



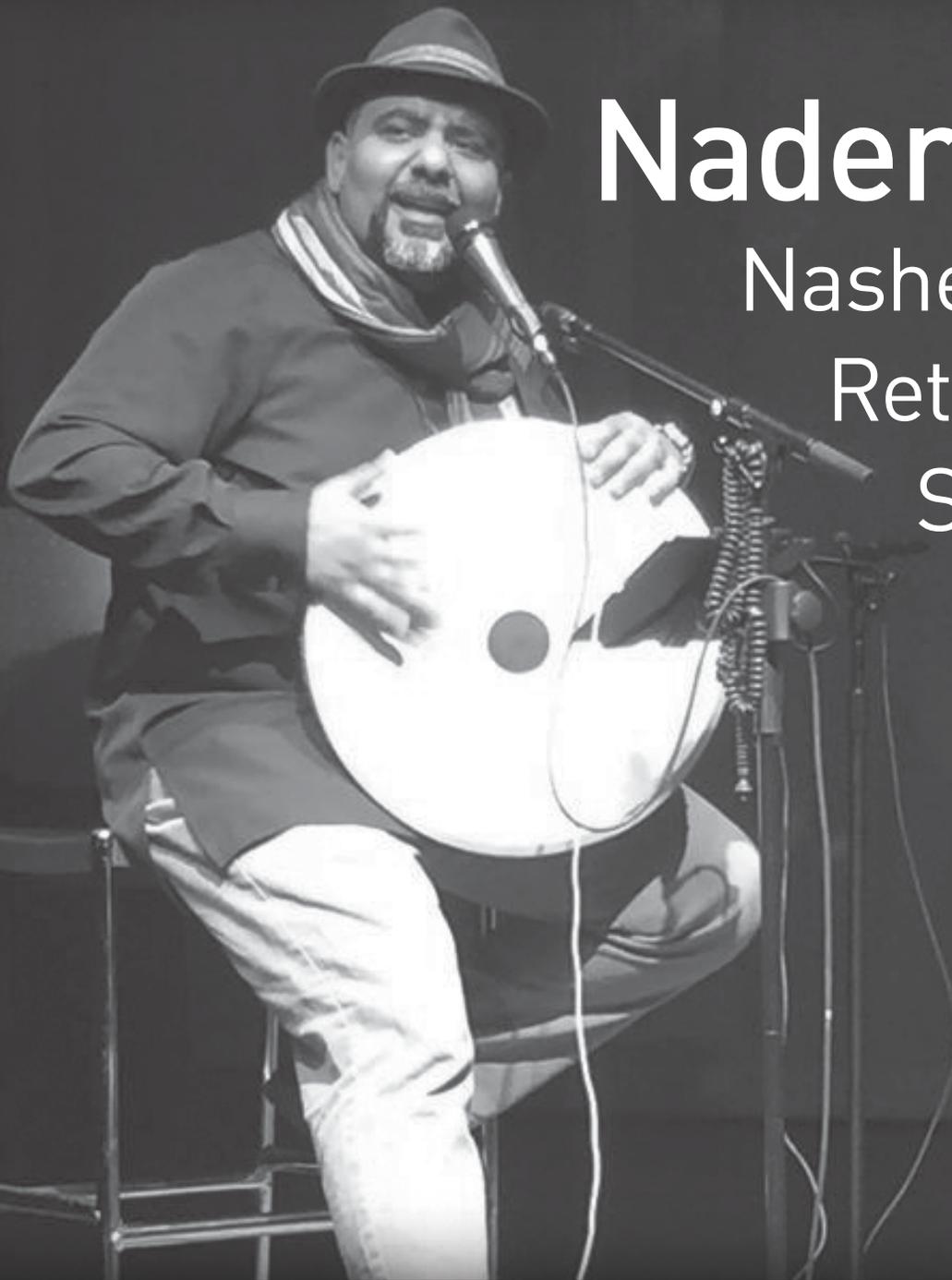
**Idao** • Learning Disabilities  
Association of Ontario

*The right to learn, the power to achieve*

# communiqué

THE PUBLICATION OF THE LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO

WINTER 2015/SPRING 2016



## Nader Khan: Nasheed Singer Returns After Seven-Year Absence

Educator's Institute a Huge Success • Mindfulness for People with LD and ADHD  
How to Help Children and Their Families Cope with LDs

Communiqué, the publication of LDAO is published twice-yearly. Articles should be submitted to editor Carter Hammett (iwriteandedit@yahoo.com) approximately six weeks before the publication date. Content deadline for the Fall/Winter 2016 issue is March 1, 2016. Communiqué reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity, length and accuracy. Advertising rates available upon request. Subscription rate for non-LDAO members is \$25.00 yearly.

Communiqué provides a forum for information, news and opinions relevant to the field of learning disabilities. The Association does not, in any sense, endorse opinions expressed or methods or programs mentioned. Articles may be reprinted unless otherwise stated. Please mention "LDAO Communiqué" and the article's author if and when articles are reprinted.

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LD chapters across Ontario are waiting to serve you...

by Carter Hammett, Editor

# Editor's Notebook



Reconnecting with old colleagues is often a pleasure and it was a great pleasure indeed to reconnect with musician Nader Khan. Once upon a time, Mr. Khan was sleeping in the back of his car, was a homeless person who was working full time while trying to support a family overseas. He recorded an album, went on tour, formed an association, positioned himself as a facilitator of service and knowledge and completely reinvented himself in the process. It's been a pleasure to read the reports of his travels, listen to his music, read his wisdom. Oh, and he has ADHD too, proving that you can still go through traumatic life stages and emerge victorious. He's back with a new album and it's a thrill to have him featured in our pages again.

Spirituality is at the core of his work and for the past two decades or so, spirituality has also been the foundation of the terrific work done by Jon Kabbat Zinn and the facilitators of the Mindfulness program and all of its offshoots. Mindfulness has had a terrific success rate with helping people with invisible disabilities, mental health and chronic pain manage

their conditions and embrace their shortcomings while staying in the moment. It's long overdue that we capture that in an article this issue.

Finally, the LD@School Educators Institute was another successful event back in August. This issue we offer a portfolio of the event complete with photographs and an article by presenter Aaron Bailey on the power of sharing stories. We hope you enjoy it.



## WE HAVE A WINNER!

Congratulations to Patti Moorcroft Tasker, who correctly answered our skill-testing question about which US presidents had learning disabilities? Tasker correctly identified George Washington, Woodrow Wilson and John F. Kennedy and for that she wins a smart key by Legato. An extra special thanks to our apps columnist Mark Kawate for donating this super cool item! Thanks for playing, Patti...The key will be in the mail soon!



## AND FINALLY... A NEW BOOK BY... ME!

I don't normally like to use this space for personal promotion but please allow me the indulgence of announcing the publication of a new book of essays, **Book of Disquiet: Dispatches From the Disability Front Lines**. Previously published in these very pages over the past decade, revised and updated, the book celebrates the remarkable achievements of people working to better the lives of people with LD and ADHD. It includes profiles of people from the famous (Rick Green, Henry Winkler, Rick Lavoie) to the quiet pioneers labouring behind the scenes (Gabor Mate, Ron Davis) and includes subject matter that ranges from the pragmatic to the spiritual. The lovely Shannon Sheppard summarizes the book in our Shelf Life section. Available in both paperback and Kindle editions, the book will be formally published November 2015. Visit [www.bookofdisquietessays.weebly.com](http://www.bookofdisquietessays.weebly.com) and various social media for further details.

Onward!

## This Issue We Were...

**Aaron Bailey** works at the Regional Assessment and Resource Centre at Queen's University in **Kingston**. Aaron has become an advocate for people who are struggling with disabilities by giving motivational speeches around the world to help students like himself that are

currently struggling with the difficulties of having learning disabilities or ADHD. • **Dr. Hadley S. Koulton** is a Psychologist-Psychoeducational Consultant at JVS **Toronto** • **Anne McDonagh** is a retired adult educator who is now active on a number of non profit boards. She

is active in the Workers' Education Association of Canada and edits the adult education newspaper, Learning Curves. • **Shannon Sheppard** is Public Relations Chair with LDA **Durham**.

Next Issue You Could...

# Message FROM THE CEO

## A TIME FOR GIVING...



Lawrence Barns, CEO

As we enter the season of goodwill I decided to reflect on what our community would wish for. Ask any board member involved with an LDA and the word you are almost certain to hear is “sustainability.” As we strive to bring better programs, support to parents and students, awareness to the general public and most of all shine hope into lives that desperately need it, funding is always an issue.

Having said that, there are a lot of thanks due to those who support our work today. As a member you make a difference, United Way is a huge partner across the province, Trillium Foundation continues to seed new projects across the network. But last year LDAO suffered another loss on

the year. While it hurts every time I say it, I am proud we didn't turn anyone away that needed us.

