



Idawc • Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County

The right to learn, the power to achieve

The Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County does not endorse, recommend, or make representations with respect to the research, services, programs, medications, products, or treatments referenced in this newsletter. The material provided in this newsletter is designed for educational and informational purposes only.

In our February 2019 Issue:

LDawC News – 1-2

Articles – LDs and ADHD

Our Self-Advocacy Pamphlet Journey –
2-4

10 Ways to Help Shy Children Self-
Advocate – 4-6

5 Tips of Gratitude for Happiness – 6-8

Guelph Storm tickets – 9

LDAO Membership Application – 10

LDawC News

January was another productive and eventful month at LDawC, with many programs on the go. Erika Longman, our new Reading Rocks Coordinator was busy preparing for our Rocks program. This program began on January 28th, with 13 students aged 6-12 matched with 13 volunteer tutors in Guelph, and 8 student/tutor pairs in Fergus. These pairs will work together for 16 one-hour sessions over 8 weeks on a number of reading skills, including sight words, phonics and fluency. Erika says, “I

can't believe how quickly this first month has flown by. We have an incredible group of tutors and students who have already started to form great working relationships. I'm so looking forward to seeing the benefits of all their hard work.”

Our Peer Support Network group met on January 23, and 5 people shared their stories, experiences and resources to try to help one another. A common theme that evening was that as parents, you have to shift your expectations or dreams for your child – not in a negative way, but one that aligns with their strengths, which may not be academics. Thank you to everyone who came, and their openness and willingness to help the other members.

On January 31, our teacher's college practicum student, Mary Monk, presented a workshop on the Ontario Curriculum. Mary did a great job explaining the often dry topic of curriculum, and engaged parents in meaningful activities to help bring the topic to life.

LDawC had the pleasure of having Mary Monk as part of the organization for the month of January. Mary is in her final year of a 5-year concurrent education program at Nipissing University and is completing her alternative placement with us. Mary has participated in a number of LDawC events and programs, including attending the Peer Support Network, preparing and delivering the



curriculum workshop, developing curriculum and resources for a possible Executive Functioning course for children, and also volunteering as a Reading Rocks tutor. Here is Mary's reflection on her time with LDAWC: "My placement at LDAWC is one of the most rewarding and valuable experiences I have had as a future educator. During my placement, I was able to share my knowledge of the Ontario curriculum, assessment, and differentiated learning with parents. More importantly, I got to hear and learn from parents about their experiences with their children and the school system. For me, the biggest take away from this placement is being able to better understand education from a parent and student perspective. I look forward to using the skills I have gained during this placement to make communication and understanding of student and parent needs extremely prominent in my future classrooms."

Articles – LDs and ADHD

Our Self-Advocacy Pamphlet Journey

Self-advocacy is a skill that doesn't always come easily to kids with LDs or other exceptionalities. It is not until your child begins to know him or herself well, and what works and doesn't work, that s/he can speak more confidently about needs. One exercise that you can work on with your child to help with this process is creating a self-advocacy pamphlet. This can be a powerful way to help your child examine his/her strengths, goals, what s/he needs and what s/he needs to be successful in the classroom.

The self-advocacy pamphlet was originally done in the classroom working with a teacher, but is something you can do at home as well. Work together and draw from your child's psycho-educational report, IEP and you and your child's knowledge. You can use the example below as a template for your child's pamphlet. The categories (my hobbies, my strengths, etc.) are listed below in the article. It's also a fun, creative project. The completed pamphlet could be given to teachers, coaches.

