



WCHC
COMMUNITY
HEALTH CENTRE

UPDATE

JANUARY-JUNE, 2026

SERVING WOOLWICH WELLESLEY & WILMOT

We Are Growing Our St. Jacobs Site!

"growing toward a healthier tomorrow"

Woolwich Community Health Centre is excited to share that construction will soon begin on an expansion of our St. Jacobs location. This project represents an important step forward in our commitment to meeting the growing primary care needs of the communities we serve.

Across Woolwich and the surrounding areas, thousands of residents are currently without a family doctor or nurse practitioner. As the demand for timely, accessible primary care continues to rise, we recognize the importance of taking meaningful action. Expanding our St. Jacobs site is one way we are working to ensure more people can access the care they deserve, closer to home.



The upcoming expansion will include additional exam rooms and space for more staff. By increasing our capacity, we will be able to welcome more patients, reduce wait times, and strengthen our ability to deliver comprehensive, team-based care. This investment is not just about growing our facility; it is about supporting the health and wellbeing of the entire community.

Online Appointment Booking Is Available!

YOU CAN BOOK YOUR APPOINTMENTS ONLINE!

We are making it easier than ever to connect with care at the Woolwich Community Health Centre – you can now **book your appointments online** through our website!

Typically, this is to be used to book follow-up visits. You can schedule an appointment in just a few clicks, whenever it is most convenient for you – online booking is available 24/7.

It is simple, quick, and secure. Just visit our website and follow the prompts to choose your provider and time. To help walk you through the process, we have created a short **video guide**, which is available for you to follow along to guide you through the process. You can find this video on our website for the step-by-step guide.

Of course, phone booking will still be available if you prefer to call to book your appointments. However, we encourage everyone to give the online option a try – it is one more way we are working to make care more accessible, flexible, and centered around your needs.

Thank you for being part of the WCHC community. We are here to make your care experience easier every step of the way.

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Health and Wellness Programs

During the January-June 2026 season, Woolwich Community Health Centre is offering a combination of virtual (on zoom), in-person and hybrid group sessions. Groups meeting in-person will have the location indicated in the session description.

All health and mental health education events are FREE. Registration is required. To register for the health and wellness sessions: visit our website www.wchc.on.ca and click on the Community Programs tab, then click Workshop/Fitness Class Booking, or email/call Tariq at (tabdulhadi@wchc.on.ca) (519-664-3794 ext. 222).

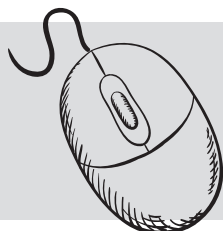
SESSION DESCRIPTION	DATE & TIME	LOCATION
<p>ORGANIZING CARE</p> <p>Managing health care – whether for yourself or someone else – can feel overwhelming. Keeping track of appointments, medications, and important information can be challenging, but staying organized can help you feel more in control and reduce stress.</p> <p>This interactive workshop will provide practical tools and strategies to help you manage health care more effectively. In this session, you will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify your care team and understand the different roles they play • Learn how to prepare for medical appointments to make the most of your time Explore strategies to stay organized after appointments • Consider how digital tools can support your health care management <p><i>*This workshop is a Health Matters Workshop from ABC Health Literacy</i></p>	<p>Thursday, January 22, 2026</p> <p>1:00 - 2:30 PM</p>	<p>In person only</p> <p>10 Parkside Drive St. Jacobs</p>
<p>MANAGING STRESS WITH A RARE OR CHRONIC DISEASE</p> <p>This workshop is designed for people living with chronic or rare diseases. Living with an illness can be stressful. Experiencing stress is a normal part of everyday life, but people living with a chronic or rare disease often experience more stress than they would in everyday life. One step towards building health literacy is understanding how you experience stress and learning some ways to manage it.</p> <p>In this workshop, you will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn what stress is and what it feels like • Explore how stress is related to chronic or rare diseases • Learn strategies for coping with stress <p><i>*This workshop is a Health Matters Workshop from ABC Health Literacy</i></p>	<p>Thursday, February 19, 2026</p> <p>1:00 - 2:30 PM</p>	<p>In person & Zoom</p> <p>10 Parkside Drive St. Jacobs</p>
<p>THE VALUE OF ADVENTURE</p> <p>Clay Williams has spent his life chasing adventure – from moving his family across continents to running thousands of kilometres, including a journey from Canada to Mexico following the migration path of monarch butterflies. In this inspiring talk, he shares how adventure, in any form, can awaken our spirit, renew our sense of purpose, and even slow the passage of time itself.</p>	<p>Thursday, March 5, 2026</p> <p>3:00 - 4:00 PM</p>	<p>In person & Zoom</p> <p>10 Parkside Drive St. Jacobs</p>
<p>SOCIAL PRESCRIBING LUNCH + LEARN</p> <p>Join us for a celebration of national social prescribing day! During this workshop you'll have the opportunity to learn all about what social prescribing is - and how it can make a positive impact in your life. After the presentation, you'll get to experience to benefits of social connection first hand, while also enjoying some light refreshments.</p> <p>Facilitated by Courtney Bauman Courtney Bauman, 519-664-3794 ext. 237 or cbauman@wchc.on.ca</p>	<p>Thursday, March 19, 2026</p> <p>12:00 - 1:00 PM</p>	<p>In person only</p> <p>10 Parkside Drive St. Jacobs</p>

