



When Families are in Charge... Home, Housing and Support

Finding Our Place Among Other Citizens Wishing to Build
Vibrant, Diverse Neighbourhoods in which to Live

What's happening in Durham Region?

**Around housing for people
with disabilities and their
families**

There is a lot going on...

- ▶ 30+ families gather monthly to learn together
- ▶ Secondary Suites
 - Two families have made significant renovations to current properties
 - Five families into new housing with separate spaces of home for family members
- ▶ Two people have moved into new homes (apartment, house) of their own
- ▶ Another 5 people are poised to move based on getting modest amount of support funding



There is a lot going on...

- ▶ About 20+ people registered with social housing (not necessarily wanting the place, but maybe rent subsidy in the future)
- ▶ IBC group developed into incorporated status
- ▶ Relationship with City, Housing Durham, 2 builders, federal government strategy (CMHA) ie agree with Housing Durham about renovation dollars, portable subsidies, and mixed housing as a preference



There is a lot going on...

- ▶ Many families arrived thinking of grouped living, 24-hour paid support models and are now thinking very, very differently
- ▶ Nearly everyone has a clearer idea of both possible housing options and ways of support (paid and unpaid) and want to continue to meet
- ▶ We have a Housing website www.imagininghome.ca
- ▶ Families hosted a Housing Forum – with 85 people

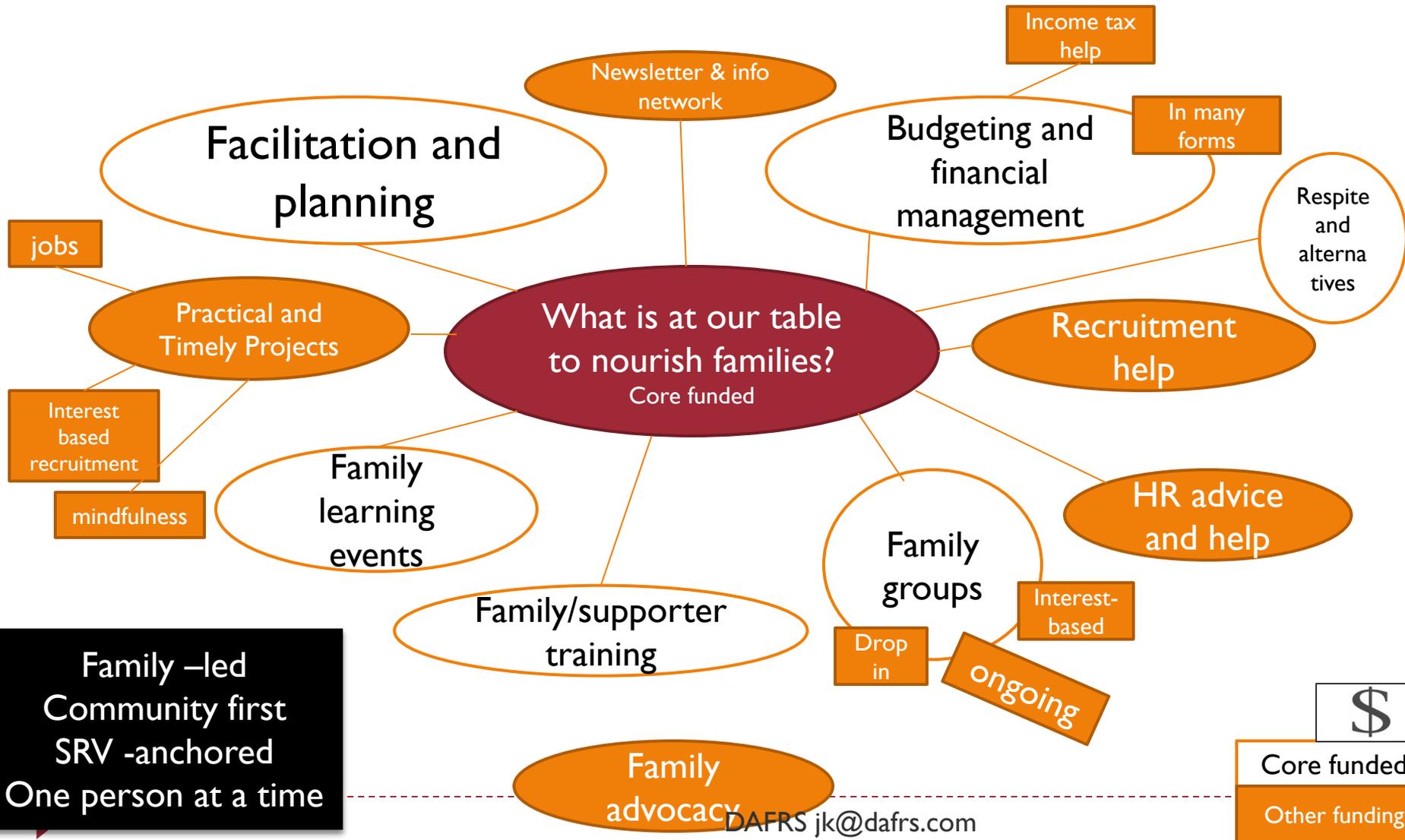


How does this happen?