So this year began in April with a loss to make up before we started. With some good fortune along the way we should break even this year. But is that enough? Our breakfast in March needs to be the big success, it always has been. But if we added 25% to the turn out we could carry a surplus into next year. Our foundation that preserves the capital invested is now almost \$120,000 and climbing. What if we could grow it to a million or more and secure LDAO for the long term?

I know I write a lot about money, but it is the gas in the engine that drives results. The stats make for grim reading,

those with a LD represent 5-10% of the population. But also

50% of teen suicides

35% of incarcerated youth

65% of unemployed high school graduates

We need to change these numbers!

What can you give to help the parent fighting the school board, the employee with the human rights claim, the struggling reader or the socially awkward tenth grader... in every case send them to the LDAs of Ontario and they will find help and support and even if money is a concern it won't matter.

**Sustain us and we promise to be there for them.** 

## LD and LDAO News

### EQUITABLE ACCESS LIBRARY AND BOOKSHARE PARTNER FOR EXPANDED ACCESS TO THOUSANDS OF TITLES

The Centre for Equitable Library Access has recently partnered with Bookshare. Through Bookshare, an accessible online library for people with print disabilities, readers can instantly access over 200,000 titles for free! Find New York Times bestsellers, novels, children's books, mysteries, science fiction, nonfiction, foreign-language books, and more.

With Bookshare you can:

- Read and listen to words read aloud
- Increase font size and read with large print
- Read on computers, tablets, smartphones, braille displays, and many other technologies
- Get free reading software

Bookshare lets you download books in DAISY Text, DAISY Audio (synthetic voice), MP3 (synthetic voice), or Braille Ready Format. Note that Bookshare is an online-only service - you cannot order books on CD.

#### Who Can Join For Free?

Patrons of participating CELA libraries with a print disability that makes it difficult or impossible to read traditional print books:

Visual impairments like blindness and low vision

Physical disabilities

Severe learning disabilities such as dyslexia

For more information on how to apply go to

<http://bookshare.celalibrary.ca> 

# THE ABILITIES CONNECT FUND

by the Ontario Chamber of Commerce • Apply today, thrive tomorrow.

Nearly 15.5 percent of Ontario's population lives with a disability. Approximately 43 percent of this population have completed their post-secondary education, yet the unemployment rate among them is 30 percent higher than the general population in Ontario. The Abilities Connect Fund, supported and funded by the province of Ontario, is designed to help businesses and other organizations access the skill sets offered by persons with a disability.

Living with a disability, such as dyslexia or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder does not have to be a barrier to employment. There are several opportunities and organizations that can assist people with disabilities seeking employment, ranging from service providers to disability associations. The Abilities Connect Fund, an initiative of the

Ontario Chamber of Commerce, helps break down employment barriers and dispels myths and stereotypes associated with employing people with disabilities. It aims to raise awareness among employers about the benefits of hiring, integrating, and retaining people with disabilities; and encourages employers to leverage this talent pool to improve employment outcomes and career trajectories for persons with disabilities.

The Abilities Connect Fund offers grants to companies for hiring and accommodating people with disabilities. For-profit and not-for-profit companies are eligible to receive up to **\$20,000** to leverage new talent by hiring and training college and/or university students or recent graduates with disabilities. Companies can also receive up to **\$3,000** to support the purchase of

assistive devices, specialized training, and assessments for new or current employees with disabilities.

This employer-focused initiative aims to raise awareness among small and medium enterprises about the benefits of hiring people with disabilities. Through the Abilities Connect Fund, businesses can reach out to persons with a disability and harness their skills sets to remain competitive in the global economy.

To learn more or apply for a grant, please visit [www.abilitiesconnect.ca](http://www.abilitiesconnect.ca) or contact Lesley Cole at **416-482-5222 ext. 2390**.



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## PARENT PERSPECTIVE ON THEIR KIDS WHO HAVE HIGH ABILITY AND LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

In their research paper, *Twice-Exceptionality: Parents' Perspectives on 2e Identification*, Lynn Dare and Elizabeth Agnes Nowicki of Western University in London, Ontario describe how they interviewed five parents of 'twice-exceptional' children. The children were identified with attention issues, learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, and emotional/behavioral disorder in addition to having 'high ability'. They ranged in age from 11 years to early 20s and included two girls and three boys.

The authors heard from parents that twice-exceptional children have such extreme strengths and weaknesses that schooling can be an exercise in frustration. Dare and Nowicki found that "from the parents' perspective, having a child who is highly able yet experiences learning difficulties

can be challenging, confusing, and frustrating. The parents in our study were strong advocates for their children, going outside the school system to find answers to the paradoxical experience of parenting a child who is both able and struggling." The authors expressed "concerns about how less privileged families with twice-exceptional children can be supported."

In their concluding thoughts, Dare and Nowicki pointed out that "students struggling with twice-exceptionality often remain unrecognized until higher grades and identification of exceptionalities may not occur until parents seek professional help." Other studies have shown that twice-exceptional children often move "from grade to grade with their educational, social, and emotional needs unmet." Even when both exceptionalities

are identified, schools tend to focus on academic weaknesses rather than offering programs to develop students' talents.

While twice-exceptional students yearn to be accepted by their peers, many feel socially isolated and experience high levels of stress. However, the authors said that parents in their study spoke about the positive outcomes that their children could achieve as they grew into adulthood, so they saw room for optimism.

Lynn Dare & Elizabeth Agnes Nowicki (2015) *Twice-Exceptionality: Parents' Perspectives on 2e Identification*, *Roeper Review*, 37:4, 208-218, DOI: 10.1080/02783193.2015.1077911

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02783193.2015.1077911>

# Public Policy Roundup

by Diane Wagner, LDAO Public Policy and Education Consultant

## ON OMBUDSMAN OFFICE GAINS NEW MANDATES TO INVESTIGATE COMPLAINTS AGAINST SCHOOL BOARDS

### THE ONTARIO OMBUDSMAN'S OFFICE & EDUCATION

Under the Public Sector and MPP Accountability and Transparency Act, 2014, the Ontario Ombudsman's office gained new mandates to investigate complaints about school boards as of September 1, 2015 and about universities as of January 1, 2016. The Ombudsman already has jurisdiction over Ontario's 24 community colleges, as well as the Ontario Student Assistance Program.

**School Boards:** The Ombudsman's office can now investigate complaints about the administrative conduct of school boards that have not been resolved by local complaint mechanisms or appeals processes. Complaints may include concerns about special education supports, school and school board policies, customer service provided by board staff, or other matters within the authority of individual school boards. The office will assess all complaints and refer them to local school board officials for quick resolution whenever possible, but if this is not successful the office may attempt resolution and if necessary investigate, make recommendations and follow up on recommendations.

**Universities:** The Ombudsman's office will be able to investigate complaints about the administrative conduct of universities that have not been resolved by a university ombudsman or other complaint or appeal mechanism. Complaints may include concerns about student services, program

requirements, student accommodations, admissions, policies, or student financial aid. The office will assess all complaints and refer them to university officials for quick resolution whenever possible, and must consider the principles of academic freedom within universities when investigating any complaint.

To download brochures on Complaints about School Boards or Universities you can go to the website:

<https://ombudsman.on.ca> 

## AODA UPDATE

On February 13, 2015 the Ontario Government released the final report of the Second Legislative Review of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, by Ms. Mayo Moran. Partly in response to these recommendations (see Public Policy Roundup Summer 2015) the government released an Accessibility Action Plan called The Path to 2025.

In addition to showcasing areas of improvement and examples that highlight exemplary practices, the Action Plan presented objectives such as:

- Consult and partner with businesses and people with disabilities to develop a voluntary third party certification program recognize businesses and organizations that have championed accessibility within their sector or community.
- Collaborate with service delivery partners both within and outside of government on pilot projects to enhance our compliance and outreach activities.
- Build on the success of the 2014 marketing campaign to create public awareness campaigns focusing on raising awareness of the AODA and the Employment Standard.

- Release an annual compliance and enforcement plan — which will include audit blitzes — and report back to inform the public on our efforts, and monitor compliance trends among obligated organizations.
- Explore opportunities through social media or online platforms to expand and strengthen the conversation on accessibility between businesses and people with disabilities.

On October 5, 2015 the Accessibility Directorate announced targeted audits of large retail organizations with 500 or more employees to determine compliance with the AODA.

On November 15, 2015 the Directorate announced the formation of a voluntary, third-party accessibility certification program to recognize businesses and organizations that have championed accessibility. Feedback is being sought from the general public, including persons with disabilities and businesses, at <https://www.certifiedforaccess.ca/>, on "the challenges faced by people and business as they work to make their interactions more accessible."