Health and Wellness Programs *(continued)*

SESSION DESCRIPTION	DATE & TIME	LOCATION
<p>HEALTHY HABITS FOR LIFE</p> <p>Healthy Habits for Life is a free 8-week program for adults who want to build healthy habits and lower their risk of long-term health problems. Each session is interactive and includes easy tips and tools you can use in your daily life. After each session, you'll get helpful resources by email to support your learning and help you stay on track. You can attend all or some of the sessions.</p> <p>Session 1 – Small Steps to Better Health – Tuesday, March 3 (1:00 - 2:30)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn what chronic conditions are and how to lower your risk • See how small changes in your daily habits can make a big difference for your health <p>Session 2 – Healthy Habits that Stick – Tuesday, March 10 (2:30 - 4:00)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn why habits matter • Learn strategies to start and keep healthy habits • Discover how self-compassion can help <p>Session 3 – Eat Well, Live Well: Simple Nutrition – Tuesday, March 24 (2:30 - 4:00)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn about portion sizes, balanced meals, healthy eating strategies, cooking tips, and why hydration matters • Discover the importance of a balanced mindset <p>Session 4 – Move for Health – Tuesday, April 14 (1:00 - 2:30)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore easy ways to add physical activity into your daily routine • Learn exercises you can try today <p>Session 5 – Sleep and Stress: A Two Way Street – Tuesday, April 28 (1:00 - 2:30)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn how stress and sleep are connected • See how both can affect your health <p>Session 6 – Health Info Without the Overwhelm – Tuesday, May 12 (1:00 - 2:30)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn how to make sense of health information • Learn how to ask good questions <p>Session 7 – Decoding Health Info Online – Tuesday, May 26 (1:00 - 2:30)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore ways to find reliable online sources • Practice spotting misinformation <p>Session 8 – Alcohol, Smoking and Screen Time – Tuesday, June 9 (1:00 - 2:30)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn how these choices can affect your health • Learn how to reduce if needed 	<p>March - June, 2026</p>	<p>In person & Zoom</p> <p>10 Parkside Drive St. Jacobs</p>
<p>YOUNG AT HEART – ADULT GAMES NIGHT</p> <p>Join us for an evening of fun! Lots of board games available and feel free to bring your own. Snacks included at each session. A great evening to socialize, meet new friends, learn new games, and enjoy time with others.</p> <p>Facilitated by: Lauren Kells, Tariq Abdulhadi</p> <p>Register online or contact Lauren Kells: lkells@wchc.on.ca; 226-972-3768</p>	<p>4th Thursday monthly</p> <p>5:30 – 8:30 PM</p>	<p>In person only</p> <p>Wellesley Youth Centre 1401 Queen's Bush Road</p>

Mental Health Workshops

SESSION DESCRIPTION	DATE & TIME	LOCATION
<p>COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL THERAPY FOR INSOMNIA (CBT-I)</p> <p>Insomnia is a complaint of difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep that impairs our functioning or causes distress. When insomnia occurs at least 3 nights a week and lasts for 3 months or longer it is chronic insomnia. CBT-I is a set of practices that have shown to be effective in relieving persistent insomnia.</p> <p>There are 3 main components to CBT-I. The first involves recoding your sleep patterns using a sleep diary. The second part is focused on solving your insomnia. It focuses on using your sleep diary to help determine your ideal bedtime and rise time. The third and final portion focuses on the mind and teaches strategies to help relax your mind and body from the often-racing thoughts that can contribute to wakefulness when in bed at night.</p> <p>This is an 8-week program in person or virtual for 2 hrs consecutively.</p> <p>Pre group phone call mandatory.</p>	<p>Monday, February 2 - March 30</p> <p>1:00 - 3:00 PM</p> <p><i>*no class Feb. 16 for Family Day*</i></p>	<p>In person & Zoom</p> <p>10 Parkside Drive St. Jacobs</p>
<p>ADDICTION 101</p> <p>Join us for this session as we cover various topics around substance use and addiction including understanding what addiction is and how it develops, why it causes us to act the way we do, how to get better, where to find help and much more! This group is open to anyone wanting to learn more (family and friends will have a separate group) and all types of substance use (alcohol, stimulants, opioids, cannabis, etc.)</p>	<p>Monday, February 2, 2026</p> <p>6:00 - 7:00 PM</p>	<p>In person & Zoom</p> <p>10 Parkside Drive St. Jacobs</p>
<p>ADDICTION 101 – FOR FAMILY AND SIGNIFICANT OTHERS</p> <p>This workshop is for any adult 18+ who has a friend, partner, parent, child, sibling, or other loved one struggling with alcohol or drug use. Whether the person is in active use, or already in recovery, you will find valuable tools and support here. In this workshop you will learn why they engage in their behaviour, why certain approaches have not worked, what does work, how to prioritize your well-being and much more!</p>	<p>Monday, February 23, 2026</p> <p>6:00 - 7:00 PM</p>	<p>In person & Zoom</p> <p>10 Parkside Drive St. Jacobs</p>
<p>SMOKING AND VAPING CESSATION</p> <p>This 8-week group will help you build the skills, learn the strategies and gain the confidence to reduce or stop your smoking or vaping. This group is for adults 18+ who are motivated to change their smoking or vaping or those who have already stopped and want more support.</p>	<p>Monday, April 13 - June 8, 2026</p> <p>3:30 - 5:00 PM</p>	<p>In person & Zoom</p> <p>10 Parkside Drive St. Jacobs</p>
<p>POSITIVE INFLUENCE: HELPING YOUR LOVED ONE GET SOBER</p> <p>This 8-week group is for loved ones of people struggling with substance use to learn many skills that can help your loved one change, and to help yourself. This group is for adults 18+ who are family or significant others of people who are struggling with substance use and are not currently struggling with their own substance use.</p> <p><i>Note: It is recommended, but not required to attend the Addiction 101 – Family and Significant Others group first</i></p>	<p>Monday, April 13 - June 8, 2026</p> <p>6:00 - 7:30 PM</p>	<p>In person & Zoom</p> <p>10 Parkside Drive St. Jacobs</p>