1. Engaged Families
2. A family support and resource organization
3. A principled framework
4. Family – to – family learning
5. Excited by a vision for our neighbourhoods and communities



Family-led at DAFRS: how can we support families to manage and lead?



Principles that Guide Our Actions...

- ▶ Life happens best in typical ways in ordinary community - not separate or special
- ▶ Always begin with the person and their interests – not their deficits or disabilities
- ▶ Supports and plans are best arranged around individualized options – not groups
- ▶ Relationship is key and safeguarding relationships can only be developed within real community

Principles that Guide Our Actions...

- ▶ Get beyond mere presence and to look at authentic participation, contribution and real inclusion
- ▶ Shared decision-making is essential -the voice of the individual is important, including simple everyday choices and governing of one's life
- ▶ This good life in community is for everyone regardless of ability or support requirements
- ▶ We believe that ours is an abundant community, and so we will seek out opportunities where there are not yet people with disabilities because these will provide the greatest potential, and these will be places where community members stand to gain the most benefits from coming to know this one person.

Housing and DAFRS

- ▶ Only an extension of how we think at DAFRS – family led, one person at a time, in community, SRV anchored
- ▶ Some HTF money allowed us to focus and think a bit deeper
- ▶ We started with what we know – inviting families to come together to share what they want, what they know, and to learn what they do not yet know



...and what they mean for Housing

- ▶ Designed for and with one person at a time
- ▶ Focused on a “home of my own” where they are in charge in typical and important ways
- ▶ Anchored in diverse neighbourhoods where they are not grouped with others with disabilities and seen as “one of them”, but rather where they live in homes with and among others so that they are seen as “one of the neighbours”
- ▶ Home is a places of security and identity from which typical roles, contribution and relationship with others flow in ordinary and typical ways and in ordinary places in their community.



**Our vision is best for the whole
community**

And this all begins at home.....

Our Starting Point

Every day in Ontario families and individuals look for and find housing. Which strategies might work for us?

What innovations might we contribute?





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- ▶ Our family members with disabilities are much the same as the rest of us
 - ▶ If we believe that they want and need the same things from a home as you and I
 - ▶ Safety and security
 - ▶ Choice, control and king of the castle
 - ▶ Good neighbours and friends
 - ▶ An anchor to go forth
 - ▶ Then our principles tell us to look at what everyone else with affordability issues were doing with housing

▶ HOME



HOUSING



SUPPORT



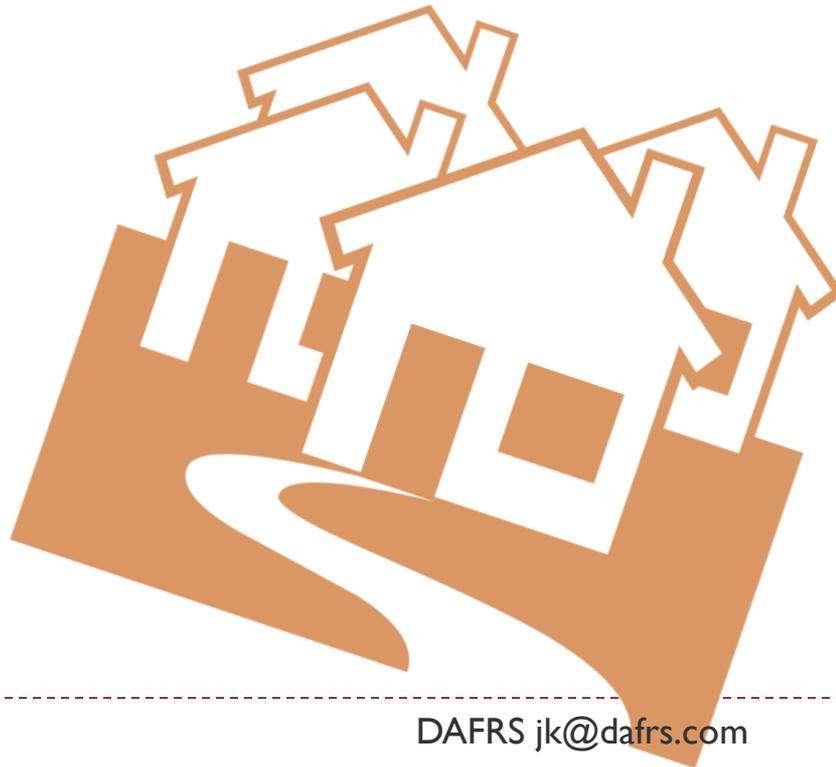
Housing

- ▶ **Housing** is the physical aspect of home – where it is, what it looks like, and may change throughout our lives.
- ▶ The challenges are really ones of affordability as they are for all citizens. This means that Housing challenges ought to be addressed in the same ways that housing is addressed for the rest of the population –
 - ▶ through Departments of Housing,
 - ▶ basic income levels, and
 - ▶ national housing strategies.



