



Idawc • Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County

The right to learn, the power to achieve

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In our April 2019 Issue:

LDAWC News – 1-2

Articles – LDs and ADHD

The Good Things about ADHD: 'It's My Superpower' – 3

Teenagers and LDs – 4-5

Teachers Weigh In: What I Wish Parents Asked at Parent-Teacher Conferences – 5-7

Resources – 7-8

Upcoming LDAWC Events

Motivating Struggling Learners – 9

UnderstandABILITY – Demystifying Psychoeducational Assessments – 10

LDAO Membership Application – 11

LDAWC News

Reading Rocks Update

Our Reading Rocks program is coming to a close at both our Guelph and Fergus sites. This was another very successful offering: 21 students worked with their volunteer tutors over 8 weeks improving their literacy skills.

This month we want to introduce you to one of our volunteer tutors, Fatima Bektic. Fatima has been a Reading Rocks tutor a few times, and is a student at the University of Guelph. We asked her a few questions, and here's what she had to say:

What motivated you to become a tutor for the

LDAWC? Answer: I want to become a speech language pathologist and thought this would be a way to obtain some experience. I keep coming back because, not only do I love this program, but there are so many kids who want to participate and we need all the tutors we can get.

What do you like most about being a Reading Rocks tutor? Answer: working with different kids, seeing how much each child improves, seeing how much the kids enjoy the program, and gaining valuable experience.

What's your favourite book? Answer: Holes (a children's book) – this is one of the first novels I read and I love reading it with my tutees.



*Reading Rocks volunteer tutor,
Fatima Bektic*

Thank you so much, Fatima, and all of our other Reading Rocks volunteers for being a part of this program. You have no idea how much we at LDAWC, and especially your tutees and their families, appreciate you.

Guelph Storm 50/50 Draw + Missing Winner!

On Friday, March 1, the Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County ran the 50/50 draw at the Guelph Storm game. The Storm played the Windsor Spitfires in what was a blowout game for them with a win of 11-4. LDAWC staff and board members had a great time selling tickets to everyone at the game, cheering on the Storm players.

Running a 50/50 draw at the Storm game is the most significant fundraiser for LDAWC every year. The pot was close to \$5,000 on March 1st, and LDAWC's cut was \$2,474.38 after expenses.

We're still looking for the 50/50 draw winner at the March 1/19 Guelph Storm game: ticket #U-342901.



LDAWC staff members Jen Paterson and Erika Longman, helped by Gavin and Emma at the March 1 Guelph Storm 50/50 draw.

Articles – LDs and ADHD

The Good Things about ADHD: 'It's My Superpower'

Produced by Rob Brown, BBC News



Inattentiveness, hyperactivity and impulsiveness - these are just some of the symptoms of ADHD or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. By some estimates, it is one of the most common behavioural disorders in the UK.

But instead of us here at the BBC deciding what questions to ask about ADHD, we wanted to give that job to people who know ADHD much better than us - an ADHD parents' support group.

The group came up with four questions and we at BBC Stories made four films to try to find answers for them

In this film, the parents asked us why ADHD is often seen as negative? So we made a film looking at some of the good things about it.

You can see the full film, “ADHD – The Questions Parents Want To Ask”, here:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/av/stories-47630021/the-good-things-about-adhd-it-s-my-superpower>

Source : <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/stories-47630021/the-good-things-about-adhd-it-s-my-superpower>

Teenagers and LDs



Parenting a child with learning disabilities (LDs) is not a simple thing. Parenting a teenager is fraught with challenges, but the greatest repository for solid, useable advice is **listening to the experience of other parents**. Here are some suggestions to help you parent your teenager with LDs:

1. Find Yourself Some Community Support

There ARE other people in positions similar to your own – and they could all use somebody to talk to as well. You can find support groups, discussion groups, and possibly friends, through organizations like the LDAO local chapters, school communities and online. The group you affiliate with may offer you a broader bank of points of view, shoulders to lean on, practical advice and strategies, and then may allow you the chance to pass on the same things to the next parent who needs it.

2. Be Aware of What's Coming Up

The teen years are years of intensive growth and change. Expectations on your child are going to increase during these years, at school and in public as well as at home. Adolescents need to go through this in order to develop independence and prepare for adulthood – but not all young people progress at the same rate, and some may need more or longer periods of parental help.

Keep in mind that your teenager may feel the pressures to “keep up” with peers, and may feel badly to be even slightly out of step with them. Also keep in mind that your own peers may expect you to do the same, with regard to a schedule for removing supports or granting freedoms.

Essentially, keep in mind that your teenage child will move through the stages of development, just as they did with the school curriculum, with accommodations made for their learning disabilities. Students

in high school will naturally face more of the challenges of independence, and you can use these as practice runs for development. For example, your child will be expected to begin to self-advocate in high school. With support and preparation, you can help this happen, giving your teen the chance to prepare for life. They *will* get there – at a pace that works for them and your family!

3. They're Leaving Home

Someday! It may not feel like it, but this is more than likely their goal. If you treat the teenage years as serious preparation for this fact and continue with healthy communication, you can help them do so with the least amount of strife.