To subscribe to our newsletter and
receive electronically visit our website
www.wchc.on.ca

Nutrition Workshops

Join our nutrition workshops of varying topics to improve your healthy eating habits.

To register: visit our website www.wchc.on.ca and click on the Community Programs tab, then click Workshop/Fitness Class Booking, or email/call Tariq at (tabdulhadi@wchc.on.ca) (519-664-3794 ext. 222).

SESSION DESCRIPTION	DATE & TIME	LOCATION
LET'S HAVE TEA AND TALK ABOUT HEALTHY EATING FOR MENTAL HEALTH Feeling cold and tired with low motivation? Is it low nutrition or the winter blahs? Join Dietitian Katie for tea and let's talk about healthy eating for mental health. Facilitated by Katie Hortobagyi, RD	Thursday, February 5, 2026 2:30 - 4:00 PM	In person & Zoom 10 Parkside Drive St. Jacobs
INFANT INTRODUCTION TO SOLIDS Whether it's your first or fifth child, we can always use a refresher on best practices for introducing solid foods to your baby. Learn from a dietitian when and how to provide complimentary foods, appropriate textures to serve, and first foods to offer. Babies are welcome! Facilitated by Brittany Trueman, RD	Thursday, March 5, 2026 10:00 – 11:00 AM	In person & Zoom 10 Parkside Drive St. Jacobs
NUTRITION MONTH CELEBRATION! Drop by our St. Jacob's location to meet one of our Dietitians, Katie. Say hello, pick up some healthy recipes, food samples, and ask your nutrition questions! Happy Nutrition Month! Facilitated by Katie Hortobagyi, RD	Thursday, March 5, 2026 2:30 - 4:30 PM	In person & Zoom 10 Parkside Drive St. Jacobs
DIABETES AND NUTRITION Join us at Woolwich Community Health Centre or on Zoom to learn about how nutrition changes can help manage your diabetes. This interactive talk will go over artificial sweeteners, label reading, whether carbohydrates are good or bad, and how much sugar is okay to have. Facilitated by Brittany Trueman, RD	Thursday, April 9, 2026 10:00 - 11:30 AM	In person & Zoom 10 Parkside Drive St. Jacobs
FOLLOWING THE MEDITERRANEAN DIET AT THE GROCERY STORE <i>(in person grocery store tour)</i> Join Dietitian Katie at the grocery store to learn how to choose foods that fit within the Mediterranean Diet. Budget friendly food options and plant proteins will be a focus!	Monday, May 14, 2026 1:00 - 2:30 PM	In person only Location TBD
KIDS CAN COOK! (virtual support) This is for kids of any age who want to start cooking in the kitchen! Email Dietitian Katie at Khortobagyi@wchc.on.ca and I will support you by sending back age appropriate recipes that you can try at home with your family and in your own kitchen. I will also support you with information about safety in the kitchen. Facilitated by Katie Hortobagyi, RD	Thursdays in June 2026	Zoom only
LENTILS, BEANS, AND MORE! Join our Registered Dietitian as we explore the tastes and benefits of plant-based eating. Participants will learn how to incorporate plant proteins into home cooking and have the opportunity to sample tasty vegetarian dishes. Facilitated by Natalee Miller, RD	Wednesday, May 6, 2026 1:30 – 3:00 PM	In person & Zoom 10 Parkside Drive St. Jacobs
MANAGING CHOLESTEROL WITH NUTRITION Nutrition plays an important role in lowering your risk of chronic health issues like heart disease, which is one of the leading causes of death in Canada. This workshop will help you learn which foods raise your cholesterol and which ones help to lower it. Learn practical tips from a dietitian to take control of your heart health today. Facilitated by Brittany Trueman, RD	Thursday, May 7, 2026 10:00 - 11:30 AM	In person & Zoom 10 Parkside Drive St. Jacobs

Caregiver Support Group

SESSION DESCRIPTION	DATE & TIME	LOCATION
<p>SCALE TOGETHER</p> <p>Presented in partnership with the Ontario Caregiver Organization, this 8-week program is designed to support caregivers, empowering them with practical information and skills to focus on your mental health and wellbeing within a caregiver role.</p> <p>Facilitated by Courtney Bauman and Aidan Herzog - McArthur</p> <p>Contact for registration: Courtney Bauman, 519-664-3794 ext. 237 or cbauman@wchc.on.ca</p>	<p>Begins Monday, March 2, recurring every Monday until April 27.</p> <p><i>(Note that there is no session on April 6th due to Easter)</i></p> <p>10:00 - 11:30 AM</p>	<p>In person only</p> <p>Wellesley Youth Centre 1401 Queen's Bush Road</p>

