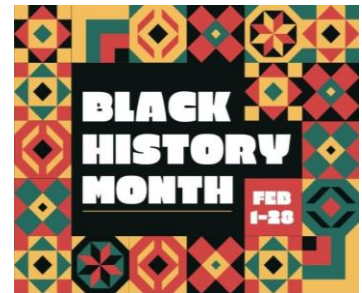
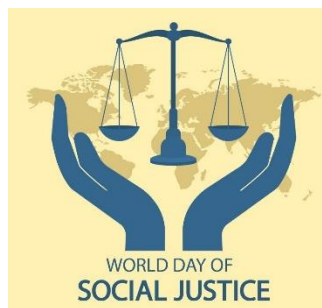




## NEWSLETTER

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  - World Day of Social Justice - February 20<sup>th</sup>
- Community Programs & Supports
- Fresh from the Our Place Kitchen
- Mental Health Tips of the Month
- Writing Group Submissions!
- Something fun! 😊



OUR PLACE COMMUNITY OF HOPE

1183 Davenport Road | 416-598-2919

[ourplaceinfo@stmichaelshomes.org](mailto:ourplaceinfo@stmichaelshomes.org) | [www.ourplacecommunityofhope.com](http://www.ourplacecommunityofhope.com)





## February Birthdays

### Our Place Birthdays

MaryAnne M. – February 5<sup>th</sup>

Jose C. – February 5<sup>th</sup>

Frank G. – February 8<sup>th</sup>

Oliver A. – February 13<sup>th</sup>

Marcelo O. – February 16<sup>th</sup>

James M. – February 17<sup>th</sup>

Eric C. – February 23<sup>rd</sup>

Jessica S. – February 26<sup>th</sup>

Jennifer S. – February 26<sup>th</sup>

David M. – February 26<sup>th</sup>



### Famous Birthdays

Alice Cooper – February 4<sup>th</sup>

Chris Rock – February 7<sup>th</sup>

Michael B. Jordan – February 9<sup>th</sup>

Uzo Aduba – February 10<sup>th</sup>

Ed Sheeran – February 17<sup>th</sup>

John Travolta – February 18<sup>th</sup>

Rihanna – February 20<sup>th</sup>

\*If you want to celebrate your birthday with us, let us know!\*

## Special Events in February

**February 14<sup>th</sup>:** We will be having a Valentines Day raffle. Guess how many chocolates are in the jar and you can win a prize!



**Black History Month:** Every Friday for the month of February, Our Place will be showing films that center on Black stories to offer a learning experience on slavery, Black power, racism, segregation, civil rights, and other Black experiences.



## Upcoming Changes!

We know you all have been waiting a while for these changes... and we are happy to announce them!

1. Bingo will now be **Tuesdays (1:30-2:30), and Thursdays (3:30-4:30)** for the month of February.
2. In February you will have the option to wear either a staff provided white N95 mask, or a blue medical mask.

## Our Place Weekly Programs

### Pool Table Time – Everyday! (*in-person*)

Enjoy a game of pool during our open pool hour! Grab a friend and come join us. If you have any questions, or want to sign up, please use the signup sheet or let staff know.

### Gaming Tournaments – Mondays at 1:30 pm (*in-person*)

Come and join us as we play fun games every week! Games include: Trivia, Name that Tune, and.... CARD GAMES! **Limited capacity.**

### Bingo – Tuesdays at 1:30 pm and Thursdays at 3:30 pm (*in-person*)

Bingo is back in person! Enjoy a game with us as there are great prizes to be won!

### Karaoke – Wednesday at 1:30 pm (*in-person*)

Yay! Karaoke is making a comeback, but with a few changes. The program will run for one hour on Wednesdays where you can have your moment to shine with a mic! Hope to see and hear you all then. 😊 **Limited capacity.**

### Peer Support Group – Wednesdays at 3:30 (*virtual*)

Peer support meetings are a time to connect with others for support, encouragement, and hope. We will learn from each other's experiences in conversations. We'll talk about

relaxation, managing emotions, self-compassion, and self-acceptance. We'll look at positive steps that you could try towards having a better life.