Meanwhile the Directorate quietly released on a relatively obscure web location, proposed amendments to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service and the Integrated Accessibility Standards. The primary changes are the alignment and integration of the Customer Service Standard into the Integrated Accessibility Standard, but there are other small changes that could be significant. The proposed changes can be accessed at: [www.ontariocanada.com/registry/view.do?postingId=20303&language=en](http://www.ontariocanada.com/registry/view.do?postingId=20303&language=en) (read the Detailed Summary under Further Information) and feedback sent by December 31, 2015. 



# Community Hubs: Count Adult Education In!

by Anne McDonagh

**O**n August 25 Premier Wynne's special advisory group presented their report on community hubs, *Community Hubs in Ontario: A Strategic Framework and Action Plan*. [www.ontario.ca/page/community-hubs](http://www.ontario.ca/page/community-hubs).

The purpose of the advisory group was to recommend how best to implement community hubs and find out what the stakeholders in Ontario think of them. Having community hubs across the province is one of four initiatives the Premier has proposed that will make Ontario successful and prosperous once again.

You may be wondering what a community hub is. The word "hub" means "centre", "core" or "focal point". A community hub, then, is the centre or the core of a community. The government has started using community hubs to deliver services. That means that many of those services will be in one location; for example, a community hub may have a Community Health Centre, an Early Childhood Centre, a seniors program, some continuing education classes and community dining. All hubs would not necessarily have the same services; it will depend upon the needs of the community.

The response to the advisory group was almost overwhelming and very positive. They heard from over 350 organizations, held over 70 meetings with stakeholders including various ministries, and received 50 written submissions, and so on.

Why the enthusiastic reception? What are the advantages of community hubs? One of the most obvious advantages is efficiency in delivering services; if the Community Health Centre is just down the street where the daycare is or the seniors group, the accessibility and the convenience work well for members of the community, for the government, and for the not-for-profit organizations that will run their programs from their hub. A hub that delivers several services in one or two buildings will experience economies of scale so that the services will not cost as much as they would if they were being delivered in a number of locations around the city.

The hubs will use public land and public buildings. Perhaps some of the schools, scheduled to be closed, will be reborn as hubs. Certainly, adult students would benefit from having courses offered in their communities. There are many more pluses, but the one to count on is the building of community. With this system, every community becomes a priority neighbourhood. A recent study of poor neighbourhoods found that what the residents found hardest to bear was not their poverty but rather their isolation and loneliness. Loneliness in a big city is not confined to the poor; it is actually characteristic of urban life. The community hub is a strong candidate for alleviating some of that loneliness. The synergy that will be created over the years

will demonstrate what a brilliant initiative the hubs are.

However, adult educators have some concerns. The report specifically addresses the issue of underutilized schools that Graham Hollings wrote about in the Spring 2015 and Summer 2015 issues of *Learning Curves*. In a section of the report called "Access to Schools" (pg.23 of 31) it acknowledged "If a school is being used by a community partner in part of its space, and students are being taught in another part and the school is therefore fully utilized by the community, only the student spaces are funded by the Ministry of Education". These spaces are for elementary and high school students. Adult students are not counted. So, even though a school may be teeming with community programs or adult education programs, it will be considered underutilized and up for closure.

*A hub that delivers several services in one or two buildings will experience economies of scale so that the services will not cost as much as they would if they were being delivered in a number of locations around the city.*

Continued on next page. ►

Adult students, including many with learning disabilities, are in schools in programs offered by the TDSB such as Adult English as a Second Language programs (Adult ESL, Language Instruction for Newcomers LINC, Enhanced Language Training), 20,000 adult students; Adult Literacy & Basic Skills (aka Essential Skills Upgrading), 2,600 adults students; Adult high school credit programs, 12,000 adult students; and General Interest/Seniors' Daytime programs, 30,000 adult students. These adult students are not counted in school utilization rates. It is not clear from the Community Hubs report if these adult students will now be counted in school utilization rates, which would take many schools out of consideration for closure.

So adult students, teachers and counselors make it a project to send an email to Premier Wynne; Liz Sandals, Minister of Education; the School Trustee for your school site, the Member of the Provincial Parliament for your school site, to tell them adult students should be counted. If all adult students sent an e-mail, that

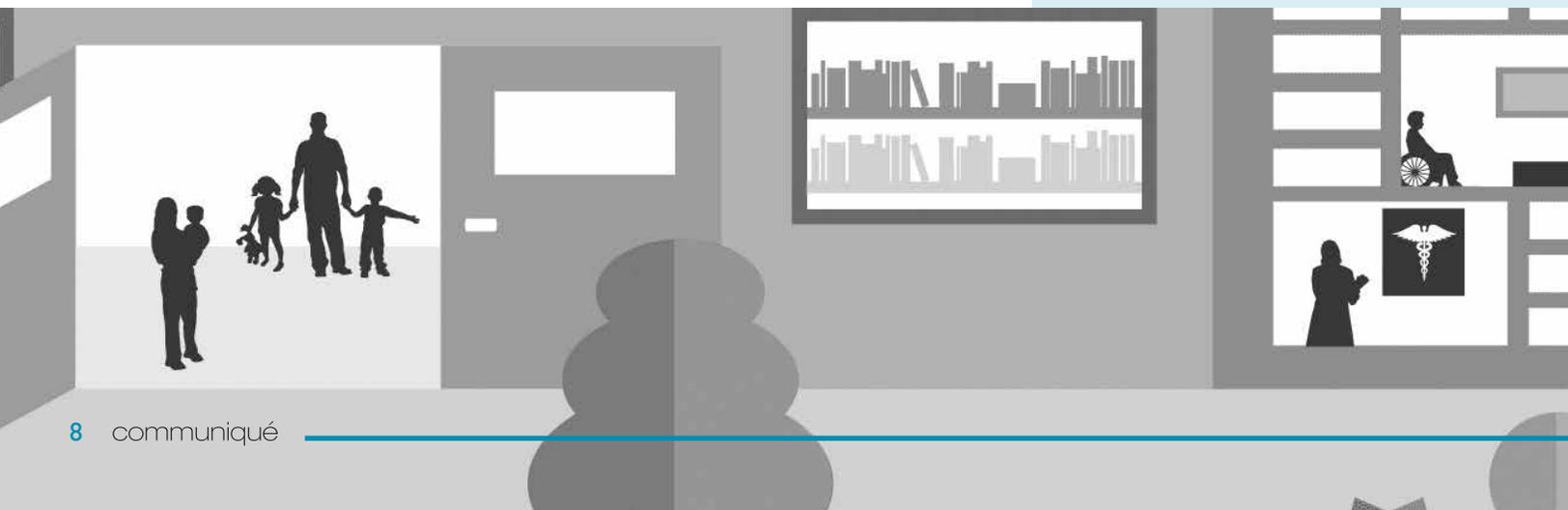
would be close to 65,000 emails. When politicians get even a few emails, they consider the issue serious. Imagine if they got a few thousand or even a few hundred. We know this works. In February 2003, when the TDSB announced the discontinuation of General Interest Courses, two seniors Jack Henshaw and Gerry Lang, along with others, secured over five thousand signatures on a petition. The program was reinstated in August 2003. So send an email, say you want to be counted in as adult students, and you want the school where your program runs to be considered a community hub.

For more information, see [www.countusin.ca](http://www.countusin.ca) 

## QUICK FACTS

- In the Throne Speech and her mandate letters to several ministers, the Premier identified the development of a policy on community hubs as a priority for the Ontario government.
- During the engagement process, the Advisory Group identified close to 60 community hubs that are already established or in the planning stages in rural, suburban and urban neighbourhoods across Ontario.
- The Premier's Community Hub Framework Advisory Group is comprised of individuals from a cross-section of community, municipal, health care and education sectors.

Source: <https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2015/08/ontario-community-hubs-action-plan-released.html>



# Web Head

## Apps for Kids with Reading Disabilities



It seems as if every day someone's got a new app for something. Need to find your parked car? There's an app for that. Order a cab? There's an app for that too. But apps have also been a goldmine for kids and adults with reading disabilities. Each issue we try to bring you some of the best and most useful tools we have come across. If you discover anything you find useful, please contact us! We'd love to find out more! Herewith, a few of our recent faves...

### MODMATH

Created by the parents of a child with dysgraphia, ModMath helps kids work on math problems without using a pencil. The app gives students a piece of virtual graph paper. When they click on a cell, kids can type in numbers, math operations and equations. Everything is automatically aligned to be clear and legible. The problems can be saved, emailed and printed. Cost: Free

### WRITE IN STYLE – POWERED BY GERLINGO

Write in Style is every writer's best friend. Smart text prediction helps you write in selectable styles, fast and without typos. Writers and bloggers can write in the style of their favorite authors. How would Jane Austen finish this sentence? How would the president phrase the next few words?