Breastfeeding 101 – ONGOING PROGRAM FOR FAMILIES IN WELLESLEY

Suitable for families expecting to welcome an infant in the next 6 weeks, this workshop is offered monthly and taught by a Lactation Consultant. Learn what you need to know about feeding your baby to make those first days and weeks easier including tips to simplify pumping, increase milk supply, and get more sleep! (in person in Wellesley only)



Date: 4th Wednesday of every month

Time: 6:00 – 8:00 PM

Location: Woolwich Community Health Centre
– Wellesley Site
(1401 Queens Bush Rd., Wellesley)

Facilitated by: Hillary Macguire (Lactation Consultant)

Contact for registration: Lauren Kells
226-972-3768 or lkells@wchc.on.ca

Walk & Talk

Do you enjoy going for a brisk walk and looking for a group to go with? Join us as we meet up bi-weekly at local trails around our community to enjoy a nice brisk walk and socialize together. Dates, times, and locations will be sent out on an ongoing basis. (Pauses during Winter and resumes in Spring)

Date: Spring - Fall
(Bi-weekly from 9:00 – 10:00 AM on Tuesdays)

Contact for registration: Tariq Abdulhadi
tabdulhadi@wchc.on.ca
Or register online /
519-664-3794 ext. 222



TECH HELP AT WCHC

Need 1-on-1 assistance with your devices? Our free Tech Help program provides personalized support to help you navigate your devices, troubleshoot issues, and improve your comfort with your technology. Our 'tech expert' can help you with just about anything! Book a time with Tariq.

Contact for registration: Tariq Abdulhadi
tabdulhadi@wchc.on.ca or register online / 519-664-3794 ext. 222

Children and Youth Programs

Welcome to the WCHC Youth Centre!

The WCHC Youth Centre is a space created with youth in mind. Whether you're looking for a place to hang out, meet new people, get creative, explore STEM activities, or access technology and electronics, the Youth Centre has it all. Designed to inspire connection and innovation, it's a place where youth can discover new interests, develop skills, and simply be themselves. Best of all, every program activity offered in the Youth Centre is completely **free of charge**.

DISCOVER OUR PROGRAMS AT THE WCHC YOUTH CENTRE

The WCHC Youth Centre is proud to offer a variety of engaging programs tailored to meet the needs of youth in our community:

- **Youth Centre Drop-In:** A welcoming space for Grades 1-12 students to relax, connect, and explore creative and recreational opportunities.
- **Mental Health & Wellness Programs:** Age-appropriate programs that support emotional well-being and build healthy coping skills for all ages.
- **Intergenerational Programs:** Once/month, youth and older adults come together to share experiences, learn new skills, and build meaningful connections through joint activities that encourage sharing experiences, relationship building, and community.
- **Special Events:** Seasonal celebrations, themed activity days, and community-wide gatherings happening throughout the year.
- **And more...**



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Looking to get involved and make a difference? The Youth Centre welcomes high school and post-secondary student volunteers who want to gain experience, support local youth, and help bring programs to life. Whether you're assisting with activities, sharing a special skill, or helping out at events, volunteering is a great way to build leadership skills and contribute to your community (and collect hours for high school). If you're interested in joining our volunteer team, reach out to us at wchcyouthcentre@gmail.com.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

The WCHC Youth Centre values collaboration and is always open to connecting with local organizations, educators, and community groups. Partnerships help us expand opportunities for youth, explore new ideas, and strengthen community ties. If your organization is interested in working with us, we'd love to hear from you.

A NOTE ABOUT FUTURE PROGRAMMING

As the Youth Centre continues to grow, our programs may shift and evolve based on youth interests, community feedback, staffing capacities, and available resources. We're committed to staying flexible, creative, and responsive — and we appreciate your patience and support as we try new things, adjust where needed, and shape the future of the space together.

STAY CONNECTED WITH THE WCHC YOUTH CENTRE!

- Want to stay up-to-date with all the exciting programs and events happening at the WCHC Youth Centre? Follow us on Facebook and Instagram for the latest updates, program announcements, and more!
- Prefer something tangible? Stop by the Youth Centre to pick up our monthly updated calendar with all the details you need.
- If you have any questions please do not hesitate to connect with our team via email at wchcyouthcentre@gmail.com.



WCHC Youth Centre



@wchcyouth



@wchc.youthcentre

WCHC Fitness: January – June 2026

WCHC has a mix of in person and virtual fitness classes are available to you! All in-person fitness classes will take place at the Woolwich Community Health Centre at 10 Parkside Dr. in St. Jacobs. Online classes will be on Zoom, which you will receive a link for after registration.

To register for a fitness class, please visit our website at www.wchc.on.ca. If you are having difficulty registering online or have any questions, please email Tariq at tabdulhadi@wchc.on.ca or call 519-664-3794 ext. 222. If you wish to pay via cash/cheque, please address the cheque to Woolwich Community Health Centre and include, with the payment, a letter to indicate your full name, address, phone number, email address, emergency contact information, and which class(es) you'd like to register for. Please note that all registrations are non-refundable.

