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[Learn more about Lifelong >](#)

 Lifelong Skills Training



Lifelong's Mission

At Lifelong Skills Inc, we envision a world where youth with disabilities and their families experience equal opportunities, fostering a life of fulfillment and productivity. As a non-profit, we are a force for good, passionately championing the rights of youth with disabilities and at-risk special families. We are committed to ensuring a sustainable future through initiatives such as continuing education, skills training, employment, and unwavering advocacy. Join us in building a inclusive and empowering world where every individual, regardless of ability, can thrive and realise their full potential.

Our Programs

We are a family-centred space, seeking to support the child and family through a multi-faceted approach. We have four major educational program tracks which are specific to the students we are working with.

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Creative Skills

Through drawing, painting, graphic design and other creative outlets, students can explore and express themselves. Our programme encourages students to be bold and personally engaged.

[Learn more >](#)

[Image Placeholder]

Developmental Skills

Our Developmental Skills Program supports students learning basic life skills such as personal care and literacy.

[Learn more >](#)

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Life Skills

Our Life Skills programme teaches students to become an active part in their household, from cooking, cleaning, handling and understanding money to other important skills.

[Learn more >](#)

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Vocational Skills

Through focusing on specific vocational skills, students can learn to become a part of the workforce. These skills include merchandising, masonry, and agricultural farming.

[Learn more >](#)

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For students, for parents, for the community.

At Lifelong, we pride ourselves on being a family-centred space in that we support both the parent and student equally. Through teaching our students skills and providing a safe, clean and educational space, we allow parents to be assured their child is in good hands. In turn, our parents support us in a multitude of ways: from teaching classes at the centre, to providing volunteer hours and helping students with travel in and around our different locations. Our parents, students, teachers and leaders uplift each other as one big family community.

[Apply to Lifelong >](#)

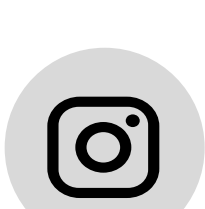
Your support will help us support more students and families in need.

A number of our initiatives would benefit from financial and voluntary help. We welcome and thank all that are able to contribute to our mission in uplifting and creating lifelong solutions to special-needs students and families.

