



AWHsome

Newsletter of Advancement of Women Halton

AWH is a collaborative of twenty women's groups and social agencies that advocate and amplify the voice of women. The monthly meetings give us an opportunity to hear about the activities and challenges of member organizations. This newsletter is another avenue for readers to learn about AWH member activities during the previous month.



International Women Day

March 2026

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- GASP
- Community Development Halton

Coming in March

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- 4th WHAM
- 6th Union Threads
- 8th GASP plus other dates
- 22nd GRAN WASH
- 25th Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care

Issues From AWH, Our Members and Partners

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Final Word

We as Women by Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1911)

***“Now then, all forward together!
But remember, every one,
That ‘tis not by feminine innocence
The work of the world is done.
The world needs strength and courage,
And wisdom to help and feed—
When, ‘We, as women’ bring these to man,
We shall lift the world indeed.”***

FEBRUARY HAPPENINGS



In honour of Black History Month, and in partnership with the Canadian Caribbean Association of Halton, and Film.Ca Cinemas, Oakville Festivals of Film & Art (OFFA) were set to present the film *BROTHER* Wednesday February 18th. However, freezing rain and icy conditions meant that the showing had to be postponed until the following Sunday.

Set against the pulsing backdrop of Toronto’s early hip-hop scene, the film follows Francis and Michael—sons of Caribbean immigrants—as they navigate identity, masculinity, and family. When tensions escalate, a mystery unfolds that changes their lives forever.

The screening was followed by a virtual live Q&A with Director/Writer Clement Virgo, who has won multiple awards for the film. The conversation was moderated by CCAH Board Member Alicia Munian.



Several members of the CCAH were in attendance for the event, as well as members of the Oakville Festivals of Film & Art.

In addition to board members from both organizations, many people attended the screening to see this captivating Canadian made film, showcasing black culture here in Canada.



GASP actions for February (just a few of them!)

Sat Feb. 21 Halton's Annual Seedy Saturday - Celebration of Seeds & Sustainability at Church of the Incarnation on Abbey Lane.

Wed Feb. 25 A Climate Conversation with Steven Guilbeault MP, organized by Seniors for Climate.



**Community
Development
Halton**

Housing Solutions Forum held Thursday, February 19, at Film.Ca
(Film.ca generously provided the venue for free!)

THINKING BEYOND THE MARKET:
A film about genuinely affordable housing
Film by Dr. Brian Doucet, University of Waterloo

Hosted by
 Community Development Halton

Supported by

Register
 cdhalton.ca/event-list

DATE: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19TH, 2026
TIME: 6:00-8:30 PM
LOCATION: FILM.CA,
171 SPEERS ROAD, OAKVILLE

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

This film screening evening, hosted by the CDH Peer Researcher Team, featured [Thinking Beyond the Market](#), a powerful film by **Dr. Brian Doucet (University of Waterloo)** exploring what genuinely affordable housing can look like when communities move beyond market-only solutions.

Dr. Doucet has been touring the country with his film and we are thrilled that he made a stop in Halton.

The screening was followed by a facilitated community discussion grounded in local realities, lived experience, and practical solutions **with Dr. Doucet**.

Angela Chavez wrote, "It was wonderful, very inspirational, practical and really shows how with political will and community engagement, things are possible."

Why this matters now

Housing affordability is impacting individuals, families, employers, and service systems across Halton. This forum was designed to move the conversation beyond headlines—creating space for shared learning, honest dialogue, and community-level insight at a moment when the issue is more urgent than ever.

COMING IN MARCH

Monday March 2



Community
Development
Halton

We're keeping the momentum going on **housing advocacy in Halton** and invite you to join one of our **online working meetings in March**.

Please register using the links below:

Morning meeting: Monday, March 2nd at 10am

<https://www.cdhalton.ca/event-details/morning-halton-housing-advocacy-network-working-meeting>

Evening meeting: Monday, March 2nd at 6pm

<https://www.cdhalton.ca/event-details/evening-halton-housing-advocacy-network-working-meeting>

We will start with a brief recap, and then breakout into three different working groups:

- **NIMBYism** - mobilizing citizens at housing development meetings,
- **YIMBYism & Storytelling** - using compassionate narratives to combat stigma around homelessness and housing insecurity, and
- **Municipal election engagement** - engaging locally elected officials to make housing the top priority this municipal election cycle (October 2026).

We've also created a WhatsApp group

Join: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/GA1vMp28lrk1ykPcP6XrTB>

Wednesday March 4

The Women of Halton Action Movement (WHAM)

Presents

The Dinner Party 2026

March 4th

at the Oakville Conference Centre

[For more information](#)



Friday March 6, 2026

OFL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE PRESENTS

UNION THREADS

A CRAFT-IN FOR WOMEN'S POWER

March 6, 2026
7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m



Union Threads: A Craft-in For Women's Power

This year marks the 50th Anniversary of the OFL Women's Committee, and we're honouring that legacy through hands-on creativity and collective conversation.