Write in Style combines the gray text suggestions known from search engines with the simplicity of a free text area. As you write, the next few words are always predicted and laid out in front of you. Arrow keys help you find fitting alternatives and when you're done, you can export the text directly to your email or wherever you need it.

The best thing is that you can select from a variety of topics, styles and languages to get suggestions fitting your needs:

Available styles: W. Shakespeare, J. Austen, F. Nietzsche, F. Kafka, A. Dumas

Available languages: English, German, French, Spanish, Catalan, Danish

Available topics: Political Speech, Basic.

### SPY SAM READING SERIES

Compatible with iPad. Requires iOS 7.0 or later.

Created by a doctor to help his son learn to read, this multi-book adventure starts with a few simple words on each page. Gradually the simplistic cartoon façade falls away to reveal a thought-provoking plot that champions loyalty and determination. You can also download books 2 and 3. Cost: Free

### VOICE DREAM READER

This customizable app lets kids highlight text and have it read aloud to them. Although Voice Dream Reader has been around for about two years, it was updated this year to add more voices and functions. Kids can adjust the voice the app uses and its speed. They can even

connect their Google Drive, Evernote and Dropbox accounts to have documents there read to them. Cost: \$9.99

### LEO'S PAD: PRESCHOOL KIDS LEARNING SERIES

Through animated storytelling, this app teaches young kids academic and social skills, creativity and a love of learning. Each chapter tells a story that includes interactive games, puzzles and songs. You can track your child's progress in the "Parent's Pad." Designed for preschoolers, the app is cool enough to appeal to young grade-schoolers, too. Cost: First chapter free, \$25 for all six

### DYSLEXIA TOOLBOX

This app "by dyslexic people for dyslexic people" has a suite of useful assistive technology features for older kids with dyslexia. One feature is a type pad with word prediction software that can help kids create messages for text, email and social media. Another is a digital overlay for reading text through a color screen. There's also a digital document reader (for purchase) that takes photos of text and reads them aloud. Cost: Free. 

# Elsewhere

## Bits and Pieces of LD/ADHD News Collected From Around the World...



UNITED STATES



### Partnership News: Lime Connect and Eye to Eye

Lime Connect is proud to announce a partnership with Eye to Eye, the only LD/ADHD movement dedicated to mentoring in the U.S. Eye to Eye brings university students and K-12 youth together both inside and outside the LD/ADHD community with their Think Different Diplomats, camps for students with LD/ADHD, and a variety of events.

Lime Connect and Eye to Eye share the vision that all individuals with disabilities should be celebrated. They look forward to collaborating and supporting each other as their organizations grow and act as instruments for change. For more info visit: [www.limeconnect.com/news\\_events/page/partnership-news-lime-connect-and-eye-to-eye](http://www.limeconnect.com/news_events/page/partnership-news-lime-connect-and-eye-to-eye) 



UNITED STATES



### A Brain System that Appears to Compensate for Autism, OCD and Dyslexia

Individuals with five neurodevelopmental disorders — autism spectrum disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, Tourette syndrome, dyslexia, and specific language impairment (SLI) — appear to compensate for dysfunction by relying on a single powerful and nimble system in the brain known as declarative memory.

This hypothesis being proposed by a Georgetown University Medical Center neuroscientist is based on decades of research. It is published online and will be in the April issue of *Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews*.

The proposed compensation allows individuals with autism to learn scripts for navigating social situations; helps people with obsessive-compulsive disorder or Tourette syndrome to control tics and compulsions; and provides strategies to overcome reading and language difficulties in those diagnosed with dyslexia, autism, or SLI, a developmental disorder of language.

"There are multiple learning and memory systems in the brain, but declarative memory is the superstar," says Michael Ullman, PhD, professor of neuroscience at Georgetown and director of the Brain



and Language Laboratory. He explains that declarative memory can learn explicitly (consciously) as well as implicitly (non-consciously).

"It is extremely flexible, in that it can learn just about anything. Therefore it can learn all kinds of compensatory strategies, and can even take over for impaired systems," says Ullman.

"Nevertheless, in most circumstances, declarative memory won't do as good a job as these systems normally do, which is an important reason why individuals with the disorders generally still have noticeable problems despite the compensation," he adds.

Knowing that individuals with these disorders can rely on declarative memory leads to insights on how to improve diagnosis and treatment of these conditions. It could improve treatment in two ways, Ullman says. First, designing treatments that rely on declarative memory, or that improve learning in this system, could enhance compensation. Conversely, treatments that are designed to avoid compensation by declarative memory may strengthen the dysfunctional systems.

Ullman says compensation by declarative memory may also help explain an observation that has long puzzled scientists — the fact that boys are

diagnosed with these disorders more frequently than girls. "Studies suggest that girls and women are better than boys and men, on average, in their use of declarative memory. Therefore females are likely to compensate more successfully than males, even to the point of compensating themselves out of diagnosis more often than males," Ullman says.

[https://www.meistercody.com/en/press/details/92/Meister\\_Cody\\_%E2%80%93\\_Talasia%34;\\_wins\\_the\\_Dyslexia\\_Quality\\_Award\\_2015/](https://www.meistercody.com/en/press/details/92/Meister_Cody_%E2%80%93_Talasia%34;_wins_the_Dyslexia_Quality_Award_2015/) 

## GERMANY

# "Meister Cody – Talasia" wins the Dyslexia Quality Award 2015

The Dyslexia Quality Award is awarded to high-quality programs and training materials. This year, the math learning game "Meister Cody - Talasia" by Kaasa health GmbH won the coveted award.

Since not every training program is suited to every child with dyscalculia and dyslexia, an independent commission made it a goal to filter the practice-proven training materials, computer programs and literature from the abundance of offerings.

The commission is made up of multiple internationally active organizations such as the

Governing Body of Dyslexia in Germany and the First Austrian Governing Body of Dyslexia and uses expert surveys as its orientation.

The selected training materials and programs can be seen at [www.bestofdyslexia.com](http://www.bestofdyslexia.com). More than just trainers in dyslexia and dyscalculia can benefit from this selection. Parents and teachers can benefit too. The training possibilities have been optimized for children with learning disabilities and can adapt to the learning level of each individual.

[https://www.meistercody.com/en/press/details/92/Meister\\_Cody\\_%E2%80%93\\_Talasia](https://www.meistercody.com/en/press/details/92/Meister_Cody_%E2%80%93_Talasia) 



# How to Help Children and Their Parents Cope with Learning Disabilities

By Hadley S. Koltun, Ph.D., C.Psych, Psychologist, JVS Toronto



Learning disabilities (LD) can affect the way in which a person takes in, remembers, understands, and expresses information. Learning disabilities can also influence the way a child organizes information. Children with learning disabilities are intelligent and have abilities to learn despite difficulties in processing information. These children should not be thought of as “stupid”, or “lazy”.

Simply put, if you have a choice between performing and not performing, you would choose to perform. But if something is getting in your way of performing, then you cannot do so.

Children (and adults) with LDs can have an ongoing impact on friendships, school, work, self-esteem and daily life. Nonetheless, individuals with LDs can succeed when accommodated and also given good coping strategies.

Estimates of LDs vary due to the manner these are evaluated. Approximately 5-10% of students in public schools are identified as having LDs. There are three to four times as many boys than girls who are diagnosed with LDs.

## CAUSES OF LEARNING DISABILITIES

There is evidence that LDs have a genetic basis, although it is possible that some LDs are caused by acquired neurological or biological factors. Learning disabilities are not caused by cultural/language differences (such as English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) factors), problems with inadequate or inappropriate instruction, social class or lack of motivation. Attention problems, behavioural/emotional disorders, sensory impairments or other medical conditions can co-occur with LD.

## HOW ARE LEARNING DISABILITIES DIAGNOSED?

Only a thorough assessment done by a qualified professional such as a duly registered psychologist or psychological associate can yield a reliable and valid diagnosis and plan of intervention. Sometimes, a psychologist can be assisted by teachers with special education training or other allied health professionals such as speech-language pathologists. This type of assessment usually involves cognitive assessment (e.g., intelligence

testing, language memory/processing testing) and academic achievement assessment (e.g., reading, spelling and mathematics). Sometimes, the behaviour and emotional life of a child might be explored by interviews and other ways of assessment. Often, assessments evaluate the executive functioning of a child.

School boards often have an in-house psychological services department which provide consultation and assessments for free (usually paid through taxes since its part of the educational system). However, the wait list to see a psychologist is often long. Some opt to see a psychologist in private practice which usually is paid for out of pocket. Some group medical plans will cover part of the cost, with a doctor's referral.

