

LDAWC Family Conference Program

Saturday, October 22, 2022



ldawc • Learning Disabilities
Association of Wellington County

The right to learn, the power to achieve

Guelph, St. James Secondary School

9:15 – 9:25 Welcoming Remarks, Patricia Townson, ED
9:25 - 11:00 Keynote –Parenting through Challenging Times
Ann Douglas, Bestselling Parenting Author, Columnist and Workshop Leader

11:00 – 12:00 Nutrition Break, Bring your own lunch

12:00 – 1:15 Concurrent Workshop Streams

Breakout #1	Breakout #2	Breakout #3	Breakout #4
Is your child “Neurodiverse”? What to look for Dr. Colleen Willard-Holt, Wilfrid Laurier University	Assistive Technology Leanne Husk, Assistive Technology Instruction Specialist, Bridges Canada	Mental Health & LD - gap in the social and schools skills Rose Freigang, C. Psych. Assoc., Insight Psychology on Norfolk	IEPs Explained Nadia Tonin, Jacqueline Weresch & Mark Howe WCDSB/UGDSB

1:15 – 1:45 Break

1:45 – 3:00 Concurrent Workshop Streams

Breakout #1	Breakout #2	Breakout #3	Breakout #4
Strategies for Time Management and Productivity Alina Kislenco, RP, Founder of The ADHD and Asperger’s/ASD Centre	Showcase of LDAWC programs Patricia Townson, Executive Director, LDAWC	Simple Strategies to Help Children Become Better Readers Dr. Alexandre Tavares, Psychiatrist	Transitioning - Into and Out of Highschool Nadia Tonin, Jacqueline Weresch & Mark Howe WCDSB/UGDSB

3:00 – Return to Auditorium for Wrap Up – silent auction & parent resource draw



Family Conference 2022 Session Summaries



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KEYNOTE SPEAKER –Parenting Through Challenging Times

Ann Douglas

“Having a child who is struggling doesn’t make you a bad parent, just as being a child who is struggling doesn’t make your child a bad kid.” That’s a powerful and reassuring message to hear if you happen to be the parent of a child who is struggling in some way. In this thought-provoking presentation, Ann Douglas will share some of her own hard-won wisdom about thriving as a family while weathering one of life’s many storms (the focus of her book *Parenting Through the Storm*). Expect a presentation that is kind, encouraging, and real and that leaves you feeling anything but alone.

Ann Douglas sparks conversations that matter about parenting and mental health. She is the creator of The Mother of All Book series and the author of *Happy Parents, Happy Kids* and *Parenting Through the Storm*. A passionate and inspiring speaker, Ann delivers keynote addresses and leads small-group workshops at health, parenting, and education conferences across the country. Her website is anndouglas.net.

BIO FOR ANN DOUGLAS

Ann Douglas sparks conversations that matter about parenting and mental health. She is the weekend parenting columnist for CBC Radio and bestselling parenting author. Her most recent books are *Happy Parents, Happy Kids*, *Parenting Through the Storm*, *The Mother of All*. Her new book *Navigating the Messy Middle: A Fiercely Honest and Wildly Encouraging Guide for Midlife Women* will be published by Douglas & McIntyre on October 1, 2022. anndouglas.ca

Website: anndouglas.net

Twitter: [@anndouglas](https://twitter.com/anndouglas)

Facebook: [The Mother of All Books](https://www.facebook.com/TheMotherofAllBooks)

Instagram: [@anmdouglas](https://www.instagram.com/anmdouglas)

Pinterest: [@anmdouglas](https://www.pinterest.com/anmdouglas)

LinkedIn: <https://ca.linkedin.com/in/anndouglas>

BREAKOUT SESSION 1 – choose 1 of 4 sessions

Breakout #1

Is your child "Neurodiverse"?

Dr. Colleen Willard-Holt

A lot of times we see co-morbidities with our neurodiverse population, ADHD and Dyslexia for an example, but a lesser known phenomenon that is still being studied is the Twice- exceptional child. These children (and adults) are sometimes seen as low-achieving and lacking skills, but then, every so often, we see something extraordinary come from them. Moments of absolute genius and exceptional talent!

In this workshop we will look at some case studies and examples of times when we have seen this happen, talk about how to see and understand these special gifts and talents and how to keep our minds open to the possibility that just because there is something challenging our kids, the creative ways they rise to meet these challenges can show us how extraordinary they really are!

Colleen Willard-Holt served as Dean of the Faculty of Education at Wilfrid Laurier University from 2008-2019. She received her Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from Purdue University. Prior to earning her Ph.D., Dr. Willard-Holt taught at the K-12 level. At the university level, she has taught courses in general teaching methods, educational psychology, assessment, educational research, brain research, gifted education, and special education. Her areas of research include gifted children with disabilities, implications of neuroscience research for classroom teachers, multiple intelligences, international experiences for teachers, peace education, and preservice teacher education. She has also published in those fields and has addressed regional, national, and international audiences on those topics. Dr. Willard-Holt has recently retired but remains engaged in teaching part-time, conducting research, and giving presentations.

Breakout #2

Assistive Technology

Leanne Husk, Assistive Technology Instruction Specialist, Bridges Canada

With technology infused in so much of student learning today, it may be overwhelming and a bit mystifying about how you can help. Come and learn about the tech tools students are using in classrooms today across the curriculum, and the features they can use to support them to be independent, successful learners! While the focus will be on the popular Google applications, we will make connections to the Microsoft environment as well. A particular focus will be on the features and tools students have available to support reading and writing, primarily the Read&Write Tools by TextHelp.