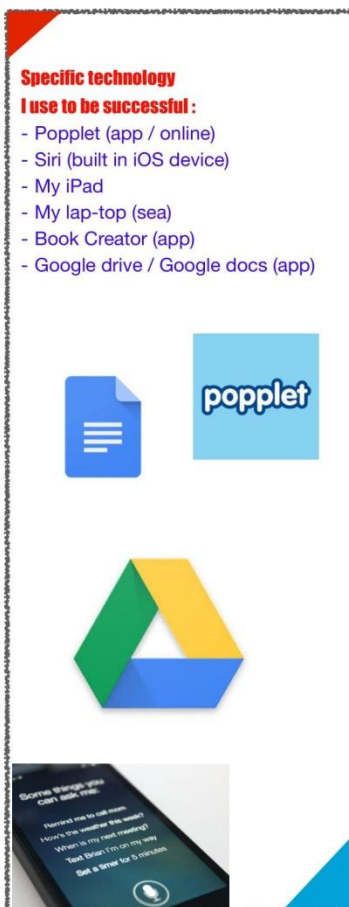
The article below comes from ld@school.ca, a phenomenal resource put together by LDAO, dedicated to serving the needs of Ontario's educators.

Sagonaska is a Provincial Demonstration School for students with learning disabilities (LDs), located in Belleville, Ontario. After seeing a webinar from the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) where Julia Osborne showed the self-advocacy cards she created and uses in her school board (York Region District School Board), the students in Mike Di Donato's grade 8 class decided to create their own self-advocacy pamphlets, to assist in their transition to grade 9.

To begin the process, Mike conferenced with individual students, using the "Understanding LDs" chart (also known as the Waterfall Chart), created by the York Region District School Board, another

resource available on the LD@school website. Reviewing the Waterfall Chart deepened each student's understanding of his or her LDs and the information was visually laid out in a Popplet, a tablet application that enables you to create graphic organizers. This information was then used to create the personalized pamphlets, which included the following areas:

- Student Photograph
- My Hobbies
- My Strengths
- My Needs
- My Goals
- How I Can Help Myself
- How You Can Help Me
- Specific Technology I Use to be Successful



| | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>My Needs :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Phonological Awareness: - the ability to know the sound a letter makes and know how to spell words - Short-term memory <p>My Strengths :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -I am creative -I am a leader -I am independent and collaborative -I Persever -I work well with most people -Use of my technology -Drawing -Painting -Mathematics | <p>How I can help myself :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Make sure teachers know who I am -Take medication in the morning for ADHD -Use my lap-top / iPad / iPhone -Ask the teacher to email me notes before class -Try to be more organized <p>How you can help me :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Take a few minutes to get to know me -Know and understand my technology and why I use it -Prompting to keep me on task -Give me a little bit more time on work -Allow me to listen to music during a math test or work period | <p>My goals :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To read at grade level - To graduate high school  |
|---|---|--|

Source: <https://www.ldatschool.ca/our-self-advocacy-pamphlet-journey/>

10 Ways to Help Shy Children Self-Advocate

By Amanda Morin

Self-advocacy is important for kids with learning and attention issues. It helps them ask for what they need. But shy kids may find it especially hard to request help or speak up for themselves. Here are some ways to help your shy child ease into being a self-advocate.

1 - Understand your child's shyness.

Not all shy kids are shy in the same way. Knowing what's behind your child's shyness makes it easier to know how to help. Some kids are anxious about speaking up when they don't know what the response will be. Some don't like to talk in front of other people. Others just need time to get comfortable with new people and new situations. And still others are just content being quiet observers.

2 - Avoid labeling your child as “shy.”

The more your child hears you call her “shy,” the more likely she is to live up to that expectation. Instead, let her know you understand she doesn’t always feel comfortable speaking up. For example, if your child doesn’t answer a teacher’s question at a school event, try to avoid saying, “Oh, she’s just shy.” Instead, try saying, “She’s not feeling very talkative right now.”

3 - Encourage your child to speak for herself.

Self-advocacy isn’t limited to school. It can take place anywhere your child can express her needs. Encourage your child to order her own meal at a restaurant or answer a store clerk’s questions. Or have her write down the questions she needs to ask her scout leader or soccer coach.

She may need your help, but if you don’t immediately speak for her, you give her a chance to think about what to say and how to say it. It also shows her you know she’s capable.