## WHAT SIGNS DO WE LOOK FOR WITH IDENTIFYING POSSIBLE LEARNING DISABILITIES?

As children progress through the early grades of school, they often find challenges as they learn to read, write and compute mathematical problems. However, if these difficulties continue interfering with learning, then they might show signs of learning disabilities.

For instance, children with difficulties with reading usually show challenges in early reading skills such as remembering letter sounds or letter blends. They may have much difficulty remembering how to read or decode very familiar words. As well, they may have difficulty in rhyming sounds in words, difficulty with memory for words and difficulty in learning to read, write and/or spell.

Extensive studies have shown that children diagnosed with reading disabilities (RD) consistently have more problems than other children do in their "phonological awareness" ability. Phonological awareness is the ability to notice, think about, and manipulate the individual sounds in word. For instance, a child with RD may have difficulty saying the word "cowboy" without saying the "boy" sound while a child without RD may find this easy. Research shows that problems with phonological awareness in early grades are associated with poor reading comprehension in later grades.

Children with LDs in math may find it challenging to learn number facts. They may also have difficulties keeping in mind more than one aspect of a problem. For example, when interpreting a word math problem, children may find it difficult to remember the numbers in the problem and at the same time to find the cue word that tells them what to do with the numbers (such as add, subtract, divide or multiply).

Because of these problems, children with learning disabilities often need assistance with school related tasks. These include executive function skills (the ability around getting started, planning and organizing your task, executing the task and monitoring performance). They may require more time to complete assignments or tests.

## HOW DO SCHOOLS HELP CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES?

Many school boards help children with learning disabilities by first identifying when a child exhibits challenges that exceed standard teaching practice. For example, a child in Grade 3 may still be

*Continued on page 14. ►*



reading text below grade level and may be having difficulties both decoding and comprehending text. An In-School Team meets and makes recommendations around how to accommodate that child that includes a listing of his or her educational strengths and needs. An In-School Team meeting would include school personnel including the current classroom teachers, special education teachers and the principal or vice-principal. Other professionals such as a psychologist, speech-language pathologist or a social worker can also be called in.

After a period of time, these interventions are implemented and the response to these interventions is evaluated to determine their effectiveness. Then, a psychoeducational or a psychological assessment is often recommended. The general purpose of the assessment is for educational planning but more specifically around whether Learning Disabilities are evident. If it is evident, then recommendations connected with a child's strengths and needs are implemented.

If Learning Disabilities are evident,

then a meeting to identify the child's needs, place the child in an appropriate program and review the progress can be implemented (Identification, Planning, Resource Committee, IPRC). At the same time, the Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT) can also write an Individual Education Plan for the child. Accommodations and modifications can be implemented. An IEP can be reviewed and revised over time. It is best to speak with school personnel to learn more about this process, specific to where you live. 

## HELPING PARENTS TO HELP THEIR CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

Children with Learning Disabilities frequently require either accommodated or modified programs at school. There are many programs for remediation of reading or other academic difficulties.

Parents and teachers should keep in frequent contact with the school to best plan the educational progress of a child with learning disabilities. Often there are annual meetings with the Special Education staff to review the IEP or to have an IPRC meeting. Use that time to collaboratively evaluate progress and to review strengths and needs of your child.

The following are some suggestions for parents and teachers to help children with learning disabilities, particularly those with reading problems. Please keep in mind this is not an exhaustive list and other suggestions are available.

**Focus on the child's strengths not the weaknesses:** It is important to remember that there is not one profile that fits all LDs. Every child will have a unique set of skills, abilities and problems. Parents know their child the best. Parents and teachers can be encouraged to think of how to use the strengths of the child to compensate for weaknesses.

**Set reasonable expectations:** Try not to expect more than the child is capable of doing but expect the best he or she can produce. This may mean teaching skills step by step, from simple skills to

more complex skills. Provide the initial assistance and then gradually reduce the support given as the child makes progress.

**Help the child with memory strategies:**

Memory problems can be associated with LDs. Parents and teachers should become aware of the tasks or situations where the child is being asked to remember information. They can help the child to remember by teaching him more about the information and as required, rehearse it, reword it (in a way that is meaningful to him) and to reduce the amount of it by such strategies as categorizing, chunking and grouping the information. He should also be encouraged to ask for the information to be repeated.

**Guide the child's language comprehension:**

Find out what your child understands and try not to use words they do not understand. It is important to remember that words also have several meanings (for instance, words like bill, back). This can be difficult for the child with LDs to understand. Children with LDs may have difficulty with words that represent space or time (before, after, between) and they may need frequent demonstrations to make such words meaningful.

**Engage the child in early literacy activities:**

Reading to children strengthens oral language and introduces them to the large variety of different types of language materials (stories, fairy tales, poetry,

science explanations). Reading signs, labels or thank you notes helps them to understand the relationship between oral and written language. If the child does not like to read, parents can "read" the pictures and reduce the language to the level the child understands and enjoys. Asking simple factual comprehension and logical type of questions (inferential comprehension, for example, "how does the girl in the picture feel?") can help with strengthening reading comprehension later on.

Parents should be encouraged to play listening games with their children. Think of objects that begin or end with a particular sound. Start with simple sounds, not with blends (blended sounds are those like "bl" as in "black" or "sh" as in "shop"). Rhyming games are encouraged too.

**Become involved advocates for your child:**

It seems that you may feel alone in your struggle to help your child. It is sometimes difficult to best represent the needs of your child to school personnel or other professionals. However, it is important to stay informed on the progress of your child and on the topic of learning disabilities. Sometime meeting with parents who have children with similar problems can be helpful to realise that you are not alone. The Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) and its local chapters can help parents to learn, discuss and advocate for their children [www.ldao.ca/lda-in-canada/ldao-chapters/](http://www.ldao.ca/lda-in-canada/ldao-chapters/) 

# Educator's Institute Special

## Speech Therapy

*By Aaron Bailey*

*By sharing experiences of personal struggle we open ourselves up creating a healing community in the process, the author discovers...*



**W**hile I am standing in front of my audience at the LD@ School Educator's Institute preparing for my presentation, anxiety hits which causes me to feel terrified and is sometimes unbearable. I begin to wonder to myself, "What the heck am I doing, and why am I putting myself through this?" I am constantly reminded after my presentations why I am doing this. When I have parents, teachers, and students approach afterwards and thank me for being open about my disabilities, and say that I have helped them feel less alone, helped them understand their children or students better. The reactions from my audiences, and hearing personal stories of struggles and difficulties, keeps me pursuing this angst-riddling job of being a motivational speaker.

I had the pleasure to present at the second annual Educators Institute this year in Mississauga ON. My presentation, Living with ADHD and Learning Disabilities: Turning Perceived Disadvantages into Advantages, consists of an overview of some of the struggles I faced while growing up with ADHD, learning disabilities (LDs), Generalized Anxiety Disorder (G.A.D), and mental health issues; strategies that have

helped me work with my disabilities; and strategies that educators can implement in their classroom.

This was my first time attending the Educators Institute and it was a fantastic experience. It is an overwhelmingly positive feeling to be surrounded by like-minded people, who are all there to better understand different aspects of LDs, as well as pragmatic strategies to use in our respective fields. One aspect that I really enjoyed was that some of the speakers spoke of the science behind LDs, touching on psychology and what happens within the brain. I find this fascinating as well as helpful in better understanding some of my students' behaviors.

The breakout sessions were informative and a great resource to help work with some of my students. I have a unique perspective at these conferences as a person who has multiple disabilities and works with students with LDs. Not only do I get the chance to learn more about the students I work with, but I also learn a lot about myself.

A break out session that I found useful was Dr. Todd Cunningham's presentation about students' learning profiles. His presentation explored the complexity of different areas that students with LDs may struggle in. To me these areas are the "behind the scenes" skills that not every one notices such as word decoding, phonological processing, processing speed, and so on. This presentation reminded me of the iceberg example: there is a lot more under the surface than we realize. Overall it was a wonderful conference and I very much look forward to returning next year.

During my presentations I am very open about my struggles in life, specifically with depression and suicide attempts and ideation. Being so open about my struggles creates common ground between me and the audience who may experience similar difficulties. They often ask questions stemming from their own life struggles or even that of their children. I find this openness in a large group to be quite beautiful, because within a 45-minute presentation everyone is willing

to speak in front of each other about their personal stories. One of the stories I was told at this year's Educators Institute was by a gentleman telling me about his son's difficulty with ADHD, and his coach's inability to understand his impulsivity and inability to stay still. After our discussion he pulled up a picture on his phone of his son and said: "This is who you've helped today". I left that conversation inspired, motivated and quite teary.