Whether you knit, crochet, cross-stitch, bead or want to learn, you're invited to join us for an evening of craftivism inspired by the **OFL's Women Power Work** campaign and the 50 Years of Women in the Ontario Labour Movement project.

Celebrate International Women's Day with women from across the province at a hybrid craft-in rooted in the long tradition of women gathering to create, strategize, and build power together. March 6, 2026. 7-8.30 pm

RSVP and you'll receive:

- A digital pattern of your choice designed for this event (cross-stitch, crochet, knit, bead, or colouring page)
- Instructions for your chosen craft
- A materials list so you can prepare in advance

[Learn More](#)



Sunday March 8: David Suzuki Play at Burlington Centre for Performing Arts. Buy ticket [here](#)

Saturday March 14: Palestine Land Exercise Oakville. An immersive workshop at Munns United Church on history and current conditions in Palestine.

Monday March 23: Queen's Park Rally. Ontario needs a climate plan!

ACTIONS PLEASE FOR THIS MONTH:

Save the endangered piping plover

Email the Honourable Julie Dabrusin - Minister of the Environment, Climate Change and Nature and ask her to protect the piping plover at Wasaga Beach before the birds return for nesting.

Petition to Protect Ontario Waters: No New or Renewed Water-Taking Permits Issued Until Safeguards Are Restored - see [petition](#)



GRAN WASH CAMPAIGN

Sunday March 22 is World Water Day with a global theme of gender equality.

Grandmother's Advocacy Network (GRAN) has chosen WASH (Water Sanitation and Hygiene) as our GRAN campaign for 2026. We will be reaching out with requests for action. **Sandy Milakovic Regional lead S/S W Ontario GRAN**



Ontario Coalition for Better Childcare

Wednesday, March 25 at 8pm

Ontario promised affordable childcare, but families are still waiting

- Fees could go up again
- Waitlist are growing
- The province is short 10,000 educators

We have less than one year to push our governments to deliver on what they promised!

CAMPAIGN LAUNCH

MARCH 25 at 8PM

— Online on Zoom —

PARENTS FOR CHILD CARE

In November, Ontario announced that the province will not be delivering on its promise of reaching \$10aDay fees by March 2026.

The [Auditor General of Ontario has reported](#) that only 75% of promised child care spaces have been created, and that there is a shortage of 10,000 Early Childhood Educators.

Uncertainty reigns in Ontario because the province only signed a one-year child care funding agreement with the federal government, rather than five-year agreements like other provinces.

Unless they sign a new agreement, fees could sky-rocket again and parents will be left scrambling.

Families need the federal and provincial governments to fund a real plan to deliver affordable child care for all. This means committing to a universal \$10aDay child care program, no less than accessible, affordable and quality daycare for our children.

Please join us on **Wednesday, March 25 at 8pm** and bring a parent friend

ISSUES & NEWS FROM AWH, OUR MEMBERS and PARTNERS



AWH HEALTH COMMITTEE REPORT, based on a BC Health Coalition webinar with:
Chris Galloway, Friends of Medicare and Parkland Institute and Dr. Saad Ahmid,
Canadian Doctors for Medicare.

Bill 11 Alberta's Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2025, will change public health care as we know it in Canada and legislate *more* two-tier health care and undermine public health care. Physicians will be able to work in public *and* private facilities at the same time. Under the Canada Health Act, doctors have to choose one or the other. Alberta will set a precedent for the rest of the country.

- The Alberta Premier says that private health care will enhance access to more care options. However, the existing Alberta private surgeries charge the public purse about twice the amount paid to public hospitals and wait lists have not shortened.
- Critics in favour of two-tier health care compare Canada to successful two-tier systems in some European countries. However, Canada has fewer doctors, and fewer beds per capita compared to many OCED countries.
- Many OCED countries tax higher as % GDP than Canada.
- USA has the lowest tax rate as % GDP and the highest health care costs per capita.
- Canadians complain that we are taxed too heavily because we compare ourselves to the USA, our geographically closest neighbour.

In 2022, compared to other provinces, Ontario had:

- The second lowest age-standardized per capita total provincial health sector funding at \$5,268 per person, below the national average of \$5,562 per person.
- The lowest age-standardized per capita provincial funding for hospitals at \$1,805 per person, below the national average of \$1,949 per person.
- The third highest age-standardized per capita spending on physicians at \$1,137 per person, above the national average of \$1,084 per person.
- The second highest age-standardized per capita public drug spending at \$440 per person, above the national average of \$353 per person.
- A below average number of hospital beds, with 230 hospital beds per 100,000 population, below the national average of 249 beds per 100,000 population.
- The fourth lowest number of physicians, with 233 physicians per 100,000 population, below the Canadian average of 246 physicians per 100,000.



PRISON LIBRARIES

AWH has signed on to a letter sponsored by Book Clubs for Inmates and shared by ExLibris to Hon. Gary Anandasangaree, Minister of Public Safety concerning “the decision by Correctional Service Canada (CSC) to eliminate all librarian positions in federal penitentiaries across Canada that represents a sweeping and regressive dismantling of rehabilitative infrastructure within our prison system.

