bgc Durham

bgcdurham.com

INCLUSION MATTERS

OCTOBER

Octoberbrings cooler days, changing routines,and plenty of opportunitiesto learn,connect, and celebrate together. Throughout the month, we recognize important dates including World Mental Health Day, World Food Day, and Halloween, while also celebrating Women's History Month and a variety of cultural and awareness observances. These moments give us opportunities to build understanding, celebrate differences, and encourage meaningful conversations with children and youth. At BGC Durham, Inclusion Matters means continuing to create programs where every member can participate, feel a sense of belonging, and be supported in the ways that work best for them. This month's newsletter highlights inclusive activities, helpful resources, and practical strategies to support our members throughout the fall.

bgc Durham

bgcdurham.com

INCLUSION MATTERS

UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Week-Long Heritage Recognitions

- **October 4–10**
  Fire Prevention Week
- **October 5–11**
  Mental Illness Awareness Week
- **October 18–24**
  Invisible Disabilities Awareness Week

Month-Long Heritage Recognitions

- German Heritage Month
- Canadian Islamic History Month
- Islamic Heritage Month
- Latin American Heritage Month
- Women's History Month
- ADHD Awareness Month
- Learning Disabilities Awareness Month
- Dyslexia Awareness Month
- Children's Vision Awareness Month
- Occupational Therapy Month

Key Events

1	National Seniors Day
1	International Coffee Day
4	National Day of Action for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ People
5	World Teachers' Day
6	World Cerebral Palsy Day
8	World Sight Day
10	World Mental Health Day
11	International Day of the Girl Child
12	Thanksgiving
16	World Food Day
18	Persons Day
22	International Stuttering Awareness Day
24	United Nations Day
27	World Occupational Therapy Day
31	Halloween

Different holidays. Same goal — a stronger, more inclusive community.

INCLUSION MATTERS

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH
Women Who Inspire Us

Malala Yousafzai

Education advocate and Nobel Peace Prize laureate. She continues to champion girls' rights around the world.

Maya Angelou

Poet, writer, and inspiration to generations. Her stories and words remind us of the power of resilience, self-belief, and kindness.

Dr. Jane Goodall

Primatologist and conservationist. She showed us that one person can make a difference — and that kindness can change the world.

Frida Kahlo

Artist and trailblazer. Her creativity, strength, and authenticity continue to inspire people to express themselves and be unapologetically themselves.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Lawyer and Supreme Court Justice. She fought for equality and showed us the importance of speaking up for what is right.

Billie Jean King

Tennis champion and advocate for equality. She used her platform to fight for equal rights in sports and beyond.

Michelle Obama

Author, advocate, and former First Lady. She inspires us to dream bigger, work harder, and lift others up.

Mae Jemison

Astronaut, physician, and trailblazer. She broke barriers and showed us that there are no limits to what we can do.

Ways to celebrate:

- Read books by and about women.
- Explore their stories through art and music.
- Talk about their contributions and impact.
- Encourage your own dreams and ideas!

Fall Fun Withoutthe Overload

Dress for comfort

Layer up, choose comfy materials, and keep extra clothes on hand.

Outdoor Fun

Enjoy nature walks, leaf collecting, and sensory play.

Minimize Sensory Triggers

Choose Your Own Adventure

Offer choices and flexible options whenever possible.

Create Calm Spaces

Quiet spaces, fidgets, headphones, and a break can help reset.

Fall Treats

Keep snacks and drinks accessible for different dietary needs and preferences.

HOW TO HAVE AN INCLUSIVE HALLOWEEN

OFFER MULTIPLE OPTIONS

Consider non-food treats, allergy-friendly options, and treats that are safe for different dietary needs.

CREATE A SAFE & CALM SPACE

Have a quiet space for anyone who may feel overwhelmed, need a break, or prefer a less busy environment.

BE MINDFUL OF COSTUMES

Avoid costumes that include cultural appropriation, harmful stereotypes, or anything that could make someone feel uncomfortable.

INCLUDE EVERYONE

Use inclusive language, respect different abilities, and make sure all members feel welcome and valued in your activities

THINK ABOUT SENSORY NEEDS

Consider lighting, noise levels, and decorations. Offer alternatives for those who may be sensitive to certain elements.

FOCUS ON KINDNESS

Be patient, flexible, and lead with empathy. Small actions can make a big difference in how someone experiences the holiday.

REMEMBER:

Halloween isn't just about costumes and candy - it's about community, connection, and belonging!

INCLUSION MATTERS

Fun Inclusive Craft!

BUILD YOUR OWN INCLUSIVE MONSTER

Everyone's monster can look different — and that's what makes them special.