These experiences don't just happen during my presentations. I have also experienced these situations when I am one-on-one with people. Once doing chores outside, a young girl and her grandmother came over and began to swing on the nearby swings. We started talking and the young girl was enthusiastic about talking with me. Working outside in the summer heat I decided to opt out of wearing a shirt; the young girl promptly asked "How many abs do you have?" Much to her chagrin, (she made my day however!), the grandmother said to me "Sorry she doesn't have a filter", I quickly replied "Oh no worries, I have ADHD so I don't have a filter either". The young girl quickly exclaimed "I have autism!" We then delved into a lovely conversation about strategies, struggles, and how it feels to have a disability. After this encounter the grandmother said "Thank you, it's great to be with people who get it!" Whether it be during a presentation, or on a one-on-one encounter, it is clear how impactful it can be to others to share your story.

*"Being so open about my struggles creates common ground between me and the audience who may experience similar difficulties. They often ask questions stemming from their own life struggles or even that of their children."*

I've found when I disclose my story a commonality is created. It is that feeling of commonality that makes some people feel comfortable enough to open up and discuss some of their life struggles. What I find most interesting about this, is that there appears to be an eagerness for people to disclose their experiences. They seem to be looking for someone they can finally relate to. This screams to me about how important it is for people to share their story, talk openly about their disabilities, and shows how impactful and powerful the power of speech can be.

An aspect of my speech talks about the stigma surrounding disabilities, specifically invisible disabilities like ADHD or depression. I think what increases the stigma around invisible disabilities is the lack of people telling their stories. I've had people disclose their ADHD, and tell me that their parents and I are the only ones who know about their diagnosis. I understand not everyone is comfortable

with disclosing their story, and that's completely fine. However the shame that is surrounded by having these disabilities is unfortunate. I'm blown away when someone tells me that I've helped them feel better about their diagnosis, and that it's nice to know that they are not alone. This speaks volumes about the power of speech, and how important it is for others to hear these stories. When I refer to people sharing their stories, I do not mean that they have to go in depth about their journey. As you read earlier it can be as easy as saying "I have ADHD" and that simple statement can change someone's life, and open up a beautiful discussion between you and another person who may have similar issues.

People often ask me why I decided to become a motivational speaker if it causes me so much anxiety, and how am I able to be so open about very personal details in my struggle with disabilities. I do not think I chose to become a motivational speaker:

I saw a substantial gap in supporting students with disabilities. I began speaking on a panel as a graduate student of a transition camp to help students with disabilities transition to post-secondary. It was there that I could see myself reflected in these students who seemed to be searching for others like them. It was at this point that I realized the importance of letting students with disabilities know that they were not alone in the world, and that support exists for them. For me that realization beats my anxiety every time. The reason I am able to share such personal details of my story, is because when I am able to see myself reflected in someone, like the father who showed me his son's phone picture, I am reminded what I felt like at that time. What I needed as a child was to hear someone share their story about their struggles and to know that there is hope. I'm glad I now have the opportunity to do this for others. 



## SAVE THE DATE!



LD@school's 2nd Annual Educators' Institute was an overwhelming success!

With over 400 English and French participants, the Institute **was sold out**.

The 2016 bilingual Educators' Institute will take place on **August 23rd and 24th** at the Hilton Mississauga/Meadowvale in Mississauga, Ontario.

***Save the date and watch for more information, coming soon!***

# Scenes From the Educators Institute: A Portfolio



*Quiet time for Exhibitors to the Educator's Institute - Delegates are currently in session but soon 380 delegates will converge to see the latest in publications, software programs, and other information provided in both English and French.*



*Dr. Judith Wiener, of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), addressing delegates in a session she titles: *Fostering the 4th R: Relationships of Children with Learning Disabilities and ADHD*. She works in the Department of Applied Psychology and Human Development and has been in the research field for many years.*



*Dr. Todd Cunningham, of OISE, addresses delegates in a session entitled "Developing Learning Profiles for Students with Learning Disabilities in your Classroom". Dr. Cunningham is a Psychologist and Lecturer at OISE, working out of the Department of Applied Psychology and Human Development.*



*Opening Morning Keynote Speaker Dr. Daniel Ansari, Professor & Canada Research Chair in Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience, Department of Psychology, Western University, London, ON. His Keynote session provided an overview of what has been learned through both behavioural and brain-imaging research about how children develop numeracy and mathematical skills.*

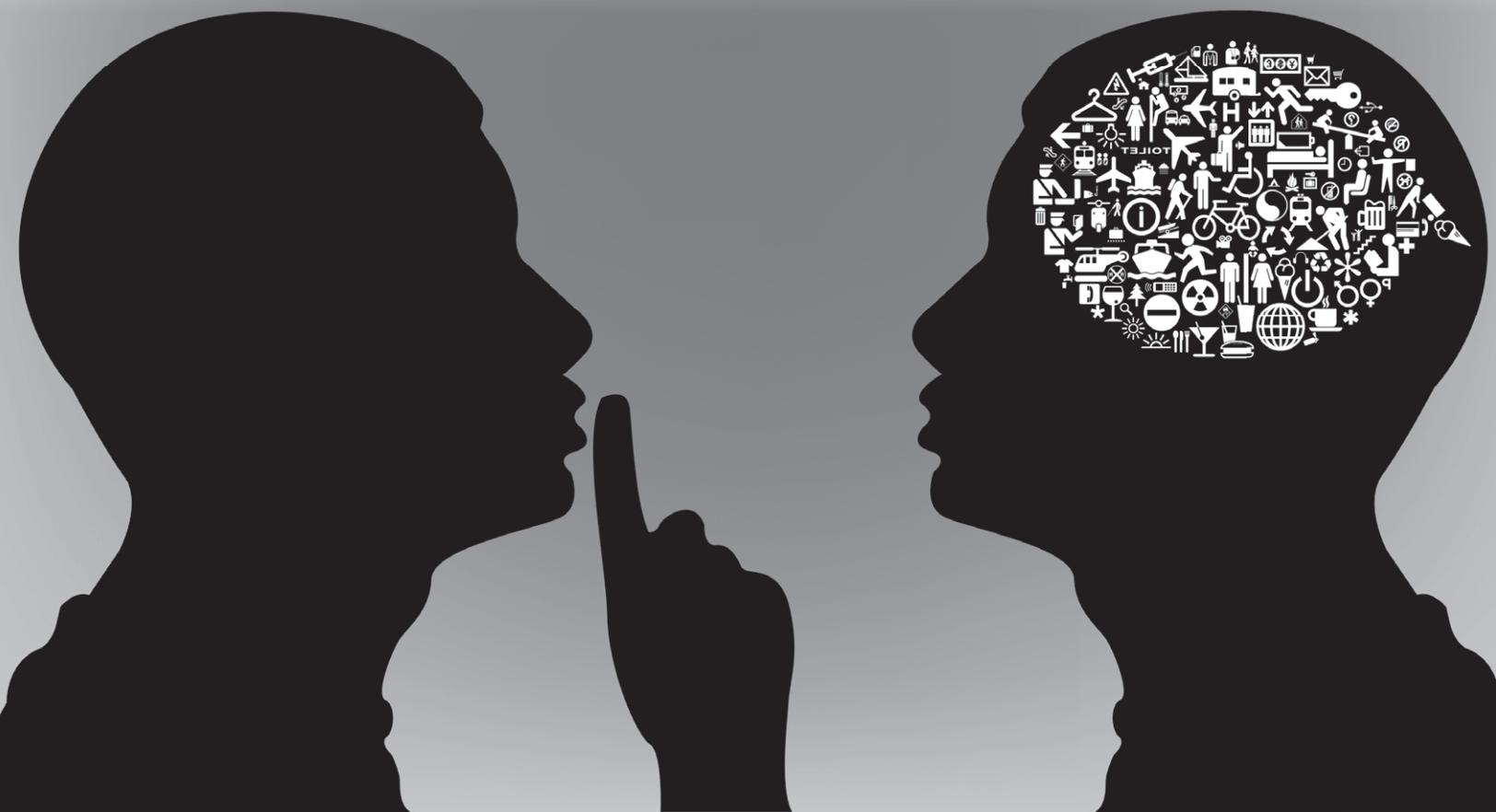


*On Day 2, the morning Keynote Speaker, Dr. Jamie Metsala, Professor and Gail & Stephen Jarislowsky Research Chair in Learning Disabilities at Mount Saint Vincent University in Halifax, NS spoke to delegates about how an over-emphasis on individual differences and assessment do not line up with current research-based understandings in the field of reading disabilities, and have too little payoff for students with reading disabilities.*

# An Open Mind

*During the past decade interest in Mindfulness has escalated dramatically. Now people with various disabilities are starting to feel the benefits as well.*

*By Carter Hammett*



There's a lovely moment that occurs in Mindfulness classes around the world and it goes something like this: Participants are asked to accept a raisin offered by the facilitator and hold it in their mouth, tasting, feeling, listening.