Link to join: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87674798802>

Join by phone: (647)-374-4685. When prompted, enter in the Meeting ID: 876 7479 8802

### **Art & Crafts Group – Thursday at 1:30pm (*in-person*)**

Art & Crafts is a time to explore your creative side and connect with others. It will include drawing and coloring, painting, sketching and many more fun activities. Suggestions are welcome! 😊

### **Writing Group – Fridays at 1:30pm (*virtual*)**

Writing Group with Peter (a professional journalist!) is a time to connect with others, build friendships and get creative together. Everyone is welcome to join in and no experience is necessary!

Link to join Writing Group via Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/93536287038>

Join by phone, dial: 647-374-4685. When prompted, enter in the Meeting ID: 935 3628 7038

## **Community Programs & Supports**

*\*Please ask one of the Our Place Staff if you need access to a phone or computer\**

**Nicotine Replacement Therapy:** Are you thinking of quitting smoking? Talk to any of our staff members about how you can access support and free nicotine replacement therapy like lozenges and patches with no wait.

**Addiction Support Groups:** If you are on a journey with addictions and are seeking support from the community, feel free to contact any of these communal resources.

<i>Narcotics Anonymous</i>	<i>KeepSIX Consumption and Treatment</i>	<i>Evangel Hall Mission – 552</i>
Toronto – call 1-888-811-3887	<i>Services (CTS)– 955 Queen Street East) – 416-461-1925 ext 2264</i>	Adelaide Street West – 416-504-8056

**Community Fridges Toronto** is a mutual aid organization made up of community members and volunteers working to provide food for those in need. They have several fridges and pantries across the city (locations listed below) and they operate on a “take what you need, leave what you don’t” basis. Feel free to visit any fridge to pick up or drop off food.

214 Wright Street	782 Adelaide Street West	250 Westlake Avenue	499 Parliament Street
1132 College	870 Dundas Street	348 Pape Avenue	

Street	West	(Pantry)	
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**Allan Gardens Food Bank** 353 Sherbourne Street: You can visit and collect food from the bank once a week either on Thursday or Friday from 12:30pm to 3:00pm. Everyone who is interested must register and complete the intake process if it is your first time visiting. Please remember to bring your own bag.

**Bloor West Food Bank** 2305 Bloor St. West at the St. Pius X Catholic Church: They provide Prepacked bags for those who have made an appointment to visit. To make an appointment, email at [appointments.foodbank@gmail.com](mailto:appointments.foodbank@gmail.com). The food bank is open every Friday from 12:30pm to 3:00pm.

**Feed it Forward Grocery Store** 2770 Dundas Street West, Unit A: They're open every day of the week; Monday to Sunday 11:00am to 6:00pm. The grocery store has items from vegetables, fruits, hot and ready to serve food, canned foods and cupboard items. The pay what you can system works with points (each \$0.50 cents is equivalent to 1 point). Different items cost different amount of points/dollars (ex. Bread \$1 or 2 points, Salad \$1 or 2 points, Peppers \$0.50 or 1 point). They accept cash payments happily. 😊

**Parkdale Activity-Recreation Centre (PARC)** 1499 Queen Street West: A drop-in space running daily to support those who do not have stable housing (in shelter, respite). Meal Programming runs from Monday – Thursday from 9:30am to 12:30pm, Fridays from 1:00pm to 4:00pm, Saturday and Sunday from 11:00am to 3:00pm.

**Evangel Hall Mission** 552 Adelaide Street West: Clothing bank and various drop-in services are available Monday – Friday from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm. If you are in need of a shower, need access to laundry facilities, they provide services on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Registration for these specific services start at 9 am.

**Davenport-Perth Neighbourhood Community Health Centre** 1900 Davenport Rd: Provides free harm reduction kits and other support. Contact (416) 656-8025 for more information. They offer short term, one-on-one crisis support and information on OW, ODSP, shelter and housing, and health-related supports. Contact their CSCI worker to book an appointment → Ingrid Moreno (416) 656-8025 ext. 401.

**Shelter Beds and Respite Centres:** If you need a place to stay you can access 24-hour respite sites and shelters by calling at (416) 338-4766 or toll-free at 1-877-338-3398.

