

Welcome to Unison eVoice, a monthly bulletin that profiles programs and partners at Unison.

## Program Profile **Wellness Resource Centre**



**Staff Lead: Karima Kassam, Health Promoter**

Karima is passionate about building vibrant communities. She started her career in community based health promotion over twelve years ago and has worked in many settings including Toronto Public Health and the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario. In 2008, Karima joined Unison, Keele Rogers site, as one of the Community Health Promoters. Her work spans advocacy initiatives and community based lifestyle initiatives such as the Colour It Up! Cooking Program, Building Bridges to Better Health program (Chronic Disease Self Management), Walking Club and now, the exciting new Wellness Resource Centre!

### Wellness Resource Centre

The Wellness Resource Centre is a drop-in information resource centre where community members can research their broad health and wellness questions. These diverse issues could include housing, child-care, healthy eating, physical activity and medical concerns. Internet access, resource books, guest speakers and information on local services are on hand. The Centre aims to diminish barriers, such as literacy or language, through the use of staff and trained volunteers to provide objective discussion of the information received.

The program is now run as a pilot at the JT site every Thursday from 1 to 3 pm March until June. By providing a supportive and caring environment and access to



reliable resources, we hope community residents will make informed decisions about their health and well-being.

For information, please contact Karima Kassam at [karima.kassam@unisonhcs.org](mailto:karima.kassam@unisonhcs.org) or 416-653-5400 x 1227.

### How do you find reliable online information?

When you have a health question, starting your search online is very valuable. However, not everything online is considered reliable. The Wellness Resource Centre will assist clients to use the following elements to evaluate the information they find on the internet. (Visit us at the Wellness Resource Centre for more information.)

Top 5 Elements of finding reliable health information:

• Reliable and Trusted	Is the source reliable? i.e. Recognized as a not-for profit or Canadian government site.
• Up-to-date	Is the information current for the last 2 years?
• Inclusive	Does the site encourage you to share the information with your healthcare provider?
• Scientific	Are you being encouraged to buy a certain product? Is the scientific information biased in support of the product?
• Relevant	Does the information on the site pertain to you? i.e. Someone who is similar to your gender, age and ethnicity?

Ref: See the full list on Reliable Health Information at [www.heartandstroke.on.ca](http://www.heartandstroke.on.ca)

## Community Partner Profile

## Toronto Public Library

**Toronto Public Library**

The Toronto Public Library (TPL) is a system of 99 branches that serve the people who live, work, or go to school in Toronto. The TPL is the world's busiest library system, with over 17.5 million visitors each year! Part of the TPL's vision, is "to be the cornerstone of Toronto neighbourhoods, connecting people to each other, to their neighbourhoods, and to their hopes and dreams". In working to achieve this vision, the TPL partners with Unison in offering a Seniors Reading Circle.

**The Program**

The Seniors Reading Circle (SRC) is part of the Forever Young Seniors Program, and it is run every last Thursday of the month.

One or two representatives from the Barbara Frum Library bring multiple copies of an advanced picture book to the Lawrence Heights site of Unison.

**Book Selection & Purpose**

The books that are selected for reading serve two purposes. First, the words and imagery from the book are meant to trigger memories so that seniors can retell their life experiences as they remember them. Second, they are catalysts or vehicles for thoughtful discussions. It's all about socializing literature and bringing the community together in a friendly and thought-provoking environment.

**What Participants Have To Say...**

*"I look forward to the reading circle each month. I like books with meaning, one which will lead to varying opinions... We get to know a lot about each other this way"*

*"The books that are selected teach an inner-good... I also particularly enjoy that it is intergenerational"*

*"We tend to be self-absorbed in our own world. This program allows us to put ourselves out there and express our emotions and perspective on things."*

**Toronto Library Branches within Unison Catchment****Centennial**

578 Finch Ave. West  
Toronto, ON , M2R 1N7  
416-395-5490

**Downsview**

2793 Keele Street  
Toronto, ON , M3M 2G3  
416-395-5720

**Barbara Frum**

20 Covington Road  
Toronto, ON , M6A 3C1  
416-395-5440

**Maria A. Shchuka**

1745 Eglinton Avenue  
Toronto, ON , M6E 2H4  
416-394-1000

**Oakwood Village Library and Arts Centre**

341 Oakwood Ave.  
Toronto, ON , M6E 2W1  
416-394-1040

**Evelyn Gregory**

120 Trowell Ave.  
Toronto, ON , M6M 1L7  
416-394-1006

**Amesbury Park**

1565 Lawrence Ave. W.  
Toronto, ON , M6L 1A8  
416-395-5420

**Weston**

2 King Street  
Toronto, ON , M9N 1K9  
416-394-1016

**Jane/Dundas**

620 Jane Street  
Toronto, ON , M6S 4A6  
416-394-1014