That's about it, really.

But it's so much more: first, attention is brought to the raisin, noticing it as if for the first time. Participants are encouraged to

feel the texture of the fruit between fingers, observing its colours and surfaces along the way. Thoughts and feelings and reactions in general are noted before participants are asked to smell, and then finally eat, the object. You are asked to chew the raisin slowly, again noticing how it feels, how it tastes, and what the impulse to swallow feels like.

It's an interesting exercise in that many people who experience it feel as if they've tasted the raisin for the first time. Some remark that if people ate their food like that all the time, we'd almost certainly eat less.

When you are paying attention in this manner, your relationship to things changes: you see more and see more deeply. You literally wake up to the process and become more aware of the impulses your body is trying to communicate to you.

And this, really, is the essence of mindfulness, so wonderfully captured by the man generally credited as popularizing it in the west, Jon Kabat Zinn, and his book, *Full Catastrophe Living*, which was among the first to introduce Mindfulness to the outside world.

For the uninitiated, Mindfulness has been making a lot of headway during the past decade and can be defined as the intentional, accepting and non-judgmental focus of one's attention on the emotions, thoughts and sensations occurring in the present moment, which can be trained by meditational practices that derived from Buddhist traditions.

The success of Mindfulness has been documented and its benefits are many, including the reduction of both rumination and worry, which in turn contribute to conditions like anxiety and depression. It's also gained wide-spread popularity as a tool for managing difficult emotions and conditions like ADHD.

At the heart of Mindfulness are two principles: focusing on the present moment and having a non-judgmental attitude of openness, curiosity and acceptance.

Indeed, it's a major thrust of several Mindfulness based spin off programs, including Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) says Jane Bowman, a Toronto-based occupational therapist with St. Joseph's Health Centre, who's been practicing MBCT for the last five years.

"MBCT may seem contradictory but Mindfulness is usually about acknowledging our thoughts and allowing them to pass. It's about awareness and acceptance in the present moment," she says.

"The cognitive piece fits into a couple of places, including, among other things, recognizing that thoughts are not facts. It's also about working with different thoughts and we're purposely of in the moment. We then practice introducing a different thought and holding that in awareness and accepting it."

Bowman notes that it's also important to realize that all-or-nothing thinking is consistent in people with depression.

This also has an impact on people living with ADHD since many experience co-existing depression and anxiety alongside their ADHD, Mindfulness has proven to be a powerful tool says Bowman, who has worked on this issue with several of her clients.

"With ADHD a big part is trouble sustaining attention as it relates to mindfulness," she says. "Another goal of Mindfulness is cognitive flexibility and inhibiting unhelpful thinking, so we

start with a shorter practice of perhaps two-to-five minutes at a time and then gradually build up to a period of sustained attention."

Some of the benefits of Mindfulness for people with ADHD include being able to reach a state where the mind can pause and focus on one thing at a time.

"It's about slowing down having enough energy and realizing that that energy just has to be harnessed," she says.

MBCT has also benefitted people with dyslexia says Bowman. "It helps them stop, pause and think before answering questions," she says.

Executive functions are yet another area where Mindfulness can have a positive impact.

"Those are definitely skills I work on individually with people," says Bowman. "It's about making time to plan and I find many people either don't make a plan or

*Continued on next page. ➤*



*“When you’re in a state of health our core beliefs are in balance (‘I am competent and incompetent’) but when we’re depressed we look for evidence to support a negative belief about ourselves.”*

take time to review the plan. I always say, having no plan is planning to fail.”

Among the exercises that benefit people with LD and ADHD are gentle interventions like the Three Minute Breathing Space (see sidebar)

“This exercise grounds you in the moment and with practice, allows you to choose how you respond to a situation,” says Bowman. A reaction is a knee-jerk response, (“I can’t do it!”) but a response is slower and considers more of the grey areas (“Perhaps I could do that if I ask for an extension of time.”)

There is currently much research being conducted in the field of mindfulness and ADHD and perhaps the best-known is Lidia Zylowska’s MAPs for ADHD program at the University of California. Most programs have found a wide range of applications, including coping with pain, managing negative emotions and enhancing happiness. Self reports and other measurements demonstrated “that it is feasible to teach people with ADHD mindfulness. On the surface it looks like a contradiction, but if you look at it, if you look at the nature of self-regulation, it’s not,” Zylowska has stated.

Mindfulness programs are currently offered both in hospitals and in private practice, including The North York General Hospital, Toronto Western and St. Joseph’s Health Centre in Toronto and The Royal Ottawa Hospital in the nation’s capital. Some programs are covered by OHIP and tend to be cheaper when offered in hospitals. Other programs are offered to specific communities, like artists or for those living in chronic pain. Some programs

may require a doctor’s referral prior to admission. Be sure to research these variables accordingly. Also, be sure to inquire which offshoot of Mindfulness will work best for you? Do you want the benefits of yoga and meditation or do you prefer a more cognitive based approach? Make sure you invest some valuable research time before deciding which program to commit to.

“When you’re in a state of health our core beliefs are in balance (‘I am competent and incompetent’) but when we’re depressed we look for evidence to support a negative belief about ourselves.” Our thoughts become automatic conditioning and black and white. It becomes difficult to perceive the grayness of life anymore. Mindfulness can help change those perceptions,” says Bowman.

For local examples of the use of a mindfulness approach with students watch videos on the LD@School website ([www.LD@School.ca](http://www.LD@School.ca)) *Supporting the Mental Health and Well-Being of Students with LDs through Integra Mindfulness Martial Arts (Part I)*, *Mindfulness Teaching Practices: Implementing the Integra Mindfulness Martial Arts Program in the Trillium Lakelands District School Board (Part II)* and *A Mindfulness Practice to Support the Well-Being of Students with LDs – Feed All Four* 

## THE THREE MINUTE BREATHING SPACE EXERCISE

**Preparation** – Begin by deliberately adopting an erect and dignified posture, whether you are sitting or standing. If possible, close your eyes. Then take about 1 minute to guide yourself through each of the following steps:

### Step 1. Becoming Aware

Bringing your awareness to your inner experience, ask: What is my experience right now?

What thoughts are going through your mind? As best you can acknowledge thoughts as mental events, perhaps putting them into words.

What feelings are there?

What body sensations are here right now?

### Step 2 – Gathering

Now, redirect your attention to focus on the physical sensations of the breath. Move in close to the sense of the breath in the abdomen...feeling the sensations of the abdominal wall expanding as the breath comes in...and falling back as the breath goes out. Use breathing to anchor yourself in the present moment. If your mind wanders, gently escort it back to the breath.

### Step 3 – Expanding

Now, expand the field of your awareness around your breathing so that it includes a sense of the body as a whole, your posture and facial expression.

If you become aware of any sensations of discomfort, tension or resistance, take your awareness there by breathing into them on the inbreath. Then breathe out from those sensations, softening and opening with the outbreath.

As best you can, bring this expanded awareness to the next moments of your day.

*SOURCE: The Mindful Way Workbook by John Teasdale, Mark Williams and Zindel Segal*

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# Shelf Life

Books to enlighten and inspire and help you learn a little bit more about and embrace your LD/ADHD!

## THE MINDFUL WAY WORKBOOK: AN 8-WEEK PROGRAM TO FREE YOURSELF FROM DEPRESSION AND EMOTIONAL DISTRESS

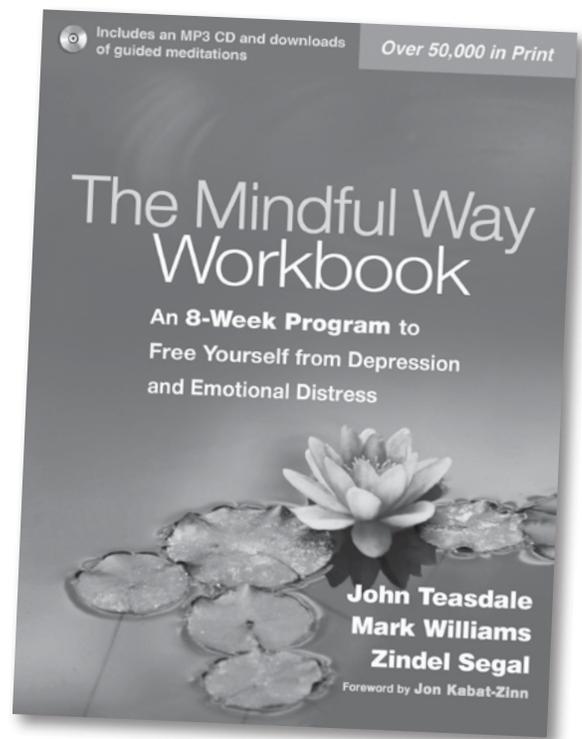
by John D. Teasdale PhD, J. Mark G. Williams DPhil,  
Zindel V. Segal PhD

Imagine an eight-week program that can help you overcome depression, anxiety, and stress--by simply learning new ways to respond to your own thoughts and feelings. That program is mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT), and it has been tested and proven effective in clinical trials throughout the world. Now you can get the benefits of MBCT any time, any place, by working through this carefully constructed book. The expert authors introduce specific mindfulness practices to try each week, plus reflection questions, tools for keeping track of progress, and helpful comments from others going through the program. Like a trusted map, this book guides you step by step along the path of change.

