

Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MIDDLESEX COUNTY, ON – One month ago, the Women’s Caucus of Middlesex County Council held its very first webinar, inviting women from across Middlesex County to share their experiences during the COVID19 pandemic.

Women shared their stories of caregiver burnout, guilt, increased anxiety and feelings of isolation. These stories stemmed from increased demands of their time, loss of programming and resources for respite care, caring for aging parents and children and lack of childcare / balancing work and home life.

On December 21st, 2020, Premier Doug Ford announced a provincial shut down lasting a minimum of 28 days in Southern Ontario, including Middlesex County, beginning on December 26th, 2020. Many of the demands on women have not been addressed moving into the second wave of the pandemic.

There are many programs and resources across Middlesex County for residents to utilize in times of need, and women across the County should not hesitate to reach out. “As we move into another provincial lockdown, women from across Middlesex County should know they are not alone and have places they can turn” explains Cathy Burghardt-Jesson, Warden of Middlesex County.

Using 211 Ontario is a quick resource to access information to Ontario’s community, social, health-related and government services. Women can access information by visiting 211Ontario.ca or by calling 2-1-1.

The Canadian Mental Health and Addictions Crisis Centre provides walk in support, as well as a 24/7 support line. The Mental Health and Addictions Crisis Centre is located at 648 Huron Street in London and is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week for anyone older than 16 years old experiencing a crisis with no referral needed. If someone needs emotional support, but they are not in crisis, residents of Middlesex County can call The Support Line at 519-601-8055 for confidential supportive listening 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Adults

can also text 45645 between 4pm and midnight to connect with the Crisis Text Line with the Canada Suicide Prevention Service or call 1-833-456-4566 at any time for help.

For residents under 16, the Vanier Children's Crisis Intake Team can help by calling 519-433-0334. Youth can also access help through the Kids Help Phone via phone 24/7 at 1-800-668-6868, texting CONNECT to 686868 or connect through Facebook Messenger. For more information about other resources from Kids Help Phone, visit kidshelpphone.ca.

For women experiencing abuse, the Women's Rural Resource Centre is available to all Middlesex County women with a 24 hour, 7 days a week helpline. Women can access help any time by calling 1-800-265-5390.

"As the Women's Caucus, we heard how women across Middlesex County are coping during the pandemic, and we want to emphasize that no one is alone. There are resources available and no one should feel that they have to deal with this alone", Warden Burgardt-Jesson adds

Links to additional community supports can be found on the County of Middlesex's website at middlesex.ca/covid19.

The Women's Caucus of Middlesex County Council is made up of Middlesex County Warden Cathy Burghardt-Jesson (Mayor of Lucan-Biddulph), Joanne Vanderheyden (Mayor of Strathroy-Caradoc), Alison Warwick (Mayor of Thames Centre), Aina DeViet (Mayor Middlesex Centre) and Kelly Elliott (Deputy Mayor of Thames Centre).

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