These actions signal a stark retreat from education, literacy, and meaningful rehabilitation. They undermine decades of progress and contradict both Canada’s domestic law and its international human rights commitments.

Let us be unequivocal: a prison library without a librarian is not a library.”
At time of writing, the letter had not been shared with the public

GRAN WASH CAMPAIGN



In 2010 the United Nations declared access to water and sanitation as a human right fundamental to health, dignity, and prosperity and essential to the realization of all other rights.

However, lack of sustainable safe water, sanitation and hygiene remains one of the greatest global challenges facing lower income countries and here at home our own indigenous communities are experiencing the same challenges. The world is not close to meeting this Sustainable Development Goal.

This is why Grandmother’s Advocacy Network (GRAN) has chosen WASH (Water Sanitation and Hygiene) as our GRAN campaign for 2026.

[Read More](#)

NEWS FROM LOCAL POLITICIANS and LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

News from MPP Effie Triantafilopoulos:

Strengthening Local Healthcare Through Collaboration:

Collaboration is essential to delivering quality healthcare close to home.

We met with the leadership at Halton Healthcare to review healthcare priorities, system capacity, and future funding opportunities. Thank you to Melissa Farrell, President and CEO, and her team for the quarterly update and the thoughtful and productive discussion with my colleagues Zee Hamid and Joseph Racinsky.



Our government is continuing to take bold action to protect Ontario’s world-class health-care workforce now and for years to come. By increasing the number of nurse practitioners and physician assistants, while upskilling registered nurses, we are moving closer to ensuring everyone can connect to primary care.

To support recruitment and retention, Ontario is investing over \$4.5 million in an innovative program to help more than 1,400 registered nurses gain advanced skills in chronic disease management, cancer screening, maternal and child care, and immunizations. Delivered with Conestoga, Lakehead, Trent and Western universities, the program launches this year and builds on recent government investments to expand team-based primary care across the province.

News from Zee Hamid, MPP for Milton and Associate Solicitor General

Children’s voices matter in divorce proceedings.

I’m proud to support the Keeping Children Safe Act, introduced by my colleague Lisa Hepfner, with the backing of the National Association of Women in Law and more than 300 organizations across the country.

This legislation strengthens protections for children in divorce proceedings by addressing family violence and ongoing coercive control. The courage shown by survivors today was deeply moving. I thank Lisa for bringing forward this important bill.

The Act proposes key amendments to the Divorce Act that would:

- Require legal advisers representing a spouse in divorce proceedings to assess the risk of family violence and, where risks are identified, to take steps to put appropriate safety plans in place;
- Give courts better tools to assess the impact of coercive control on parent-child relationships, helping ensure children remain protected from domestic violence after separation or divorce;

- Allow courts, under specific conditions, to hear directly from children—through written input or interviews—so their views and preferences can be meaningfully considered; and
- Challenge harmful myths and stereotypes about family violence, including the false assumption that violence ends once spouses separate or divorce proceedings begin.---

Associate Minister Williams meets with women-owned businesses in Milton

It was a pleasure hosting the Associate Minister of Women's Social and Economic Opportunity in Milton. Minister Williams' tour included meetings with 2 Milton-based organizations lead by women; Hum-WE Women's Hub and Eco Systems Informatics. To conclude the visit, the Minister and Zee co-hosted a roundtable. The roundtable consisted of over 50 women who run businesses and organizations within our community. Zee and Minister Williams had the opportunity to hear the opinions, ideas and concerns of these community leaders.

Our province continues to support women entrepreneurs and leaders, while remaining committed to improving and expanding shelters, programming and for women who are facing situations of domestic violence and abuse.

A warm thank you to Minister Williams' for visiting Milton Riding and meeting with the women who contribute to our community and strengthen our local economy.



INFORMATION FROM ALLIES



disability
without
poverty

Ending Disability Poverty

Joint Disability Tax Credit (DTC) Letter

- In partnership with national health professional organizations, DWP issued a joint letter calling on the federal government to follow through on its commitment to reduce administrative burden by reforming the DTC. You can find the letter [here](#).

Updated [Advokits](#) are available to #BetterTheBenefit.

OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

Amazing Canadians



FINAL WORD

Be That Woman

By Donna Ashworth

Be the kind of woman you want to call when things go wrong.

Be the motivator, the encourager of dreams.

Be the kind of fierce friend you want to have yourself.

Love your girlfriends deeply, they are your sister warriors in this world Only they know just what a crazy, hormonal ride womanhood really is.

Be loyal, love hard.

Be a soulmate, be a sister.

Be strong, be kind.

Listen hard and laugh lots.

Tell the truth but keep the secrets.

Big up everyone you meet.

Kind words travel endlessly.

If you can't say anything nice, don't say anything at all.

Spread the sparkle of a smile and a compliment whenever you can.

There is room for us all to be happy and successful.

Lend a hand if you're there already.

Pull your girls up.

Push them if you need to.

Straighten each other's crowns,

Spot the lipstick on the teeth and the loo paper on the shoes.

Avoid the drama, smile at the haters,

They're actually admiring you from afar.



SAVIS
of Halton



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