4. Remember How You Felt

Adolescence is not an easy time. Keep this in mind when things get tough, and don't take apparent rejections as reflections on you or your parenting abilities. This can be easier if you are not alone during this time. See point 1.

When all else fails, be kind to your teenager and kind to yourself. An average parent will experience issues during these years, and when you add LDs into the equation it can become extra challenging. So be prepared to say sorry and admit when you have made a mistake. You and your teenager will both be thankful you did.

Source: <https://www.ldathome.ca/what-are-lds/teenagers-and-lds/>

Teachers Weigh In: What I Wish Parents Asked at Parent-Teacher Conferences

By The Understood Team



Parent-teacher conferences are a great way to build a partnership with your child's teacher. Open and honest conversations can help you and the teacher connect what's happening at school with what's happening at home.

But these conferences can be challenging for several reasons. Time may be limited. You *and* your child's teacher may have a lot of topics you want to cover. Plus you may feel unsure about what to bring up—or *not* bring up—in this meeting.

We asked our Understood for Educators Teacher Fellows to weigh in on what they wish parents would ask and share in parent-teacher conferences. Some of them are parents of kids with learning and attention issues too, so they've been in your shoes.

There were a few themes carrying through many of these tips: sharing what's working (and *not* working) at home, asking how you can be helpful, and being open about your child's likes and dislikes.

"As a teacher, I always want the parents to give me honest feedback about the child's perception of their school experience. It opens the door to have authentic discussions about progress socially, emotionally and academically."

—Ashlee Upp, *third-grade general education teacher*

"It's best to provide the teacher with a vision of what life looks like at home, so they can understand the frustrations you may be experiencing as a parent. Teachers may see a very different child in the classroom than you see at home."

—Michelle Capriotti, *high school special education teacher*

"I wish parents asked teachers, 'What is something that I can do at home to reinforce what my child is learning in class socially and academically?'"

—Shaquala Butler, *fourth-grade general education teacher*

"Come prepared to share what works for you and your child at home. Parents and teachers are partners, and I love to reinforce systems they have at home. I also have parents reinforce systems I use in school. Kids respond well when parents and teachers use the same language, incentives and organization."

—Pauli Evanson, *second-grade special education teacher*

"I wish parents would ask me, 'Is my child grasping the concepts and skills needed to be successful?' instead of, 'Why is my child not making a certain grade?' Also, 'How can we work together to ensure my child is doing quality work away from school?' And, 'How can I support you in the classroom?'"

—Eric Crouch, *fifth-grade general education teacher*

“I wish parents would ask, ‘What can the school do to support my child and the family? Are there intervention programs to support my child? If not, why?’ Asking about the curriculum and the content objectives can demystify school and expectations.”

—Christina Armas, kindergarten and first-grade English as a New Language teacher

“I’d encourage parents to ask me what sparks joy for their child in my classroom. And I’d like them to share what sparks joy for their child at home. Children do their best learning when they are motivated and genuinely excited.”

—Jessica Cisneros, kindergarten general education teacher

Source: <https://www.understood.org/en/community-events/blogs/teacher-tips/2019/02/25/teachers-weigh-in-what-i-wished-parents-asked-at-parent-teacher-conferences>

Resources

FCSSGW Video Counselling

Family Counselling Support Services for Guelph Wellington is partnering with a secure web-based delivery service to pilot video counselling. The goal of this new approach is to increase accessibility and reduce physical barriers for clients seeking support in a non-clinic or home environment.

Those looking to access video counselling can contact the FCSSGW Intake team at 519-824-2431, ext. 10 or visit their website: <https://familyserviceguelph.on.ca/counselling-services-guelph/video-counselling-pilot/>

Partnering with Schools for Student Success: Effective Parent Advocacy



The **Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario**, in partnership with the **Integra Program** of the Child Development Institute, is presenting an **online workshop** for parents and those who are helping parents navigate the school system. The course is called ***Partnering with Schools for Student Success***, and promotes a collaborative approach to advocacy, based on knowledge and understanding on both sides.

The **seven units** explore perspectives of parents and schools, promote an understanding of the needs of students and of special education and behaviour management processes in schools, and teach strategies for successful negotiation. Scenarios will be used to help illustrate the ideas presented.

The online course is offered in **two options**:

- Professionals, and others who are working with parents, will do assignments at the end of each unit, and submit a final case study, in order to receive a *Certificate of Completion*.
- Parents can choose to take the course for their own information, without submitting assignments or receiving a Certificate of Completion, for a reduced fee.

All participants will have access to the same content and a **Comments & Questions** section where they can ask questions and share ideas.

The course will be moderated by **Julie Weisz**, with input from **Diane Wagner**, Public Policy & Education Consultant at LDAO. **Julie** is a Child and Family Clinician in Community Education and Engagement with the Integra Program of the Child Development Institute. The seven units will be made available one week at a time over seven weeks.