FUNDAMENTAL FITNESS (ZOOM)		Instructor: Christina
Weight focused movements with some cardiovascular elements to keep us healthy and happy in day-to-day life. Hand weights, a chair and running shoes are all the equipment needed. Lots of variations available!		
Tuesdays 9:00 – 10:00 AM	January 6 – June 30, 2026	26 classes for \$130

BETTER BONES (IN PERSON)		Instructor: Liz
For those who have osteoporosis or would like to reduce the risk of developing osteoporosis. Suggested equipment: weights or alternative, exercise band, small ball. <i>*No classes on Friday, February 13, March 20, April 3*</i>		
Tuesdays 9:30 – 10:30 AM	January 6 – June 23, 2026	24 classes for \$120
Fridays 9:30 – 10:30 AM	January 9 – June 19, 2026	21 classes for \$105

YOGA (ZOOM)		Instructors: Rasha & Christina
Practice of being with whatever arises moment to moment, coordinating breath, movement, and concentration. A multilevel yoga practice that incorporates flow sequence, focusing on alignment, balance, flexibility, and breathing. This class is suitable for everyone as many variations are modifications are provided.		
Wednesdays 7:15 – 8:15 PM	January 7 – June 24, 2026	25 classes for \$200

STRENGTH TRAINING (IN PERSON)		Instructor: Melanie
As we age, we naturally lose muscle mass, so it is important to practise strength training to maintain, if not increase, muscle mass. Strength/resistance training helps to build bone density, protect joints from injury, contributes to better balance and ability to do daily activities, not to mention burning calories and keeping our bodies lean. This class will teach basic foundational strength exercises with a focus on repetition, proper form, and encouragement to gradually lift heavier weights than you may be used to. <i>*No class May 6*</i>		
Wednesdays 9:00 – 9:45 AM	January 7 – June 24, 2026	24 classes for \$120
Wednesdays 11:00 – 11:45 AM	January 7 – June 24, 2026	24 classes for \$120

PILATES BASED STRENGTH & STRETCH (IN PERSON)		Instructor: Melanie
This 45-minute class will combine strengthening exercises with a focus on core and control, with stretching and mobility built in to provide a full body workout that is gentle on the joints while still challenging the muscles and mind. <i>*No class May 6*</i>		
Wednesdays 10:00 – 10:45 AM	January 7 – June 24, 2026	24 classes for \$120

CHAIR CORE, BALANCE & MORE (STANDING PILATES INSPIRED) (ZOOM)		Instructor: Christina
This beautiful combination class will have you sitting taller and feeling better with combinations of seated core movement, stretching and strengthening. We will be moving our bodies with the intention of alignment for day to day life.		
Wednesdays 9:00 – 10:00 AM	January 7 – June 24, 2026	25 classes for \$125

FUNCTIONAL FITNESS FLOW (IN PERSON)		Instructor: Tricia
Stay strong, move well, and keep doing what you love. This class emphasizes safe strength-building, balance, and movement quality tailored to real life strength and stamina. <i>*No classes on February 16, March 16, 17, April 6, May 18*</i>		
Mondays 9:30 – 10:30 AM	January 5 – June 1, 2026	18 classes for \$90
Tuesdays 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM	January 6 – June 2, 2026	21 classes for \$105

FARM COLUMN

The Night the Barn Lit Up — and what it taught our family about preventing fires.

(BY: PAULA BALLAK, COMMUNITY OUTREACH NURSE)

I can still hear my dad telling the story about that morning. Anyone who keeps livestock knows the scent of a barn – a combination of hay and grains, dusty wood, and the earthy scent of animals and their bedding. My dad recalls stepping outside and seeing a faint glow pulsing behind the barn. He remembers feeling terror and his mind racing. Half the farm's history lived in that building – wooden rafters cut by his grandfather, hay stacked in tight for winter, the gentle sound of cattle shifting in their stalls. And in one terrible moment, it all felt suddenly fragile. Thankfully, the fire didn't get far. A heat lamp had fallen into straw, but he caught it early. A few scorched boards, one melted extension cord, and a couple bins of grain were the only casualties. But that morning changed how he looked at barns – and realized how easily they can burn. What follows isn't a lecture. It's the things I learned from my grandfather and dad, and the things I've heard from others the same way. If it saves someone from standing in their yard barefoot before sunrise, staring at a barn that shouldn't be glowing, then it's worth writing.

OLD BARNs AND OLD WIRING DON'T MIX

That barn still had old wiring, despite the fact that my dad was an electrician. It was so old the insulation cracked like eggshells when you touched it. It worked – but “working” and “safe” aren't the same thing.

Electricity and dust are a dangerous pair. Add in a few mice who think wire insulation is a snack, and you have the makings of a barn fire long before you ever see a spark.

After the fire scare, he pulled out every brittle wire, ran metal conduit, and replaced ancient switches. It cost money, yes. But it didn't cost a barn.

HAY ISN'T JUST HAY – SOMETIMES IT'S A FUSE

I grew up hearing stories about hay “spontaneously combusting,” and I used to roll my eyes. Then one August, a stack of second-cutting started steaming like a compost pile. Moisture hides in bales. Microbes throw a little party inside, heat builds, and suddenly a bale can ignite from the inside out. I've seen our neighbours lose entire barns this way. I was taught to always leave space for airflow, stack loosely, and check temperatures every few days. If a bale feels warm, it gets kicked out of the barn as fast as we can get it out – but if it feels hot – or we're not feeling comfortable moving it – we call the local fire department – who come and help us assess, and are there ready if when moved, it starts to ignite. Better safe than sorry.