**Gerstein Crisis Centre:** Provides 24/7 telephone support, community support referrals, substance use crisis management, follow-up and access to short-term crisis beds. They also have an in-person mobile crisis team. Call (416) 929-5200 to access support.

**New Circle:** If you are in need of warmer clothing for the winter season, please connect with one of the Our Place staff and we will start the online referral process with you.

**Warming Centres:** Warming Centres around the city are open when an extreme cold weather alert is announced (temperatures of  $-15^{\circ}\text{C}$  or colder, or a wind chill of  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$  or colder). Warming Centres provide resting spaces, snacks, access to washroom facilities, and referrals to emergency shelters.

<b>Metro Hall</b> 55 John St, Toronto Capacity: 45	<b>Mitchell Field Community Centre</b> 89 Church Ave, Toronto Capacity: 50	<b>Scarborough Civic Centre</b> 150 Borough Dr, Scarborough Capacity: 17
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## Black History Month

The month of February is Black History Month. Every year, people participate in Black History Month events that honour the legacy of many different Black communities. It also commemorates the achievements of Black people throughout history, and reflects on the prejudices they have faced. Additionally, Black History Month is celebrated to honour Black contributions to art, culture, science, sport, and history. Historically, Black people's contributions have been overlooked as they have faced a lot of prejudice and discrimination, meaning they have faced biases or pre-judgement based on their race. Celebrating Black History Month is important because it reminds us to push back against the ways in which our society continues to oppress Black communities and undermine the contributions that they have made.



Dr. Carter G. Woodson, an African American historian, chose to celebrate this week in February since this month coincides with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, who both played key roles in abolishing slavery.

Each year, Black History Month has a different theme. The theme for Black History Month in 2023 is "Black resistance." Black resistance is a useful theme in understanding



Black History Month because it means celebrating the ways in which Black people have resisted oppression, discrimination, and prejudice over history.

Listed below are a number of influential figures from Black history to gain a deeper understanding of the history, and also explore the individual lives and ideas of people that contributed to historical events that have played important roles in shaping today's society.

**Daisy Bates (1914-1999)**

Daisy Bates is a civil rights activist and newspaper publisher. She wrote about the battle to end segregation in Arkansas. In 1957, she helped 9 Black students become the first to attend an all White high school in Little Rock, which became known as the Little Rock Nine.



**Martin Luther King Jr. (1929-1968)**

Martin Luther King Jr. helped bring about the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Each of these bills helped Black people access civil rights across America.

**Fannie Lou Hamer (1917–1977)**

Fannie Lou Hamer was a civil rights activist who co-founded Freedom Summer, a voter registration drive aimed at increasing the number of registered Black voters in Mississippi.



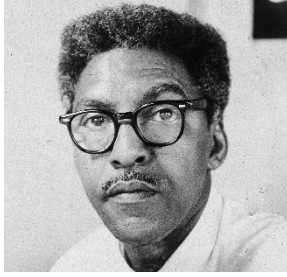
**Audre Lorde (1934-1992)**

Audre Lorde was a feminist whose poetry was published during the 1960s in several foreign anthologies, and in black literary magazines. She was politically active in civil rights, anti-war, and feminist movements. She dedicated her life to addressing injustices of racism, sexism, classism, and homophobia.

**Clara Luper (1923-2011)**

Clara Luper was a major leader of the fight to end segregation in Oklahoma. She led campaigns to gain equal banking rights, employment opportunities, open housing, and voting rights.



**Bayard Rustin (1912-1987)**

Bayard Rustin fought for racial equality, workers' rights, and gay rights. He also contributed to the Civil Rights Movement when he planned the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom to demand an end to segregation, fair wages, economic justice, voting rights, and education.

**Maya Angelou (1928-2014)**

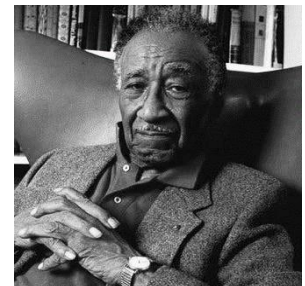
Maya Angelou was a poet, singer, autobiographer, and civil rights activist. Her most famous work is *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, an autobiography about her childhood which talks about her experiences trapped in her victimhood of racism and sexism.

