



YOUR GUIDE TO CELEBRATING FAMILY COUNCIL WEEK

JUNE 6-12, 2026

What is Family Councils Week?

Family Council Week is an annual recognition week that celebrates the important role Family Councils play in long-term care homes across Ontario. It is a time to recognize the contributions of family members, caregivers, residents, and council participants who work together to support communication, collaboration, and quality of life within long-term care communities.

Family Council Week also helps raise awareness about the value of Family Councils as a way for families and caregivers to share experiences, exchange information, identify common concerns, and contribute to positive change within their homes. Throughout the week, long-term care homes and councils often host events, activities, educational sessions, and celebrations that highlight connection, belonging, and partnership in care.

Planning Your Family Council Week

Step 1: Set Your Goals for the Week

Step 2: Form a Small Planning Team

Step 3: Confirm Dates, Spaces, and Budget

Step 4: Promote the Week

Step 5: Capture and Celebrate the Week

Step 1: Set Your Goals for the Week

Before planning activities, decide what you want participants to experience during Family Council Week. Common goals may include:

- Increasing awareness of the Family Council
- Building stronger relationships between families
- Encouraging participation in meetings
- Sharing resources and education
- Celebrating the impact of families and caregivers

You can also choose a theme for the week such as *Connection, Belonging, and Community*.

Step 2: Form a Small Planning Team

Invite Family Council members, staff partners, volunteers, and interested family members to help organize the week. Assign roles such as:

- Event coordination
 - Decorations and setup
 - Food and refreshments
 - Communications and promotion
 - Photography or slideshow preparation
 - Resource table management
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Step 3: Confirm Dates, Spaces, and Budget

Reserve meeting rooms or common areas early and confirm:

- Tables and chairs
- AV equipment
- Refreshments
- Printing needs
- Accessibility considerations
- Volunteer support

Keep activities flexible and low-cost where possible.

Step 4: Promote the Week

Promote Family Council Week early using:

- Posters
- Family Council bulletin board
- Email announcements
- Social media
- Family newsletters
- Verbal reminders during meetings
- Digital screens within the home

Be sure to include:

- Dates and times
 - Event themes
 - Accessibility information
 - Contact information
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Step 5: Capture and Celebrate the Week

Throughout the week:

- Take photos (with permission)
- Collect feedback, quotes and reflections
- Track attendance and Celebrate successes

After the week ends:

- Share photos and highlights with participants and FCO
- Thank participants and volunteers
- Review feedback for future planning
- Discuss ideas for next year

Daily Event Planning Guide

Monday – Welcome Day

Theme: Meet the People

Goal: Introduce participants to the Family Council and create a welcoming environment.

Planning Steps

1. Set up a welcome table near the entrance.
2. Prepare:
 - Information sheets about Family Councils
 - Contact sign-up sheet
 - “Introduce Yourself” cards
3. Create simple decorations and signage.
4. Prepare a short welcome message introducing:
 - What a Family Council is
 - What Family Councils Ontario does
 - Why Family Council Week matters
5. Share the schedule for the full week.
6. Offer coffee, tea, or light refreshments.

Activity Ideas

- Name tags
 - Icebreaker conversations
 - “What would you like to improve this year?” board
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Tuesday – Community & Connection Day

Theme: Coffee, Conversation, and New Connections

Goal: Help families and council members build relationships and feel connected.

Planning Steps

1. Arrange seating in small conversation groups.
2. Prepare refreshments:
 - Tea
 - Coffee
 - Light treats
3. Create Family Council Bingo cards.
4. Print conversation prompts for each table.
5. Assign volunteers to help introduce participants to one another.

Activity Ideas

- Family Council Bingo
- Conversation starters
- Story-sharing circles
- Informal networking

Helpful Tips

- Keep the atmosphere relaxed and welcoming.
 - Encourage new attendees to participate without pressure.
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Wednesday – Impact Day

Theme: Your Voice Creates Change

Goal: Highlight how Family Councils contribute to meaningful change.

Planning Steps

1. Create an “Impact Board” with:
 - Positive outcomes
 - Anonymous reflections
 - Success stories
2. Prepare feedback forms.
3. Organize an open Q&A session.
4. Set guidelines for respectful discussion.
5. Invite participants to share ideas and concerns.

Activity Ideas

- “What has improved?” reflection wall
- Anonymous suggestion box
- Open discussion session
- Story-sharing from council members

Helpful Tips

- Focus on collaboration and constructive feedback.
 - Ensure everyone feels heard and respected.
 - Discuss a plan for next steps and any discussed action items.
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Thursday – Education & Resources Day

Theme: Learn the Tools and Build Your Confidence

Goal: Provide practical information and encourage participation in Family Councils.

Planning Steps

1. Create a resource table with:
 - Printed guides
 - QR codes
 - FCO materials
 - Mailing list sign-up
2. Organize short seminar sessions.
3. Invite speakers or facilitators if possible.
4. Prepare presentation materials and handouts.
5. Provide time for questions and discussion.

Suggested Seminar Topics

- What is Family Councils Ontario?
- How to start a Family Council
- Communication and conflict resolution
- Understanding Family Council roles

Helpful Tips

- Visit FCO.NGO to find helpful resources
 - Keep sessions short and practical.
 - Make materials easy to understand and accessible.
 - Conclude with a summary of key takeaways
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Friday – Appreciation Potluck

Theme: Thank You for Showing Up and Making a Difference

Goal: Celebrate the relationships and community built throughout the week.

Planning Steps

1. Organize a potluck sign-up list.
2. Set up an appreciation station with:
 - Thank-you cards
 - Pens and supplies
3. Create a simple photo area or backdrop.
4. Prepare a “Week in Review” slideshow with photos and highlights.
5. Thank volunteers, staff, residents, and families.

Activity Ideas

- Potluck lunch
- Appreciation card writing
- Group photos
- Reflection circle
- Slideshow presentation

Helpful Tips

- Focus on gratitude and celebration.
 - Encourage participants to reflect on the week’s connections and accomplishments.
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Wrapping up Family Councils Week

Family Council Week is more than a series of events—it is an opportunity to strengthen relationships, encourage participation, and create a greater sense of belonging within the long-term care community. Whether your activities are large or small, the most meaningful part of the week is bringing people together through conversation, connection, and shared experiences.

A successful Family Council Week does not need an extensive budget or elaborate programming. Simple gestures such as welcoming new families, sharing stories, creating spaces for respectful discussion, and celebrating contributions can have a lasting impact. The week is a reminder that every voice matters and that families, caregivers, residents, staff, and volunteers all play an important role in building supportive and compassionate communities.

As the week comes to a close, take time to reflect on the connections that were made, the ideas that were shared, and the progress that was celebrated. Consider what worked well, what participants enjoyed most, and what could be expanded in the future. Gathering feedback and continuing conversations after the week ends can help maintain momentum and encourage ongoing engagement in Family Council activities throughout the year.

Most importantly, Family Council Week is a celebration of community. It highlights the value of listening, learning from one another, and working together to support residents and families in long-term care. Every conversation, shared meal, question, and act of appreciation contributes to building stronger and more connected Family Councils for the future.