Home

- ▶ **Home** is a sense of place, security and control that is made and reinforced every day and continually developed every day. From the anchor of home a person is a part of and contributes to a full community life rich with relationships.



Support



- ▶ **Support** is what enables home
- ▶ and is best offered through very individual and unique combinations of typical, natural and paid supports.
- ▶ Here is a clear role for MCSS to fund supports that allow a person to live in a home of their own, to build a good life in their community anchored from that home, and to encourage and enhance natural supports.



Home, Housing and Support...and Family-to-Family Learning

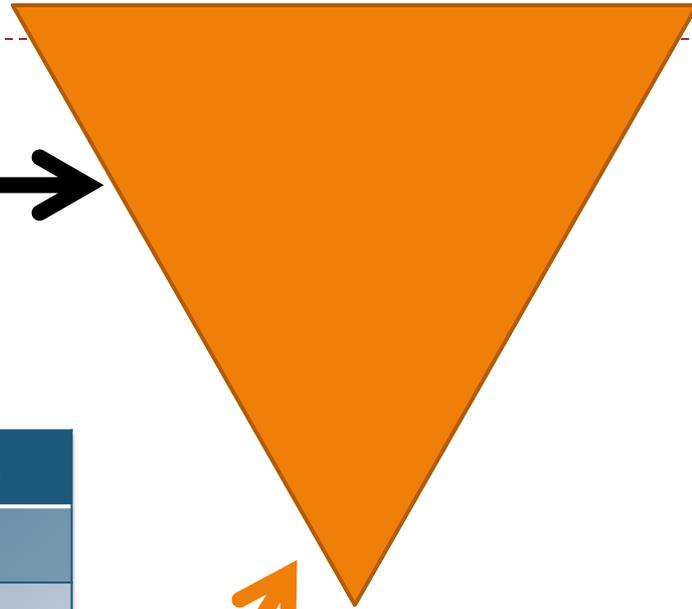


- ▶ When separated, energy and creativity abound
- ▶ Families know a lot about housing and can share and inspire each other
- ▶ Families have different thoughts on supports – especially when dollars are low – and can push each other's thinking
- ▶ In the family group, it seems easier for people to hear and examine new ideas – instead of just throwing them out.

Designing support for life

- ▶ Start with happy, safe alone time
- ▶ Add in times when you just will want to be there
- ▶ Imagine visits by sisters and brothers, extended family, family friends (on average once a week?)
- ▶ When other supports (work colleagues) are in place
- ▶ When is support then still needed?
 - ▶ Companion-style room mate supports?
 - ▶ More focused and purposeful supports to teach skills (and who best to do this – personal coach, personal chef)?
 - ▶ With a focus on building roles and bridging to relationship
- ▶ Guided and overseen by who? (network, circle)

▶ Natural and unpaid



S	M	T	W	Th	F	S

▶ Formal and paid supports



Learning to analyze what is on offer

- ▶ Try it out programs – “If you have to move in and out with a suitcase, it is not home”
- ▶ Sharing with others with disabilities put the focus on disability and not on what we have in common with neighbours (what is so cool about my son)
- ▶ We only need to figure out the next good option – not necessarily make the forever plan
- ▶ Don't do something weird if something ordinary will do (MK) How is it that the rest of our kids get a taste of living apart and more on their own?



Life is not perfect! We still need:

▶ For Housing

- ▶ Portable rent subsidies
- ▶ Renovation dollars or loans
- ▶ A Focus on mixed and diverse neighbourhoods

▶ For Support

- ▶ Individualized funding dollars for full life supports
- ▶ Clarity and supports for family-led and managed models



This all means that housing and home:

- ▶ Can only be designed one person at a time
- ▶ Is a lifelong process of tweaks, edits, stages and next steps
- ▶ Are defined by neighbourhood choices, preferences, affordability, available options, family, possibility, and creativity
- ▶ Happens best among neighbours who can provide ordinary measures of safety, companionship, role modeling, teaching, and sharing



KEY MESSAGES

Key Messages

1. Home, Housing and Support ought to be addressed separately
2. Housing and home are lifelong tweaks, edits and stages
3. That housing challenges are mostly affordability challenges
4. That all people contribute to their neighbourhood
5. Helping families does not mean taking away control or responsibility
6. Access to renovation dollars is a long term investment



Key Messages

7. Housing and home can only be designed one person at a time
8. A home of one's own is for everyone
9. That funders need to stop funding old style high profile congregated mega projects as if there are no other options
10. This is not for all families, but where there are keen families willing to partner, they ought to be resourced and supported