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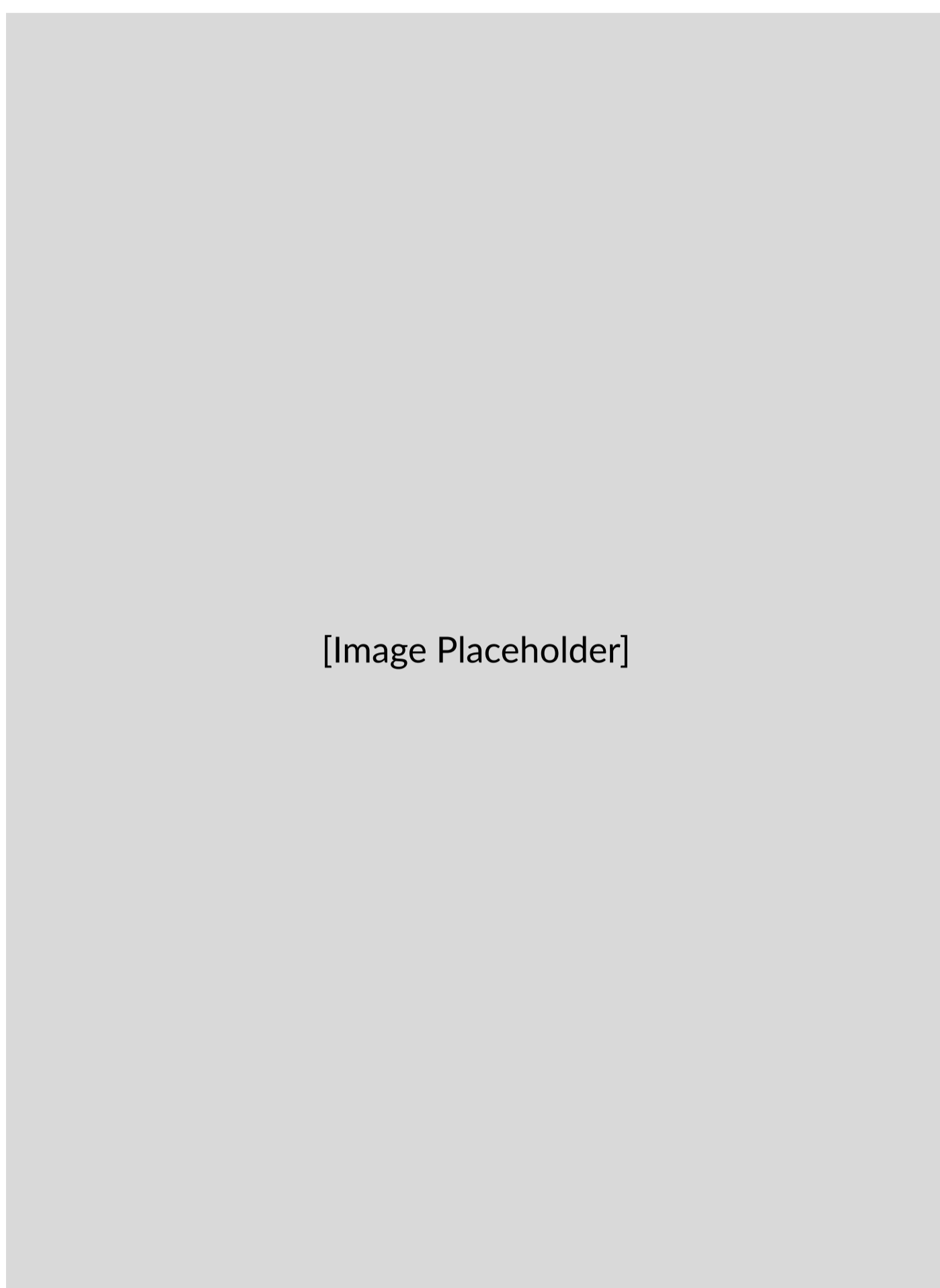
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Our Mission

