

Active Lives Day Program Dufferin opens up new location in Shelburne

Written By PAULA BROWN

Active Lives Day Program (ALDP) Dufferin, a local non-profit organization, has opened their second location with the launch of their Shelburne campus.

"Due to COVID our numbers have to be smaller in order for us to reopen and so we were looking for another place to reopen, and Shelburne made the most sense," said Howard Dalal, the director at ALDP.

Active Lives Day Program Dufferin is a program for local adult residents with "exceptionalities". The organization was founded four years ago, back in 2016, and works primarily with individuals with varying levels of developmental disabilities as well as neurological disorders. ALDP Dufferin focuses on continued education for individuals attending the campuses, giving a post-secondary option or spot to grow life skills and job skills.

"For a lot of people with exceptionalities they need a place to go, they need somewhere to continue their growth," said Colin Smits, program supervisor at the new Shelburne location.

Smits also added, "We offer anybody in the area a place to continue to grow, a place to come to have community friendships and have that recreational health and fitness aspect. Trying new things, setting goals for yourself in terms of if you want to get a job in the future ? we will try our best to set up every stage so that we can get you there."

The ALDP Dufferin Shelburne campus opened on Aug. 10 and is much like the Orangeville location, with a number of recreational programs available. Programs range from arts-based such as culinary, pottery and music to technology-based programs, including computer coding, robotics, and beginners mechanics. ALDP Dufferin also has community involvement based programs.

"We volunteer at the food bank, we work at the reuse store, and we connect with the local police department," said Dalal. "We help with stores, hairdressers, and a bunch of different organizations around, so we're constantly being in the community to give our guys a sense of purpose and a meaningful day throughout their day."

Leading up to its opening, the Shelburne location received electronics, keyboards, and chairs as donations from the community. Dalal said that the donated keyboards will help with the music program, with ALDP Dufferin looking to partner with local musicians, and donated computers will go towards a computer lab.

ALDP Dufferin currently has around 22 participants in the programs, with 10 part-time at the Shelburne campus. The new campus is located at 167 Main Street in Shelburne.

"I think that everybody needs that place that they can go and grow and learn," said Smits. "With us coming in, that brings a huge opportunity for anybody looking for that purposeful day looking for those skills that we're trying to teach."