Monsters come in all shapes, sizes, colours and styles — just like people! Use the options below to design your own inclusive monster. There are no wrong choices!

EYES
How many eyes?

COLOURS
What colours will your monster be?

TEXTURES
What will their skin or fur feel like?

fuzzy · scaly · smooth · spiky · bumpy · slimy

FEELINGS
What feeling might your monster have?

happy · calm · brave · silly · shy

HORNS, WINGS & EXTRAS
What kind of horns, wings, tails or other features will they have?

SOMETHING SPECIAL
Does your monster need anything to feel comfortable, safe or happy?

headphones · blanket · quiet space · kindness · friends · time alone

Inclusion means making sure everyone feels welcome, valued and supported — just the way they are.

bgc Durham

bgcdurham.com

INCLUSION MATTERS

Helpful Inclusion Tips!

Inclusive Language MATTERS

What is inclusive language?

Small changes in language can make a big difference!

Inclusivelanguagemeansusingwordsthatarerespectful, kind, and welcomingtoeveryone-nomattertheirbackground, identity, ability, or experience.

USE PEOPLE-FIRST LANGUAGE

- Focusonthe person, not their diagnoses or label.
- For example “a child with autism instead of “an autistic child”
- Say “a person who uses a wheelchair” instead of “wheelchair bound”

BE RESPECTFUL OF IDENTITIES

- Usethe namesand pronouns people share with you
- Avoid assumptions about gender, culture, ability, or family structure
- If you’re unsure, ask in a respectful and open wau (e.g. “What pronouns do you use?”

AVOID HARMFUL WORDS

- Skip labelslike “bad” “difficult” “attention-seeking” or “lazy”
- Avoid phrases that blame or judge (e.g. “they’re just being dramatic”)
- Focus on what you observe, not what you assume (e.g. “they seem overwhelmed” instead of “they’re misbehaving”)

USE INCLUSIVE DESCRIPTIONS

- Choose words thatareneutral and respectful
- Include diverse family structures, abilities, and cultural backgrounds in your language
- Use words like “child,” “member,” “participant,” or “friend” instead of assumptions

RESPECT HOW PEOPLE DESCRIBE THEMSELVES

- Letindividuals andfamilies share their own language and preferences
- If someone corrects you, thank them and adjust
- Everyone has the right to be seen and heard in the way that feels right for them

REMEMBER

- Language is powerful
- It can build confidence, create belonging, and support mental health
- When in doubt, choose kindness, curiousity, and respect

INCLUSION MATTERS

NISKA'S QUEST

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Each month, we explore a different province or territory in Canada. This month, let's discover Prince Edward Island!

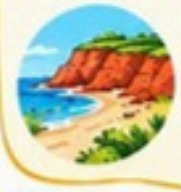
FUN FACTS ABOUT PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND!

PEI is known for its red soil, caused by iron.

PEI grows millions of potatoes every year.

PEI is connected to the mainland by the Confederation Bridge, one of the longest bridges in the world.

PEI is home of Anne of Green Gables.



Beaches and red cliffs are found around the island.

FUN ACTIVITY

POTATO EVOLUTION!

1. All members start as a Potato (crouch and waddle).
2. Find a partner at the same stage and play Rock-Paper-Scissors.
3. The winner moves up to the next stage, the other stays and finds a new partner at the same stage.
4. Play until most members reach the final stage or time runs out.

1 POTATO

Crouch and waddle!

2 FRENCH FRY

Walk stiffly!

3 POUTINE

Wiggle with arms up!

4 PEI POTATO CHAMPION

Victory pose!

NISKA'S CHALLENGE!

Add roaming "Chefs" who can tag members when they move to a new game. If tagged, drop one stage and re-earn the spot!

INCLUSION MATTERS

COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND SERVICES

FREE RESOURCES ACROSS DURHAM REGION

211 Durham

Free and confidential service connecting Durham residents to social services, programs and community supports. Available 24/7 by phone, chat, text and web, in 150+ languages.

Check them out at:
211ontario.ca

Durham Counselling Walk-In Clinic

Free, confidential counselling for children and youth ages 3-19.

Check them out at:
durham.ca/health-and-wellness/healthy-living/mental-health/

Durham Community Health Centre

A registered charitable organization providing a variety of free community programs and services, including health promotion and wellness, primary care, counselling and mental health, young parent support, youth programs, Indigenous programs, and community development. Locations include Pickering and Oshawa.

Check them out at:
durhamchc.ca

Simcoe Hall Settlement House

Oshawa community resource and food support. Its food bank provides support to local residents experiencing food insecurity; 211 lists the food bank as free and serving Durham Region.

Address: 387 Simcoe Street South, Oshawa
Phone: 905-728-7525

Check them out at:
simcoehall.com