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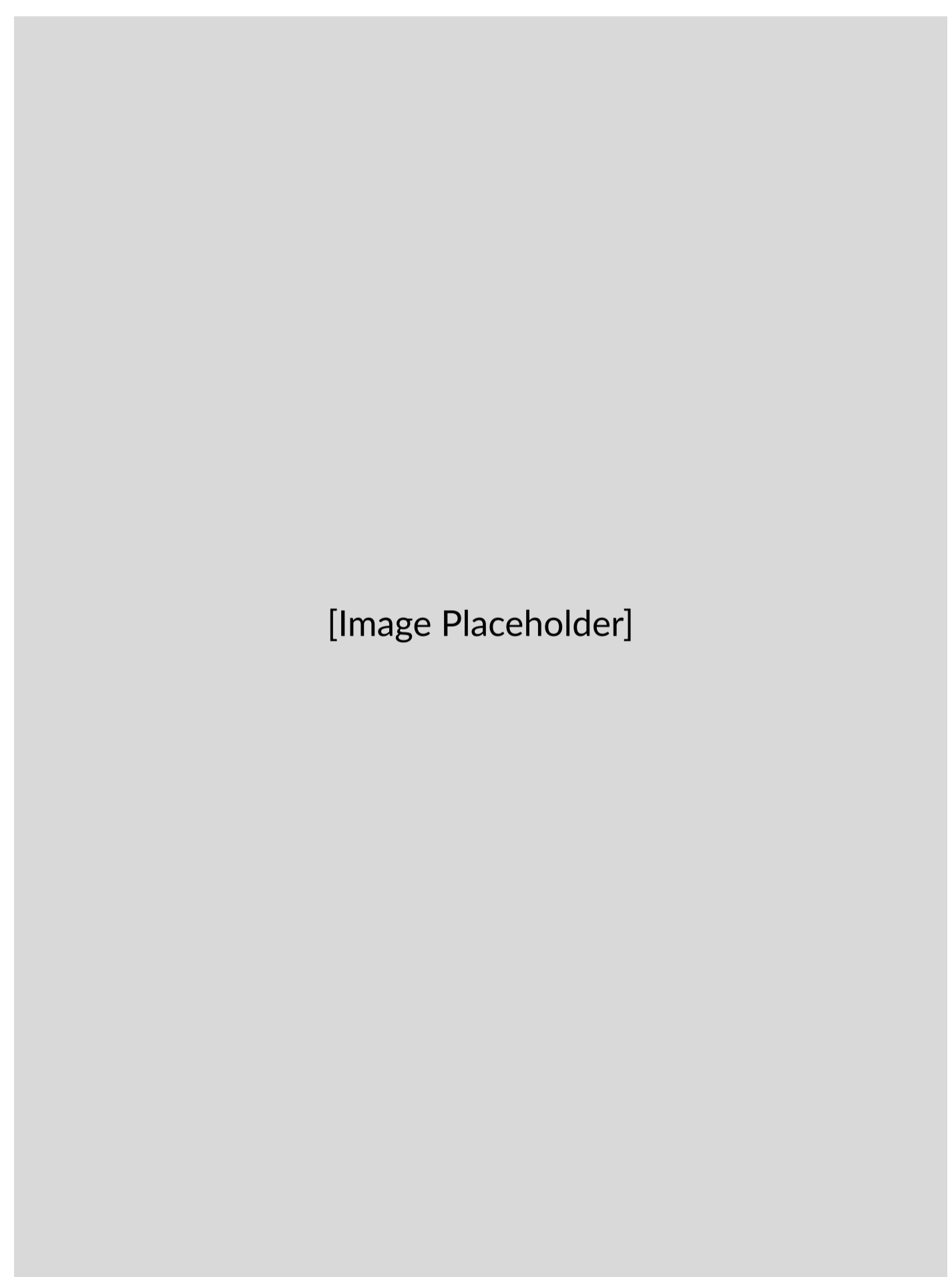
Fueled by Heather's personal journey navigating the limited educational options for her son with special needs, and Debbie's expertise in accounting and education, the mission of Lifelong is deeply rooted in addressing the educational gap faced by youth with disabilities. Our commitment extends beyond conventional boundaries, seeking to provide post-secondary education and employment opportunities for those who often fall through the cracks of traditional systems.

Our History

Founded in 2018 by Debbie Grimes and Heather Wiggins, Lifelong is woven into the fabric of a movement towards a more inclusive society.

Our founding was only possible by the personal financial backing from our founders, as well as continued support from the The Legacy Foundation. A pivotal chapter in our history involves the steadfast support of the Methodist Church of Barbados (James Street – Speightstown Circuit), our core partner since inception. Operating from the Ann Gill Methodist Church, they have generously provided us with a home at a minimal cost.

Our breakfast and hot meals program is made possible through valuable partnerships with The Salvation Army, Carter's Bakery, Goddard Enterprises, and Divi Southwinds Resort. Lifelong's history is a testament to the collaborative efforts and unwavering support that have shaped our journey towards empowerment and inclusivity.



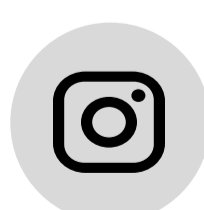
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Our Impact

In just over five years, Lifelong has grown from supporting 10 students in 2018 to actively engaging with a total of 67 students today (2024). The ripple effect of our efforts extends to our alumni, as seven past students have successfully transitioned to jobs or self-employment. Our teaching staff, predominantly composed of parents, demonstrates our dedication to continuous learning, with three currently enrolled or graduated from Erdiston Teacher's Training College. Read some of our success story profiles below:

Story 1 - Arianna Husbands

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One of Lifelong's first students, Arianna excelled in her education with Lifelong's Life Skills and Vocational tracks. Through classes on money management, science, English, and work skills, Arianna developed a range of abilities which prepared her to stay at the centre as a teaching assistant, now working with the Developmental Students. As a teaching assistant, she passionately assists students with personal care, negotiation, and communication. The supportive environment at Lifelong has not only allowed Arianna to grow but has also provided her with a sense of belonging and a loving community.

Story 2 - Dominic

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Dominic has thrived in our creative arts program at Lifelong.