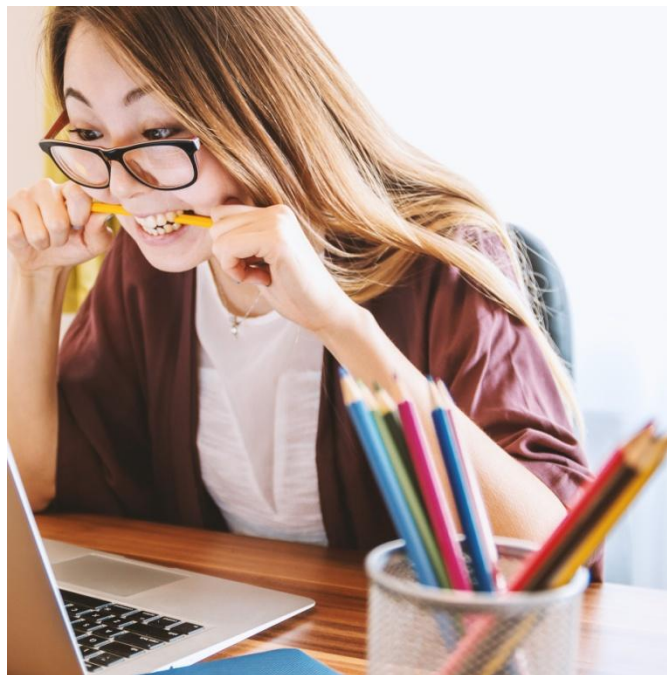
Cost: Professional option with assignments & Certificate of Completion: **\$350 (\$300 LDA member)**,
Parent option without assignments or certificate: **\$250 (\$200 LDAO member rate)**

For more information or to register:

http://shop.access.ldao.ca/index.php?main_page=product_info&cPath=1&products_id=99

Upcoming LDAWC Events

Motivating Struggling Learners



About Our Workshop:

Struggling learners can take many shapes and forms. Some may be disillusioned or disenfranchised; some may not see value in school, while others may really struggle with academics. What are critical components to help these students? Is there a best way to motivate them; and what does that look like?

Our speaker – Fil DaSilva – will tackle these issues. As someone who was truly a “struggling student”, he will share personal experiences, struggles he faced, and consequences that resulted. He will highlight strategies to avoid these struggles. He will also share personal insight into how a student who did not have enough credits to graduate with his high school classmates, how a student who did not own a single binder or writing utensil -- or have enough credits to graduate with his high school classmates.

About Our Speaker:

Fil DaSilva is a secondary school teacher in the Upper Grand District School Board, and earned his Bachelors degree in Physical Education at Brock University and Bachelor of Education at Lakehead University. Fil identifies as a “struggling learner” himself. He struggled with confidence, motivation, and his academics were poor at best during high school. Fil now seeks to inspire and pass his knowledge and wisdom to a generation of young minds. When not teaching, Fil enjoys playing the guitar and spending time with his family.

When: Wednesday, April 17, 7-9 PM

Where: Community Living Guelph (2nd Floor); 8 Royal Road, Guelph

Cost: \$15 for non members; \$10 for LDA members

We never want cost to be a deterrent! Please contact us about subsidies.

Register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/ldawc-motivating-struggling-learners-tickets-59064727189> or find a registration link at www.ldawc.ca/events

UnderstandABILITY – Demystifying Psychoeducational Assessments

About our Workshop:



A psycho-educational assessment identifies areas of strengths and challenges within a student's learning profile, and provides a deeper understanding of his/her educational needs. It is also a necessity in identifying a student with a learning disability.

Psycho-eds are challenging to understand, especially if you aren't a psychologists or a teacher.

Please join speaker Susan Slack Miller as she explains psycho-educational assessments from a parent's perspective with the intention of making it an accessible and usable document to support your child's academic success.

Come prepared for an evening filled with lively discussion and interactive activities!

About our Speaker:

Susan Slack Miller is an educator with over 25 years of experience supporting students who learn differently. In addition to a Master of Science degree in Special Education, and Specialist qualifications in Special Education, Susan taught at Trillium Demonstration School in Milton, ON (Trillium is a public school for students within Ontario with severe to profound learning disabilities.) Beyond her teaching role at Trillium, Susan also provided professional development for Ontario educators and administrators. Her work at Trillium resulted in an *Amethyst Award*, a provincial award that recognizes outstanding achievement.

Beyond her ongoing leadership roles supporting students with exceptionalities, Susan also served as a Board Director for The Learning Disabilities Association of Halton. She is also the owner of *Halton Educational Services*, which provides workshops for parents; professional development for educators/administrators; consultations for families; and direct instruction for students with exceptionalities.

When: Wednesday, May 15, 7-9 PM

Where: Community Living Guelph (2nd Floor); 8 Royal Road, Guelph

Cost: \$10 for LDAWC members; \$15 for non-members

We never want cost to be a deterrent! Please contact us about subsidies.

Register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/understandability-demystifying-psychoeducational-assessments-tickets-58097173209> or find a registration link at www.ldawc.ca/events



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