**Medgar Evers (1925-1963)**

Medgar Evers was a World War II veteran and a civil rights leader. He worked for many civil rights organizations, formed protests and voter registration drives, recruited new workers into the civil rights movement, and pushed for school integration.

**Albert Murray (1916-2013)**

Albert Murray was an essayist and social critic who changed the way people talked about race by exploring Black separatism and challenging the modern stereotype of Black people being “victims” in society.



## World Day of Social Justice

World Day of Social Justice is celebrated every year on February 20<sup>th</sup> beginning in 2009. The UN General Assembly began recognizing this day to reflect on the significance of social justice for world peace, security, and advancement. The UN also acknowledged the need to resolve poverty education, advance social well-being, and gender equality. It is important that every individual has equal opportunities in every social system. This day also serves as a platform for raising awareness for social justice worldwide. People are better prepared to find solutions and advance equality when they are aware of the different injustices that exist in the world. We can help strive for social justice through five principles:

- **Dignity of the human being** – ensuring all humans have basic necessities and rights



- **Primacy of the common good** – making choices that benefit everyone
- **Reciprocal rights and responsibilities** – the right to have a conscience and the responsibility to be kind to others
- **Dignity of work and rights for workers** – all people have the right to work safely
- **Fundamental option for the poor and the vulnerable** – ensuring that the marginalized in society are looked after



## Fresh from the Our Place Kitchen



### Beef Stroganoff

#### Ingredients:

- 1 (8 ounce) package egg noodles
- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 (10.5 ounce) can fat-free condensed cream of mushroom soup
- 1 tablespoon garlic powder
- ½ cup sour cream
- salt and ground black pepper to taste



#### Directions:

1. Sauté ground beef in a large skillet over medium heat until browned and crumbly; 5 to 10 minutes.
2. At the same time, fill a large pot with lightly salted water and bring to a rapid boil. Cook egg noodles at a boil until tender yet firm to the bite, 7 to 9 minutes. Drain and set aside.
3. Drain and discard any fat from the cooked beef. Stir condensed soup and garlic powder into the beef. Simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
4. Remove beef from the heat. Add egg noodles and stir to combine. Stir in sour cream and season with salt and pepper.

### Smoked Sausage Skillet

#### Ingredients:

- ¼ cup olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed



- 1 (14 ounce) package smoked sausage, diagonally cut into 1/4-inch slices
- 1 large red bell pepper, sliced thin
- 1 small yellow onion, sliced thin
- 1 (10 ounce) package frozen broccoli, thawed
- ½ cup chicken broth or water
- ½ cup tomato sauce
- 2 cups instant rice
- ½ cup shredded mozzarella cheese

Directions:

1. Heat olive oil and crushed garlic in a large skillet. Stir in smoked sausage slices and cook until browned on all sides.
2. Add pepper, onion, broccoli, chicken broth, and tomato sauce. Simmer until vegetables are tender and the liquid is absorbed, about 10 minutes.
3. In the meantime, cook rice according to package instructions.
4. Stir cooked rice into the skillet, sprinkle with cheese, and serve.

### Loaded Baked Potato

Ingredients:

- 6 russet potatoes
- 12 strips bacon or instant bacon
- 1 pound broccoli florets
- ¾ cup diced red bell pepper
- ½ cup water
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 4 cups grated Cheddar cheese
- 8 green onions, chopped



Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F (200 degrees C).
2. Pierce each potato with a paring knife and roast in the oven until tender, about 1 hour, depending on the size of your potatoes.
3. Meanwhile, dice up bacon. Heat a saute pan over medium heat and cook bacon until crispy, about 7 minutes. Remove bacon and set aside, leaving bacon fat in the pan.