With a firm belief that technology in our classrooms is the “game changer” for so many of our students today, it has become Leanne Husk’s passion to see it implemented and used to its potential. Combined with strategic teaching, education technology opens up curriculum to struggling learners, truly making it accessible to all. Specializing in learning disabilities, Leanne has spent her career introducing, training and mentoring students, their families and educators to the limitless potential of education technology. She is an energetic, dynamic, dedicated individual who, over the years, has gathered a wealth of knowledge and experience, devoting herself to creating positive, successful, enjoyable, interactive and inclusive learning environments for the students and teams she supports.

Breakout #3

Mental Health & LD

Rose Freigang, C. Psych. Assoc., Insight Psychology on Norfolk

Mental health challenges can contribute to a student’s experience of learning and school performance in many ways. This is especially true for children and teens with a learning disability. This talk will describe how worry and anxiety can affect a student’s attention, memory and other cognitive abilities. In addition, we will touch upon how anxiety can emerge as a secondary problem related to a youngster’s self-confidence and beliefs about themselves. Most importantly, we will discuss ways in which you, educators and your child can work together to “talk back” to anxiety and reduce its negative impact.

Rose Freigang is a Registered Psychological Associate with the College of Psychologists of Ontario in the areas of Clinical and School Psychology and is an Associate at Insight Psychology on Norfolk here in Guelph. She has provided assessment and treatment services to individuals across the lifespan in hospital, community agency and private settings for more than 25 years. Rose has a particular interest in and experience with ASD and other Neurodevelopmental Disorders, SLD, and ADHD. Rose has a strong commitment to early intervention, optimizing strengths, and fostering independence.

Breakout #4

IEPs explained

Nadia Tonin and Jacqueline Weresch and Mark Howe, WCDSB & UGDSB

Individual Education Plans (IEPs) can seem complicated, whether you are new to the special education world or a "frequent flyer". This breakout session will focus on the details of an IEP. Staff from each local school board will explain their forms in detail. Then you will have an opportunity to discuss particular line items with your respective school staff member. After the general info, you will break into two groups: one for each school board. Bring your IEP if you are willing to share the contents with the group!

Each of the staff from the school boards is an experienced Special Education Resource Teacher.

BREAKOUT SESSION 2 – Choose 1 of 4 sessions

Breakout #1

Strategies to Stop Procrastinating and Manage Your Time

Alina Kislenko, Registered Psychotherapist, Founder of The ADHD and Asperger's Centre

Executive functioning skills are so important to our daily lives. Providing students with skills in this area is valuable and necessary for success. In this workshop, you will be able to examine why your child procrastinates and how to help them to regain focus and complete the tasks (homework, cleaning up or other struggles they may have).

Alina Kislenko is a Neuroscience & Psychiatry Professor at McMaster School of Medicine and a Psychotherapist who is Autistic and ADHD. She also founded and runs the award-winning ADHD & Asperger's/ASD Centre in Guelph (and now Ottawa). She does interactive presentations all over the world and has been on many international tv and radio shows.

Breakout #2

Showcase of LDAWC Programs

Patricia Towson, Executive Director LDAWC

Join Patricia for a showcase of our Youth Programming. Curious about how Reading Rocks will help your child become a better reader? Wonder how your child can learn social skills? What about executive functioning? What is that really??? Patricia has an interactive and engaging hour for you.

Breakout #3

Simple strategies to help children become good readers

Dr. Alexandre Tavares, Psychiatrist

In this presentation, you will learn powerful techniques to immediately help children improve their attention span. We will talk about physical activity and learning techniques that maximize the learning potential of children who have limited attention span. We will also talk about how to help your child have a healthier diet and sleep habits to maximize their well-being and their learning potential.

Dr. Alexandre Tavares is a child and adolescent psychiatrist practicing in Waterloo. He grew up knowing that he did not have the best attention span, was not a good speller, and was not a fast reader, but had a thirst for knowledge. He was supported by his parents and grandparents since his childhood. They believed in him and never questioned the validity of learning with less formal educational methods used at that time: TV programs, magazines and supported listening. Dr. Tavares uses his personal experiences to better empathize with the experiences of children and teenagers with ADHD and/or learning disorders.

Breakout #4

Transitioning into and out of High School

Nadia Tonin and Jacqueline Weresch and Mark Howe, WCDSB & UGDSB

Moving from one school to another is a challenge for any students, but as students with LD's and ADHD transition the move can cause additional stress and uncertainty. Having to share your IEP, your needs and advocate for those needs can be scary - and for parents it can be extremely frustrating. Let Nadia help guide you through best practices of supporting your child, helping them advocate for themselves and supporting them as they move forward on their scholastic journey.

Nadia Tonin is a Program Coordinator with the Wellington Catholic District School Board. As Program Coordinator, Nadia is responsible for supporting schools with special education programming and implementing Ministry initiatives. Nadia is in her 21st year of teaching and has spent her teaching career at the elementary level and 13 years of it as a Special Education Resource Teacher. Nadia believes that every child has the potential to learn and deserve to be surrounded by adults who will never give up on them and who will help them reach their full potential.

Mark Howe is a Special Education Consultant responsible for Student Support and Program Services with Upper Grand District School Board