MACHINES DON'T BELONG BESIDE BEDDING

A tractor engine stays hot longer than you think. And chaff, grease, and bedding dust love to sit on hot metal like it's a beach chair. Years ago, my uncle Ken parked a baler inside right after finishing the last field of the day. By sunset, the whole back half of his barn was gone. He stood there shaking his head, saying, “Should've waited fifteen minutes.”

Those words stuck with our whole family and neighbours too.

HEAT LAMPS ARE LIKE BORROWED TROUBLE

Most of us have used heat lamps. They're simple, comforting, but also dangerous. My dad's fell because the clamp slipped on a worn beam. That was all it took. Today, if a lamp goes up, it's secured with two supports: a clamp and a chain. No more dangling cords like spaghetti. And no more lamps hanging less than 2 feet over hay or straw filled areas, yes for some as bedding, but in a location away from the hay mow.

CLEANLINESS ISN'T JUST ABOUT PRIDE

Dust and cobwebs are basically kindling waiting politely for their opportunity. Most people clean the barn in spring and fall, but prevention would have us do it whenever the dust starts to look thick enough to grow crops on.

Deep cleaning rafters, brushing away webs, and clearing clutter doesn't always make it into the top 10 jobs of the week, but they make a barn far less inviting to flames.

PREPAREDNESS IS THE THING YOU HOPE YOU NEVER NEED

The other changes my grandpa and dad made were:

- Labeling breaker boxes
- Adding more fire extinguishers
- Clearing the area around them for easy access
- Making sure the walkways were free and clear of clutter

My dad even had me help walking the cattle out of the barn a few times, which confused them but made him feel more prepared. In his words “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure”

WHY I'M TELLING YOU THIS

Barns don't just hold animals and equipment. They hold stories—of the first calf born, the late-night milkings, the sweat of generations. They deserve more care than we sometimes give them in the rush of farm life.

Our family was fortunate. The fire stopped before it truly started. Not everyone gets a warning that gentle.

So, if this column nudges you to check a loose wire, rethink a heat lamp, or test a warm bale – good. It means that smoky dawn bought something more valuable than fear. It bought prevention.



WOOLWICH COUNSELLING CENTRE

WINTER/SPRING 2026 WORKSHOPS AND GROUPS

January 2026



Glad to Be Me (Ages 4-7)

Monday, Jan. 5, 4-5 pm; Fee: \$10*

This fun-filled children's workshop promotes self-esteem and self-worth.



Caregiver Support Group

Thursday, Jan. 8, 1-2 pm; No cost

Caregivers provide physical and emotional support to family members, neighbours, partners, and friends. We recognize that caregivers may also need support. Join us for refreshments, conversation, community, and peer support. This event will have a theme of self-care. Please join us for one or all sessions.



No Need to Fret: Junior Group (Ages 10-12)

Mondays, Jan. 12-Feb. 9, 5-6 pm; Fee: \$150*

Does your child worry excessively? Do worries and fears interfere with your child's ability to enjoy a carefree childhood? Appropriate and timely intervention can help anxious children grow up to be healthy adults. This five-session therapy group provides strategies to help anxious children better manage fears and worries.



Understanding ADHD in Children Workshop

Tuesday, Jan. 13, 6:30-7:30 pm; Fee: \$10*

Explore the fundamentals of Attention-Deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), including its impact on behavior, learning, and social interactions. Learn how ADHD manifests differently in each child and common challenges they may face. Discover methods for assessing your child's strengths and challenges, including practical strategies for observing and understanding their unique abilities.



Discovering the Benefits of Mindfulness Workshop

Wednesday, Jan. 14, 6:30-7:30 pm; Fee: \$10*

Mindfulness is proven to be highly effective for both physical and emotional health, including anxiety, depression, high blood pressure, heart disease, sleep disorders, and chronic pain. This workshop will provide participants with a thorough understanding of mindfulness and the well-being it can bring to our lives.



Effective Problem-Solving and Limit-Setting with our Children

Wednesday, Jan. 28, 6:30-7:30 pm; Fee: \$10*

This workshop will cover the value of effective problem-solving to promote healthy and nurturing relationships with our children. Practical strategies to minimize parent-child conflict will be shared.

February 2026



Glad to Be Me (Ages 4-7)

Monday, Feb. 2, 4-5 pm; Fee: \$10*

This fun-filled children's workshop promotes self-esteem and self-worth.



Connecting Mind and Body for Kids (Ages 3-4)

Tuesdays, Feb. 3-Mar. 3, 10-11 am; Fee: \$150*

A fun and engaging yoga and mindfulness children's group. Through playful games and activities, children will learn breathing techniques, yoga poses and calming exercises to connect with their thoughts and feelings. Please bring yoga mats.



Parenting Children with ADHD Group

Tuesdays, Feb. 3-Mar. 3, 6-7:30 pm; Fee: \$150*

Gain practical strategies and insights to support your child's unique needs. This workshop covers ADHD traits, effective communication, and how to create a supportive home environment that fosters development and well-being.

February 2026 Continued



Grief Group for Seniors

Wednesdays, Feb. 4-Mar. 11, 10:30-11:30 am; No cost

Grief is a journey that requires special care and the support of others as we heal. This group will focus on the journey through grief after the loss of a loved one. It will provide opportunities for connection and reflection during the healing process.