4. Return the saute pan with reserved bacon fat to the heat. Cook broccoli and red pepper for 2 minutes. Add water and allow to cook until water has evaporated. Remove from heat and set aside.
5. When potatoes are done cooking, remove and allow to cool enough to handle. Cut them in half and scoop out a portion of the insides with a spoon, leaving about a 1/4-inch border on the skins.
6. Mix scooped-out potato with 1/2 of the bacon, broccoli-red pepper mixture, sour cream, salt, pepper, and 1/2 of the Cheddar together in a bowl.
7. Divide the filling and add it back into the potato skins.
8. Return stuffed potatoes to the oven and bake until heated through, 10 to 12 minutes. Remove and top with remaining bacon, Cheddar, and green onions.

### Coconut Poke Cake

#### Ingredients:

- 1 package white cake mix (regular size)
- 1 can (15 ounces) cream of coconut
- 1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk
- 1 carton (16 ounces) frozen whipped topping, thawed (6-1/2 cups)
- 1 cup sweetened shredded coconut



#### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Prepare and bake cake mix according to package directions, using a 13x9-in. baking pan.
2. Meanwhile, in a small bowl, mix cream of coconut and milk. Remove cake from oven; place on a wire rack. Using a wooden skewer, pierce top of cake to within 1 inch of edge; twist skewer gently to make slightly larger holes. Spoon milk mixture evenly over cake, being careful to fill each hole. Cool completely.
3. Spread whipped topping over cake; sprinkle with coconut. Refrigerate until serving.

## **Mental Health Tips of the Month**

### The Importance of Morning Routines Mornings – by Sim

Mornings typically set the tone for the rest of your day. Many people struggle with their mornings, so creating a routine can help you have a better day. A daily routine can help you relax and improve your mental health. It can also leave you feeling energized and

ready for what the day may bring. This energy may last throughout the day to provide a more structured sleep schedule, allowing you to recharge each night. Here are 10 tips for a morning routine that can help support your mental health.

**Activity** – Think about ways you can be active or exercise in the morning. This can help boost your mood and reduce stress.

**Slow Down** – Slow down and give yourself plenty of time to get ready. Take an extra 5 minutes when you wake up to calm your mind and body.

**Breakfast** – Many people skip breakfast, but it's the most important meal of the day. Start your day with a well-balanced meal to help boost your energy.

**Breathe** – Take a moment to lay on your bed, or close your eyes on the bus. Deep breathing can provide you with a sense of calm.

**Imagery** – Take 5 minutes to close your eyes and imagine yourself having a good day. Try to relive that.

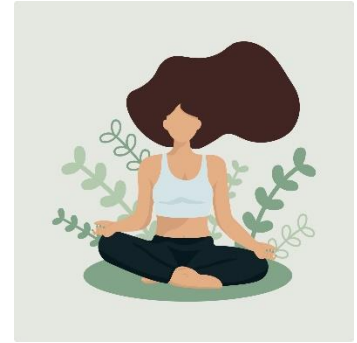
**Gratitude** – Take a moment to appreciate everything you are grateful for.

**Positivity** – Schedule activities into your day that will provide you with a sense of connectedness, pleasure, and achievement.

**Readiness** – Get ready for your day by thinking about what demands you will be facing and what physical, mental, and social resources you will need.

**Reflection** – Take a moment to check in with yourself and monitor how you are feeling in your mind and body.

**Strengths** – Take 5 minutes to note down your top strengths and think about how you can put them into action throughout your day.



### 5 Senses Grounding Exercise to Calm Down– by Jess

When things are overwhelming and you need a second to collect yourself, a grounding exercise you can do is the 5 senses.

First, find 5 things that you can see

Second, find 4 things that you can feel

Third, find 3 things that you can hear

Fourth, find 2 things that you can smell

Lastly, find 1 thing that you can taste.

When you are feeling overwhelmed it can be difficult to ground yourself, while doing this exercise try and take big deep breaths, in through your nose and hold for 3 seconds

### The 5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Technique

Ease your state of mind in stressful moments.



and out through your mouth for 3 seconds.

Trying saying little affirmations to yourself, a few examples you can use are:

“I have the ability to overcome challenging things”

“I am doing my best and that is enough”.

Each process of inhalation and exhalation should last about the same time.

