, gardeners live longer!*

*Don't let lack of space deter you. No matter how much room you have, you can grow your own vegetables*

<https://www.cbc.ca/life/home/planning-your-first-edible-garden-here-are-the-steps-to-follow-and-common-mistakes-to-avoid-1.5532253>

*Community Gardens - Registration for new gardeners is currently available at <https://london.ca/living-london/community-services/neighbourhood-building/neighbourhood-programs/community-gardens> There are 17 community garden sites available throughout the city, so there may be one in your neighbourhood where you can grow food to put away for the winter.*

*Fruit Plants ~ Tree Giveaway events from 10:00 to Noon*

*Saturday, June 10th Gathering on the Green @ 226 Wortley Road*

*Saturday, June 10th Forest City Road Races @ 580 Clarence Street*

*Saturday, June 17th Stoney Creek YMCA @ 920 Sunningdale Road East*

*More information: <https://www.reforestlondon.ca/programs/neighbourhood-releaf/>*

*Planting Help- Visit <https://www.lifespın.org/foodsecurity> You will find instructional videos and information on gardening, starting your seeds, how to grow potatoes, and container gardening for those without access to land resources.*

### **STRATEGIC PLANNING**

*We have begun the planning process for the autumn months. If there are topics that we have not covered in our video workshops, please let us know what would be of help to you.*

*In addition to our workshops, we are planning another Welcome Baby Fair and a Seniors Fair after Christmas. We hope to also offer free hearing tests this winter, once the noise of construction fades away. We will also make back-packs available to the children active in the summer program, at their final gathering.*

*Our Annual General Meeting ([RSVP here](#)) is scheduled for this year on Friday, June 23. It is an opportunity for our members and volunteers to celebrate the amazing work we accomplished in 2022.*

*A reminder to 2022 clients/customers ~ The database for 2022 is now closed, so this will be your final email update, unless you utilized other programs this year.*

*PLEASE visit our Website at [www.lifespın.org](http://www.lifespın.org) for a vast array of helpful resources we have put together for you.*