Helping Teens Manage Anxiety

Wednesday, Feb. 4, 6:30-7:30 pm; Fee: \$10*

Adolescence is a time of many stressors, including academic and social pressures. Awareness, understanding, and support are necessary to navigate through adolescent years. This workshop examines the causes and symptoms of adolescent anxiety. Strategies to support and cope with anxiety are provided for teens, their parents and others.



Caregiver Support Group

Thursday, Feb. 5, 1-2 pm; No cost

See above for more details.



Stand Tall (Ages 7-9)

Wednesdays, Feb. 11-Mar. 11, 5-6 pm; Fee: \$10*

This therapy group promotes confidence and assertiveness enabling children to protect and express themselves.



Strengthening Children's Emotional Regulation Skills Workshop

Wednesday, Feb. 11, 6:30-7:30 pm; Fee: \$10*

Learning how to recognize and manage strong emotions is an important life skill. Benefits include improved communication, independence, self-confidence, and interpersonal skills. Join us to discuss strategies for building emotion-regulation skills in our children, our teens, and caregivers too.

March 2026



Glad to Be Me (Ages 4-7)

Monday, Mar. 2, 4-5 pm; Fee: \$10*

This fun-filled children's workshop promotes self-esteem and self-worth.



Calm and Content - Strategies for Managing Your Emotional State Workshop

Monday, Mar. 2, 6:30-7:30 pm; Fee: \$10*

Life is better when we can manage our emotions and avoid getting stuck in an anxious, down, or angry state. In this workshop you will receive an introduction to how our nervous system works to manage emotions. You will learn a few tips on how to use this wisdom to stay calm and content.



Caregiver Support Group

Thursday, Mar. 5, 1-2 pm; No cost

See above for more details.

***Further subsidies available if needed.**

LEARN MORE AND REGISTER:



**WOOLWICHCOUNSELLING.ORG/
UPCOMING-EVENTS**



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WOOLWICH COUNSELLING CENTRE

WINTER/SPRING 2026 WORKSHOPS AND GROUPS

March 2026 Continued



Mindshift: Anxiety Management Group

Tuesdays, Mar. 10, 24, Apr. 7, 21, May 5, 6:30-7:30 pm; Fee: \$150*

This psycho-educational therapy group will teach you about CBT, an evidence-based approach that focuses on the way people think and act and how these contribute to mood. You will be provided with the tools necessary to begin managing your symptoms of stress, depression, and/or anxiety by learning strategies to support mental well-being. Topics such as self-care, goal setting, styles of distorted thinking, how to overcome negative thoughts using thought logs, and thought challenging strategies will be covered.



Emotion Explorers Group (Ages 5-8)

Wednesdays, Mar. 25- Apr. 22, 4:30-5:30 pm; Fee: \$150*

A safe, fun space for kids to explore and express their feelings. Through games, stories, crafts, and movement, kids will learn to recognize their feelings, express them in healthy ways, and build confidence in managing big emotions.



Empowering the Girl in Me (Ages 10-12)

Wednesdays, Mar. 25- Apr. 22, 6:30-7:30 pm; Fee: \$150*

This therapy group develops leadership skills and confidence to enable individuals who self-identify as girls to protect themselves, develop healthy coping mechanisms, and positive social connections.

April 2026



Caregiver Support Group

Thursday, Apr. 2, 1-2 pm; No cost

Caregivers provide physical and emotional support to family members, neighbours, partners, and friends. We recognize that caregivers may also need support. Join us for refreshments, conversation, community, and peer support. This event will have a theme of self-care. Please join us for one or all sessions.



Self-Compassion 101: What is it and how to practice it Workshop

Thursday, Apr. 9, 6:30-7:30 pm; Fee: \$10*

Self-compassion benefits our mental health and well-being. Learning about this concept can help you to become more resilient, which enables you to better cope with difficult emotions. Join our workshop to discover more about the skill of self-compassion and how you can apply it to your own life and experiences.



Intergenerational Jamboree (Ages 3+)

Friday, Apr. 10-May 8, 10-11 am; Fee: \$150*

Join us for a fun and interactive intergenerational program. Through meaningful and engaging play, and music activities, this program will contribute to the improved emotional and social well-being of both younger and older participants. This time of intentional connection through the generations will promote curiosity, creativity, relaxation and wonder for all. Register as a pair: child and grandparent, senior neighbour or community friend, and join us for a fun-filled program that will promote everyone's well-being.



Glad to Be Me (Ages 4-7)

Monday, Apr. 13, 4-5 pm; Fee: \$10*

This fun-filled children's workshop promotes self-esteem and self-worth.



Parenting Children with ADHD Group

Tuesdays, Apr. 14-May 12, 12:30-2 pm; Fee: \$150*

Gain practical strategies and insights to support your child's unique needs. This workshop covers ADHD traits, effective communication, and how to create a supportive home environment that fosters development and well-being.

April 2026 Continued



Calm and Content - Strategies for Managing Your Emotional State Group

Mondays, Apr. 20-May 11, 6:30-7:30 pm; Fee: \$150*

Life is better when we can manage our emotions and avoid getting stuck in an anxious, depressed, or angry state.