Story 3 - Title

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Meet the Staff

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Heather Wiggins

Co-founder and director Heather Wiggins had a vision to create a center with Debbie to provide sustainable educational resources for individuals with disabilities. Since 1989, Heather has been dedicated to teaching students with various disabilities, demonstrating expertise in diagnoses, behaviors, and age groups. Currently the Acting Senior Teacher in Charge of the Special Unit at Eagle Hall Primary School, Heather is up-to-date and dedicated to students and brings this expertise to her work at Lifelong.

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Debbie Grimes

Deborah Grimes, Executive Director and co-founder of Lifelong Skills Training Inc, brings over 35 years of expertise in bookkeeping and accounting to the organization. As one of the Founding Directors, Debbie's leadership extends to overseeing the strategic development of the institution, as well as assisting students on a day-to-day basis.

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Antoinette Husbands

Antoinette Husbands, a dedicated director at Lifelong Skills Training Inc, actively contributes to the Merchandising program and prepares students for the operation of the mini-mart business. Leveraging her 15 years of experience at Purity Bakeries, Antoinette combines professional acumen with a personal understanding of the challenges faced by At-risk special families.

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Staff Member 4

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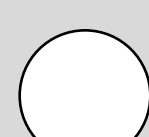
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Lifelong Skills Training - Creative Skills



Lifelong Creative Skills

In our Creative Skills programme at Lifelong, we immerse our 27 talented students in the diverse world of design. From mastering color coordination to nurturing individual artistic expression, we provide a supportive space for each student to thrive. Beyond being a class, it's a collaborative effort that flourishes with community backing. As we grow, we encourage hands-on involvement from those who share our passion. Whether through volunteering, donations, or sharing resources, we're building a creative haven where everyone can unleash their artistic potential, regardless of their abilities.

Picture or still from
Nicholas Interview

Meet Nicholas Grimes

Nicholas is at the centre of what we do in our Creative Skills Programme here at Lifelong. With a history in creative arts, graphic design and UX, Nicholas works with students to understand their individual skill-sets and interests to help their artistic talent flourish.

"They have their own challenges, and they also had their own strengths and ways of doing things. I try to draw a lot of those abilities, I like learning the things that they like to do. Sometimes it's just like learning how to see things to them a certain way in order for them to reproduce or create something based on the emotion, or just laughing with them."

Student Art [Instagram Plugin]

Scroll and explore our student art here and give us a follow on Instagram to receive updates on our students as they continue to create!



Lifelong Art Instagram Name

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Ready to join? Sign your family member up for Lifelong today!

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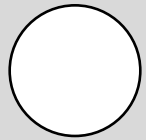
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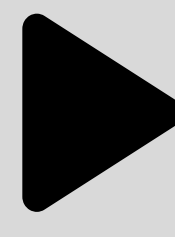
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Lifelong Skills Training - Developmental Skills



Lifelong Developmental Skills

Our Developmental Skills Programme supports students learning basic life skills such as personal care and literacy. Our developmental students are often lifelong learners - we support them to become increasingly independent through supporting and understanding their individual needs.

Meet Monique

Monique is one of our Lifelong Developmental Skills teachers. Monique joined Lifelong as a parent, but now leads our Developmental Skills class by tailoring her teaching style to each student's individual level:

"But for the most part, I have to do a lot of individual work with my students in order for them to be able to stay current and just do what everyone else is doing in the classroom."

Monique is also joined by teaching assistant Arianna Husbands in guiding the students to be their best-selves.

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OR headshot

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Information

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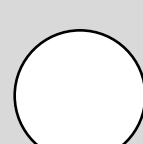
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Lifelong Skills Training - Life Skills



Lifelong Life Skills

Our Life Skills Programme teaches students to become an active part in their household, from cooking, cleaning, handling and understanding money to other important skills. Through encouraging and nurturing independence, our teachers work to tailor class content to each student and their individual interests and skill-level. Our Life Skills Programme empowers students to support themselves through acquiring independent skills.