## **Writing Submissions**

### **Bingo Games**

**By: Kimberly Acevedo**

One of my favourite games to play is Bingo. I play three different Bingo games on my iPad. Bingo Story, Bingo Wild and Bingo Aloha. These games are fun because each game has been set up as a journey. You get to play on teams. You help your teammates out. There are daily login prizes to be won too.

Many people think Bingo playing is gambling but it depends on the person and where they are playing. Bingo Halls you play for money. Everyone plays for different reasons; their motive is different.

On Tuesdays I travel by TTC to Our Place. I play Bingo here on Tuesdays in-person. Before the pandemic it was more than an hour long, now it is one hour. I liked how it was before because more people had a chance of winning. The bingo games here is different than the ones I play on my iPad. I find the ones here more challenging because we use different patterns which is good for the mind. I am not complaining, I love it actually. Some of the patterns are: the letter H, the letter L and inside frame. There are many more. The first game is a full card which you win 2 prizes and after that a person wins one. You can only win once which is a good thing. You can keep playing but you can't call out bingo or collect another prize. It helps keep your mind focused on the game than on what is going on outside of Our Place. Some people need help playing so I offer to help them because it gives them a chance to win. Seeing them win at Bingo, puts a smile on my face. Their faces light up with so much joy that they won and that they did it, especially if it is a hard pattern. It is like a whole different world and time flies so fast. Happy Bingo playing everyone.

# A Warm Welcome to Our New Students



As some of you may have noticed, there are three new additions to the Our Place team! Our students **Criss**, **Naomi**, and **Jess** will be doing their placement with us until April. They are looking forward to getting to know you all during their time at Our Place!

## **Criss**

Hello there! My name is Criss, I use they/them pronouns, and I am so thrilled to be spending the next handful of weeks at Our Place! My hobbies include digital art, crochet, video games, and listening to music. My favourite thing to do is eat- I LOVE to eat, and my favourite food is pizza! (Specifically Little Caesar's, Nova, or Dominos!) I am most looking forward to meeting this lovely community, getting to know everyone, hearing your stories, and learning how I can best support you all during my placement! If you ever have any questions, or if you just want to talk, I am absolutely more than happy to chat and listen. So looking forward to being here!

## **Naomi**

Hey everyone! My name is Naomi and I am going to be one of your placement students until April! I am in my second year in the Community Social Services program at Guelph-Humber University and I am so excited to get to meet you all throughout my placement. After I graduate, I am interested in continuing my education and hopefully get accepted into a dual Master's program in Social Work and Law. I hope to connect with everyone throughout the course of my placement as I love getting to know new people and everyone I've met already seems great. I also hope to gain knowledge on how people feel about social workers and to learn on how to improve my skills to meet everyone's individual needs. In my free time I enjoy connecting and hanging out with friends, playing with my dog, Naruto, and watching anime. I also enjoy reading, making art, and listening to music. At any point during my placement please do not hesitate to come say hello to me as I would love to talk with you about your hobbies and interests as well! Thanks for having me as a student at Our Place!