4 – Share the benefits you’ve seen from speaking up.

Before she’s willing to step outside her comfort zone, your child may need to know that self-advocacy can really be valuable. Share personal stories of times you overcame your own shyness or anxiety to speak up for yourself.

For example, “I felt shy about telling my boss I needed some extra time to learn the new software. But he was fine with it. In fact, he liked the fact that I took it seriously, and now he checks in with me after we’re trained to use new programs to see if I want extra time to practice.”

5 – Show her that her input matters.

Shy kids may feel like what they have to add to a conversation isn’t important. Invite your child to share her opinion and help in making decisions. For example, she could help decide where the family’s going for lunch or what color to paint the kitchen. Let her know you listen to and value her thoughts by saying so and following through on them. It shows her that speaking up makes a real difference.

6 – Practice and role-play.

Some shy kids know what they should ask for, but they have trouble saying it when the time comes. Rehearse sample situations with your child. You can even help her create some scripted things to say when she needs to speak up. For example: “Can I talk to you after class, Mrs. Smith?” or “I need some extra time to get this assignment done.”

7 – Work with your child’s teachers behind the scenes.

Talk to your child’s teachers about what you’ll be doing to encourage your child to self-advocate. That way you can all be on the same page and your child’s efforts, however small, can be recognized. Your child’s teacher or guidance counselor may even be able to do some lessons with the whole class around shyness and speaking up.

8 – Start small at school.

Shy kids often need to feel comfortable with people before they can self-advocate. Knowing there's someone she trusts and counts on can go a long way toward making your child feel safe speaking out.

Help your child identify the teacher or adult at school with whom she's most comfortable. Speak with her teachers or IEP team about using that person as a liaison. Your child can begin self-advocacy by talking to her liaison when she needs help or has questions at school.

9 – Add self-advocacy goals to the IEP.

Self-advocacy is an important skill that can help your child succeed in the classroom. Like any skill that's hard for her, it takes practice. Putting specific self-advocacy goals in your child's IEP can help her get the support she needs to become comfortable speaking up for herself.

For instance, you and the team could add the goal that your child will figure out and practice ways to ask for more explanation or an accommodation when she's having trouble in class.

10 – Celebrate small successes.

Even the littlest things—raising her hand in class or answering a question—can be tough for a shy child. Celebrating and recognizing these small things can help encourage your child to continue to take risks and speak out.

Source: <https://www.understood.org/en/friends-feelings/empowering-your-child/self-advocacy/10-ways-to-help-shy-children-self-advocate?view=slideview>

5 Tips of Gratitude for Happiness

The following is a blog from the Child Development Institute (CDI) in Toronto, focussing on gratitude. The CDI specializes in working with children and youth with learning disabilities.



At the CDI, our mission is to transform the lives of children, youth and their families by developing and delivering world-class, innovative and evidence-based mental health programs. As an organization we are always searching for practical strategies to share with our community to help them become healthier and happier in mind, body and spirit. CDI has dedicated the month of January to gratitude because it is a form of positive expression which has been scientifically linked to greater life happiness when incorporated into one's everyday life.

According to Harvard University's Medical School, the act of gratitude has been found to be an effective strategy used to combat mental health issues by replacing and overriding negative emotions with positive ones, leading to improved health and well-being, enhanced coping with adversity, advanced resiliency and better quality relationships.

As the 2019 year kicks off many people are spending time reflecting on the year that passed - introspectively assessing and mapping out goals to accomplish over the span of the new year. January is often viewed as a symbolic month for fresh starts, new beginnings and 'turning-the-page' both figuratively and literally. With people joining the gym, bucket-lists being written and new mindfulness routines being practiced, many are searching for new ways to achieve emotional and physical health.

https://www.health.harvard.edu/newsletter_article/in-praise-of-gratitude

1. Pay-it-forward

One way to express gratitude is through active positive engagement. This could mean volunteering with a non-profit organization, participating in community service or attending fundraising events. Another great way to deliver or express thankfulness is to perform one random act-of-kindness each day, such as paying for a coffee for a person behind you at the drive-thru, baking cookies for employees at work or donating gently-used clothes to a charity. Paying-it-forward shows appreciation for the present and future and is likely to snow-ball in effect by way of reciprocity, leading to better relationships and a happier outlook on life.