In this group, you will learn more about the wisdom of your nervous system and how you can harness it to move from surviving to thriving. Gain practical strategies to spend more time in a calm, content state.



No Need to Fret (Ages 7-10)

Breslau Location

Wednesdays, Apr. 29-May 27, 5-6 pm; Fee: \$150*

Does your child worry excessively? Do worries and fears interfere with your child's ability to enjoy a carefree childhood? Appropriate and timely intervention can help anxious children grow up to be healthy adults. This five-session therapy group provides strategies to help anxious children better manage fears and worries.

May 2026



Glad to Be Me (Ages 4-7)

Monday, May 4, 4-5 pm; Fee: \$10*

This fun-filled children's workshop promotes self-esteem and self-worth.



Let's Talk About Mental Health Workshop

Wednesday, May 6, 6:30-7:30 pm; Fee: \$10*

Mental health impacts everyone. Ongoing conversations on this topic are essential. This workshop will explore every day mental health issues people face, including anxiety, stress and depression. Join us to learn practical coping strategies to manage our mental well-being and how to navigate conversations to support others.



Caregiver Support Group

Thursday, May 7, 1-2 pm; No cost

See above for more details.



Building Better Boundaries Group

Thursdays, May 7-June 18, 6-7:30 pm; No cost

This psychoeducational therapy group explores the importance of healthy boundaries in relationships, and provides concrete information and strategies to develop and maintain them. This group will explore why setting healthy boundaries can feel challenging, and offer steps to overcome these barriers.



Self-Criticism to Self-Compassion

Mondays, May 25-June 22, 6:30-7:30 pm; Fee: \$150*

Practicing self-compassion brings many mental health benefits and helps to build resilience. Join our sessions to discover the many benefits of self-compassion and how you can apply it to your own life and experiences.

June 2026



Glad to Be Me (Ages 4-7)

Monday, June 1, 4-5 pm; Fee: \$10*

This fun-filled children's workshop promotes self-esteem and self-worth.



Tunes and Togetherness: Seniors Music Group

Tuesdays, June 2-30, 10-11 am; Fee: \$150*

A welcoming five-session, music therapy group for older adults to connect, express, and enjoy music together—no experience needed.



Caregiver Support Group

Thursday, June 4, 1-2 pm; No cost

See above for more details.

Immunization For All Ages

WCHC has launched a new project to bring vaccination clinics closer to the rural townships. The purpose of this project is to improve immunization rates through education, and improved accessibility at our sites in St. Jacobs, Linwood, Wellesley, and other central locations. The immunization project is funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). We will provide routine immunization for children and adults. If you need more information about the project and immunization, call Paula at (226) 338 4132 or email pballak@wchc.on.ca

Impfen Fa Aule Ella

Woolwich Community Health Centre haben an niet project aunjefongt tom die impfen klinnikj dichtabie, butakaunt schtaut bringen. Dit project es jemeent tom en bätren jelieeheit watch bringen von impfen an tom daut leichta moaken, bie aule dree klinnikj schtäden, St. Jacobs, Linwood, Wellesley an mea meddelja schtäden. Dit impfen project es betolt von die Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). Wie woaren aule jeweeneleje impfen aunbeeden fa kinja uk groote mensen. Wan jie mea informazion fält von dit impfen project, foon ooda email Paula bie (226) 338 4132, pballak@wchc.on.ca (translated by Anna Wall)

Financial contribution:



Public Health
Agency of Canada

Agence de la santé
publique du Canada

WOOLWICH COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

PO Box 370, 10 Parkside Dr.
St. Jacobs, ON N0B 2N0
Tel: 519-664-3794
Fax: 519-664-2182

ST. JACOBS HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday	9:00 am - 8:00 pm
Tuesday	9:00 am - 8:00 pm
Wednesday	9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Thursday	9:00 am - 8:00 pm
Friday	9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Lab Services (for registered patients only)
by appointment only.

WELLESLEY TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

PO Box 187, 1401 Queen's Bush Rd.
Wellesley, ON N0B 2T0
Tel: 519-656-9025
Fax: 519-656-9027

WTCHC HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday	9:00 am - 8:00 pm
Tuesday	9:00 am - 8:00 pm
Wednesday	9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Thursday	9:00 am - 8:00 pm
Friday	9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Lab Services (for registered patients only)
by appointment only.

LINWOOD NURSE PRACTITIONER OFFICE

Open at select times by appointment only.
Please call the Wellesley office at
519-656-9025 to book an appointment.

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www.wchc.on.ca



Woolwich Community Health Centre

ADDITIONAL SERVICES 9 and 10 Parkside Dr.

St. Jacobs Dental Care

**ACCEPTING NEW PATIENTS
AND EMERGENCIES**

Dr. Mira Nusaputra, D.D.S.
Tel: 519-664-2434
www.stjacobsdentalcare.ca

Martin's Guardian Pharmacy

Alan Martin, Pharmacist
Tel: 519-664-3785
Fax: 519-664-2170
www.martinspharmacy.ca

St. Jacobs Midwives (9 Parkside Drive)

Andrea Horst, Administrator
Tel: 519-664-2542
Fax: 519-664-1815
www.stjacobsmidwives.on.ca

St. Jacobs Naturopathic Clinic

Raza Shah B.Sc., N.D.
Jennifer Kadlec, Osteopathic Candidate
Tel: 519-664-1050
www.stjacobsnaturopathic.com