Parents as Teachers

Our Life Skills Programme relies on multiple parents to guide and lead classes. We employ our student's parents as they exhibit a number of skills from their experience in the workforce, in addition to understanding the varied educational styles that our students need in the classroom.

Parent-teachers include: (to be filled in)

If you are interested in seeing all of our parent teachers, visit our staff directory to see all who work at the centre.

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Title

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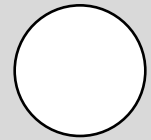
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Lifelong Skills Training - Vocational Skills



Lifelong Vocational Skills

By concentrating on specific vocational skills, students are empowered to join the workforce. These skills encompass merchandising, masonry, and agricultural farming. Industry professionals are employed to guide and educate our students, preparing them for future employment. Through this programme, we have successfully launched our very own mini-mart, offering produce and goods crafted by our students. If you are interested in our Vocational Skills Programme, we encourage you to visit our Mini Mart page and perhaps consider obtaining a membership card to support our students.

Our Agricultural Education

Our students are guided by experienced teacher-farmers to learn a range of agricultural skills. Our teachers use a range of inclusive methods which are specific to the student's individual learning style and level.

Lifelong is presently a member of the FEED programme. Our agriculture team has ably produced crops of beets, cucumbers, cassava, squash, pumpkin, herbs, sweet and hot peppers and green peas for our healthy grocery bags for the last 6 months.

Our agricultural products will soon be available to purchase through our mini-mart.

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Merchandising

Our Merchandising Students are equally a part of our vision for the mini-mart. Through teaching classes around tax, handling money and how businesses make profit, our students are made ready for employment.

If you are interested in meeting our Merchandising students, they will be working the register at our new mini-mart.

Ready to join? Sign your family member up for Lifelong today!

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The Lifelong Experience

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Lifelong Highlights

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Highlight 1

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Highlight 2

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Highlight 3

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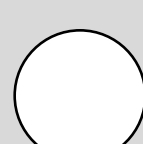
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Lifelong - Mini Mart



Lifelong Marketplace

Welcome to Lifelong Marketplace– more than a shopping spot, it's a community-driven venture with a purpose. Our mini-mart, launching this March, is more than just products; it's about empowerment and sustainability for all our students. From fresh produce to unique handmade items crafted by our talented students, the Mini Mart offers a diverse range of goods. It's a symbol of our commitment to inclusive employment and skill development, with at least six of our students working at the mart. When you shop, know that you're not just getting items; you're contributing to a community that believes in creating opportunities, building financial security, and fostering a brighter future for all.

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Lifelong Marketplace Membership

Enhancing our commitment to the community, we've introduced a unique insurance plan linked to our Lifelong Marketplace membership. By tying shopping at the mini-mart to the payment of a group life insurance plan for each student attending the centre, overseen by Sagicor, we aim to foster a sense of shared investment among parents, students and community members. Consider sponsoring a student through our Mini Mart Membership today to support our mission and have access to our fresh goods and produce.

Coming Soon

Our students and staff have worked tirelessly to turn the land next to our school into a working and functioning marketplace.

We welcome you to scroll through our gallery here which shares photographs of our students and staff working on the site before its official open in March.

We are so excited for you to join on this journey with us at Lifelong Marketplace.

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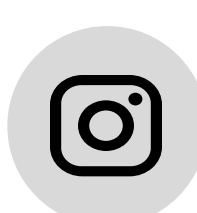
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Contact Lifelong

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Contact Info

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Mini Mart Membership - Sponsor a Student

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Sponsor Now

[Image Placeholder]

Donate to Lifelong

We are so thankful to those who believe in what we are doing at Lifelong and donate to our cause. All donations contribute to our work dedicated to the mission of sustainable care for individuals and families with special needs.

Currently, we are fundraising to purchase a Lifelong school bus which can be used to safely transport students to and from the centre, as well as to our other educational sites.

Give Now

[Image Placeholder]

Volunteer at Lifelong

Lifelong is supported entirely by the priceless time and commitment from our community and student-families who work and volunteer at the centre.

If you are interested in joining Lifelong as a volunteer, we welcome you to fill out a form on this website to register your interest. We are thankful for your time and consideration and look forward to meeting you in the future.

Sign Up

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