Guided meditations are provided on the accompanying MP3 CD and are also available as audio downloads. Note: The MP3 CD can be played on CD players (only those marked "MP3-enabled") as well as on most computers.

See also the authors' *The Mindful Way through Depression*, which demonstrates these proven strategies with in-depth stories and examples. Plus, mental health professionals, see also the authors' bestselling therapy guide: *Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for Depression*, Second Edition.

Winner (Second Place)--American Journal of Nursing Book of the Year Award, Consumer Health Category



## MINDFUL PARENTING FOR ADHD: A GUIDE TO CULTIVATING CALM, REDUCING STRESS, AND HELPING CHILDREN THRIVE

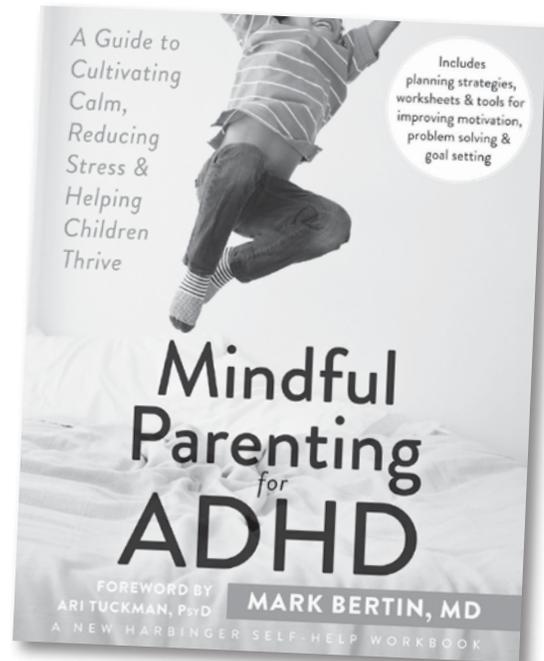
by Mark Bertin MD

Written by a pediatrician and based in proven-effective mindfulness techniques, this book will help you and your child with attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) keep calm, flexible, and in control.

If you are a parent of a child with attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), you probably face many unique daily challenges. Kids with ADHD are often inattentive, hyperactive, and impulsive, since ADHD affects all of self-management and self-regulation. As a result, you might become chronically frustrated or stressed out, which makes caring for ADHD that much harder. In this book, a developmental pediatrician presents a proven-effective program for helping both you and your child with ADHD stay cool and collected while remaining flexible, resilient, and mindful.

Bertin addresses the various symptoms of ADHD using non-technical language and a user-friendly format. In addition, he offers guidelines to help you assess your child's strengths and weaknesses, create plans for building skills and managing specific challenges, lower stress levels for both yourself and your child, communicate effectively, and cultivate balance and harmony at home and at school.

If you are a parent, caregiver, or mental health professional, this book provides a valuable guide.

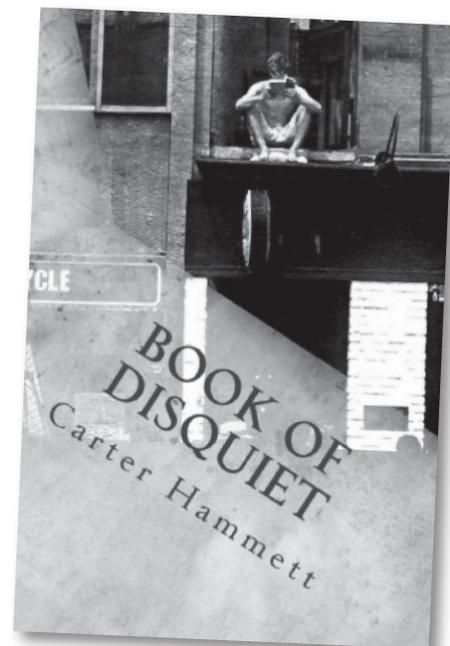


## BOOK OF DISQUIET

by Carter Hammett, Wordgarden Press (2015)

Book of Disquiet is a collection of essays regarding invisible disabilities. Hammett's essays on LD & ADHD are from over a 10 year span in his role as editor of LDAO's Communique as well as his contributions to Abilities Magazine. This creative volume of work is a depiction of the real struggles, anxiety and restlessness that many individuals face as well as the contentedness, power and possibilities that can accompany both the awareness and acceptance of Learning Disabilities/ADHD. A great read that provides insights and helps to make the invisible visible through his written word; perfect for educators, employers and students alike! To find out more, please visit the book's web site at: [www.bookofdisquietessays.weebly.com](http://www.bookofdisquietessays.weebly.com) or order directly from Amazon.ca

- Shannon Sheppard



# In Person

## NADER KHAN

by Carter Hammett

### Watermark

Nasheed singer returns with new record of devotional music after seven-year absence.

It's hard to believe that seven whole years have passed since nasheed singer Nader Khan's debut album *Take My Hand* was first released. A gorgeous recording of largely Islamic devotional music, *Take My Hand* led the Mississauga resident on tours of North America, South-east Asia, Australia and the UK and was greeted with ecstatic critical acclaim.

The name of the new CD is called *Water* and it's been worth the wait. A worthy follow-up that demonstrates the depth and versatility of its creator, *Water* builds on the strength of its predecessor while offering bare bones arrangements which lets Khan's powerful vocals take centre stage.

"Every religion sees water as a source of purification before entering the divine presence," says Khan. "The Koran says all life sprang from water."

Like its predecessor, *Water* offers a diversity of sounds and lyrics sung in English, Turkish, Arabic and other languages. Ancient scriptures mingle with modern hiphop beats, making it both a record tapped into current trends, but also a sonic experience that praises the sacred. "Echoes" is a love song written to the prophet Mohammed, and was written while attending a conference at University of Toronto.

"The transformational force is love for the prophet and being inspired by his love for you," says Khan, who was so moved by two speakers at the conference he hastily wrote lyrics inspired by both speakers.

If another song, "Presence" sounds familiar, it's because it is. "The song is a rewrite of Leonard Cohen's "Hallelujah" with new lyrics wanting divine presence. Another piece, "Take My Hand 2" is a sequel of sorts to the popular title track from the first record, this time told from the point of view of the friend being addressed in the first song.

The record reflects who I am as a Canadian Muslim," he says. "Toronto is home to the world and the music reflects the Canadian identity. The music needs to be authentic, otherwise it's hokey. If it doesn't move me, it probably won't move others."

The record is a far cry from his life a world away back in 2007 when he was near broke and living out of his car in the United Arab Emirates. An exceptionally rough spot in his life that included the deterioration of his first marriage, Khan got a gym membership where he showered and shaved before going to work. He was essentially working full time yet homeless. After this four-year stint in the UAE, he managed to make his way to Canada and slowly start rebuilding his life. Many of the songs on his first record reflect this period. It was also around this time he received his ADHD diagnosis.

"If it wasn't for the ADHD, I wouldn't be as fed creatively," he says. "Creativity in art is about pointing out the subtle realities that escape others



perceptions. Having ADHD was actually an advantage when it came time to flushing out the concepts for the music."

His wife, Dr. Bano Murtuja, has stepped up to the plate and essentially manages his career now. "My wife married me in spite of who I am. She's the one who makes things happen," he says.

Already at work on his next recording, which he says will focus on hunger, Khan's previous hardships haven't been forgotten. Indeed, his religious devotions have been the engine towards serving humanity and bridging gaps. (All of *Water's* proceeds are being donated to Water Aid Canada)

"The point is to transcend the lines of politics and religion and share spiritual experiences in a Canadian context. That can certainly transcend racial lines."

For more information about *Water*, visit [www.naderkhan.com](http://www.naderkhan.com)



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## LDAO's new bilingual web resource for Ontario educators!

Practical and evidence-based strategies to help educators work with students with LDs.

### What you will find on the LD@school website:

- General articles about LDs;
- Research-based and practice-informed strategies that can be used in the classroom;
- Videos;
- Webinars;
- Success stories;
- New resources being added all the time!



For information about TA@l'école resources available in French, please visit [www.TAaLecole.ca](http://www.TAaLecole.ca).

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