2. Smile

Smiling has been proven to have profound positive psychological effects. A bright smile shown to a stranger has the ability to brighten one's day and can be interpreted as a form of gratitude for life. Smiling impacts how you are received by others as well as how you interact with the world. By offering a smiling face you are inadvertently inviting others into your space and allowing them to feel comfortable around you without judgment. This can increase your quality of relationships at work or in your family by appearing friendly and open to engagement.

3. Write in a journal

Writing in a gratitude journal is a fantastic way to actively focus on the positive. As we all know, there can be many highs and lows in life and one way to not get overwhelmed by potential

adversity is to write three things you are grateful for on a daily basis. This exercise can open your mind to new perspectives, foster better coping skills and help you to find silver linings in every life occurrence. Expressing gratitude every day in this way has been scientifically linked to better resiliency as it is a form of positive emotional release that stretches your mind to see situations in a new light.

4. Write a thank-you note

Writing a thank-you note to someone in your life can be a way to express gratitude to those who have shown you kindness. A thank-you note can be positive reinforcement to those you care for and helps others to feel appreciated. This act of gratitude can foster better relationships with others and enhance your ability to acknowledge good deeds. This form of exercise can also provide you with a way to absorb positive deeds and emotions so they can be recycled back into your own sphere of influence.

A tip for children: You can teach children the power of gratitude by helping them write thank you cards to their friends after a birthday party.

5. Meditate

Mindfulness meditation is a way for you to de-clutter and de-stress from the noise and commitments of everyday life. It is a time to focus on peaceful thoughts and be present in the moment. It can alleviate pressure in your life by giving 5-10 minutes each day to acknowledge those things around you that contribute positively to your life – you can thank the sun for warmth, your pets for companionship, nature for its beauty or even the birds outside your window for their pleasant sound.

Source: <http://www.childdevelop.ca/gratitude2018>

Guelph Storm - Help Us Fundraise!



Tickets are \$17.50 each (reg. price \$26)

Help support LDAWC and The United Way! By purchasing Storm tickets, we're able to hold a significant fundraiser every year - please help us to be able to participate!

\$1 from each ticket will be donated to the United Way.

Game dates are:

Friday February 22, 7:30 PM – Guelph vs. Erie Otters

Friday March 1, 7:30 PM – Guelph vs. Windsor Spitfires

Sunday March 10, 4:00 PM – Guelph vs. Kitchener Rangers

For tickets, contact Jen Paterson at info@ldawc.ca or (519) 837-2050.



Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario Membership Application

Membership:

- Member fee rates to LDAO programs and services, including some online workshops/courses
- Member fee rates to all chapter programs and services, where available
- Two issues of the LDAO digital magazine LD@Ontario, sent biannually through email
- Chapter newsletters (frequency varies from chapter to chapter)

We're going **paperless**! Please provide us with your email address to receive your copy of LD@Ontario!

Required Information:

Name: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

Postal Code: _____ Chapter Affiliation: _____

Membership Type:

Family/Individual ☐ \$50.00

Professional ☐ \$75.00

Institutional ☐ \$125.00

Student ☐ \$20.00

ID # Required _____

Type of Payment:

☐ Cash (only if paying in person) ☐ Cheque ☐ Visa ☐ Master Card

Card # _____

Expiry Date: _____

Name of Cardholder: _____

CVV #: _____

Please make all cheques payable to **LDAO** and forward to **365 Evans Avenue**
Suite 202 Toronto ON M8Z 1K2