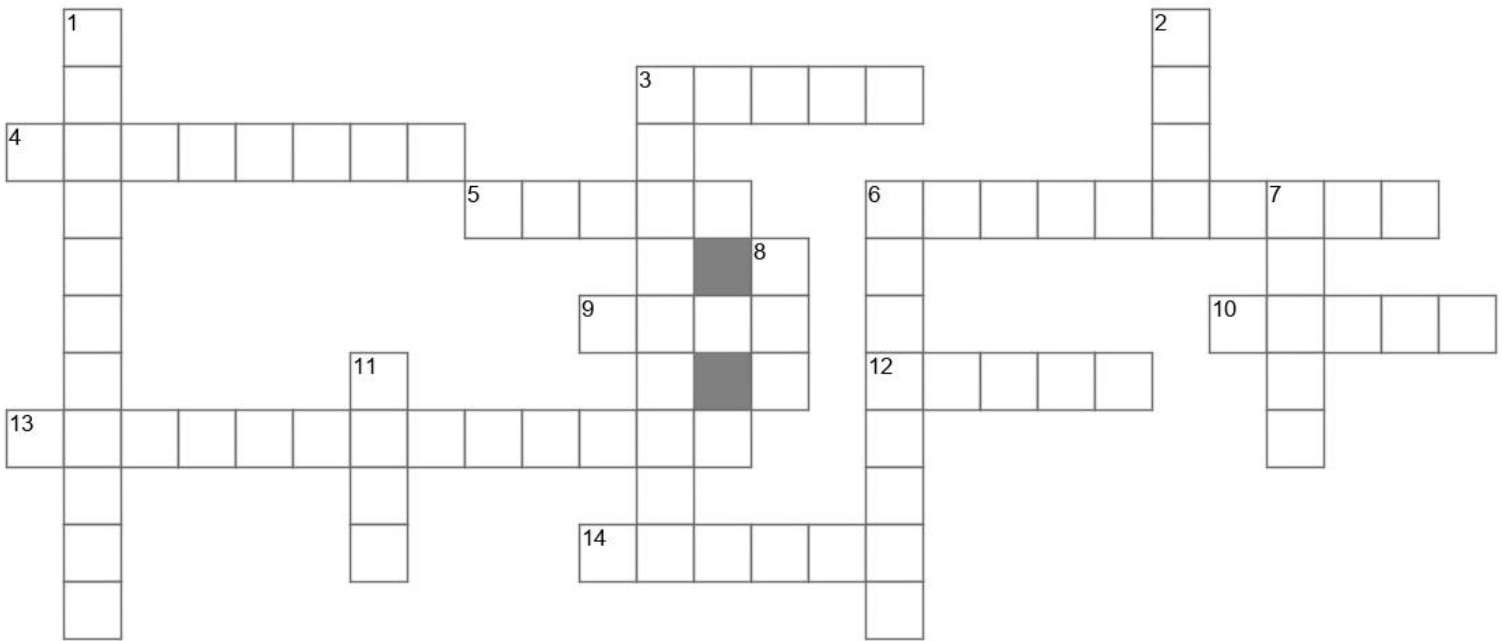
## **Jess**

Hello! My name is Jess (she/her). I am a second year student in Community Social Service and I am doing my placement here at Our Place Community of Hope. I would really enjoy getting to know all of you and hear your stories. I look forward to being a part of this community!). Some facts about me are that I really like sports, mostly hockey, I've played hockey for the past 12 years. I love to bake and cook, I really enjoy music, country music is my favourite genre. I look forward to meeting you all!



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Valentine's Day Crossword



## HORIZONTAL

3. Shoots arrows at people.
4. The month of Valentine's Day.
5. Cupid shoot this and people fall in love.
6. Valentine's Day is also time for...
9. Valentine's Day is the day of
10. Kids love Valentine's Day because they want to eat a lot of
12. Favorite flower for Valentine's Day.
13. The name of this holiday is
14. Expression often said on Valentine's Day "Be \_\_\_\_\_"

## VERTICAL

1. Heart shaped candy with words
2. Many people send one to a friend on Valentine's Day.
3. "Kisses" is one kind of this type of candy.
6. Valentine's Day is celebrated this day of the month.
7. Symbol of love.
8. Favorite Valentine's Day color.
11. A present.

# ♥ Valentine's Day ♥

S Y L W J C K Z U H T C V T B  
Y R F A H F U K M A A H F O L  
C M R P C X W P H O E O C L X  
B C C A N D Y A I T X C Q L N  
X G B S Y Q V E V D V O C U O  
S W E E T H E A R T F L T S H  
S D T A I R F W L L N A C E U  
Z E D R H R O O O E Q T O S G  
F U Y U V R V C U Q N E X S S  
R H D R R E E G T K I T K I D  
I T Q A Y M F G C G P C I K M  
E M X A S L W S F G H S H N U  
N H E A R T S L V U W P K B E  
D U A X Y F L O W E R S T C D  
S N K S D K K X F L B C M F C

1. VALENTINE
2. CANDY
3. CHOCOLATE
4. CUPID
5. FLOWERS
6. FRIENDS



7. SWEETHEART
8. ARROW
9. KISSES
10. LOVE
11. HEARTS
12. HUGS

