



# **Idak • Learning Disabilities Association of Kingston**

*The right to learn, the power to achieve*

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Winter 2017 Newsletter

## **“SAVE THE DATE” LDA Kingston Upcoming Event**

### ***Speak Up for Ability***

#### **Parents’ Forum**

**Hosted by: Learning Disabilities Association of Kingston with the Parents Involvement Committee of the Limestone District School Board**

**Funded by Government of Ontario Parents Reaching Out Program**

**April 29th, 2017**

**9:00 am – 3:00 pm**

**817 Division Street**



The forum will bring together up to 100 parents, teachers and community service providers to learn and collaborate with one another to ensure the best learning opportunities for students with learning disabilities and ADHD.

It is expected that at the end of this forum, participants will be better equipped to navigate the educational system with a greater understanding of the roles and responsibilities of teachers, administrators, parents and community service providers. Participants will be more competent in advocating for the rights of students with disabilities and walk away with strategies for communicating and collaborating with all those involved in helping students reach their potential in school and in life.

Follow LDAK on Facebook and expect further email communication about the event in the coming weeks.

As always, do not hesitate to contact us for further information.

**PLEASE POST UNTIL April 3, 2017**

## What's Happening.....

### KINGSTON'S ADHD PARENT SUPPORT GROUP

Our group supports parents who have children with ADHD in the Kingston and surrounding area.  
We are a not-for-profit parent to parent support group.

**OUR MISSION:** *"To better the lives of children and Families living with ADHD"*

**Monthly** Support Meetings (Nov-June)     **Yearly** ADHD Awareness Campaign (June)  
adhdpsgkingstonon@gmail.com 613-389-3894   www.adhdsupportgroup.ca 255 Kingscourt Ave.

### Spotlight Learning

For students with learning and attention issues, their success is increasingly dependent on what are known as **executive function processes**. (goal setting, organizing, time management, thinking flexibly, remembering, and self-checking) Explicit instruction in these skills can help your student do more than just improve academically; they will increase their academic self-confidence as well as their effort and motivation to succeed in school. Increased self-understanding and use of executive function strategies are critical for a student's success in school and beyond.



One-on-one and small group classes are offered by Spotlight Learning. Visit their website at [www.spotlightlearning.ca](http://www.spotlightlearning.ca) or contact Lynn at 613-539-0661, [lynn@spotlightlearning.ca](mailto:lynn@spotlightlearning.ca)

### Quintilian Social Club

An opportunity to meet new friends and practice social skills in authentic social situations.  
Grades 3+ **Contact Laura DeSousa, Director of Programming 613-542-0400**



### The Reading Clinic

UNLOCKING POTENTIAL, CHANGING FUTURES SINCE 2001

[www.thereadingclinic.ca](http://www.thereadingclinic.ca)

Specialists in Dyslexia and Learning Disabilities

Yes! Reading, Writing, and Math Programs

Daily Intensive Instruction Available

Twice Weekly After School Sessions Available

2 locations: 559 Bagot St 1287 Woodbine Rd

Contact: Jan MacLean 613 547-5179     [jan@thereadingclinic.ca](mailto:jan@thereadingclinic.ca)



# Know Your Learning Style

**Learning styles can help you manage information, identify preferences as well as the learning styles of others. Herewith our primer on a vital piece of self-knowledge.**

Are you an adult learner returning to school? Are you worried about taking notes, completing assignments and obtaining good grades? Or are you a job seeker learning new ways of finding employment?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, then a solution might be to understand your learning style.

Knowing how you learn is important because it deals with how you manage information, how you prefer to study and how you solve problems.

Everyone learns differently. Some students learn using one dominant style and others learn with a combination of styles. Your preference might be very similar to your best friend or it could also be distinctive and atypical. Researchers have developed many learning style assessments to categorize styles and several are available at no cost online. For example, there is Service Canada’s “How Do I Learn Best?” assessment at : [www.jobsetc.gc.ca](http://www.jobsetc.gc.ca) under the “Training & Learning” section.

Discovering if you are a visual learner, auditory learner or hands-on learner can help immensely if you are an adult returning to school. Adult learners are often balancing busy personal and professional lives. Therefore, finding ways to manage limited time might eventually be the difference between a passing and failing grade.

Squeezing in study time at midnight using the same traditional method you applied when you were 16 years old might not be the answer to achieve today’s goal. Instead, you might want to establish how you learn and how you hear information, so you can accomplish the most from your college or university courses.

Learning styles are significant not only in educational settings but also in informal learning settings including understanding how to conduct a job search. Learning styles can be unique as finger prints and everyone is slightly different yet if you know your style, and how you prefer to learn you can organize your information in a way that is comfortable for you especially if you like to learn in a linear step-by-step approach.

If you are a person who likes to think outside-of-the-box, your mind might gather information in chunks with no particular sequence. Some people can learn without following a plan and instead rearrange the order of the sequence while still arriving at the correct answer.

Everyone learns differently and it is crucial to note that no single learning style is better than the other. Each is just a different blend of abilities and strengths. Research concludes that everyone has at least one dominant learning style even though we might often use more than one.

For example, sometimes you might like to learn using an organized routine. At other times you might like to learn in a more adventurous and original way preferring to focus only on what is absolutely needed. However, in times of stress, such as preparing for an important closed-book exam or job interview, your dominant style usually takes over.

Returning to school or looking for a job can be incredibly stressful. Thus, understanding your learning style can dramatically change your anxiety level and help maintain balance between all the responsibilities in your life.

# Know Your Learning Style

How you learn also connects to the best time of day to absorb concepts or complete projects. For example, some adult learners are not able to function at full-speed first thing in the morning, while others may struggle in the evening. Awareness of your peak training times will enable you to complete your goals more successfully and might ultimately improve your projects or assignments so you can receive higher grades.

Another benefit of knowing your learning style is that it can be a transferable awareness you can use in school, volunteering, networking, or in the workplace. For example, if you have not been to school in a long time, you might be surprised by the number of assignments that are done in groups instead of individually.

Just like in the workplace, teamwork is a common trend so by knowing the value of learning styles you can become aware of the learning preferences of your colleagues and then find appropriate ways of working efficiently and effectively with them in order to accomplish your goals.

Whether you are looking online by yourself, or in a traditional classroom setting, identifying your learning style can be an excellent bonus to add to your self-assessment. As an adult, learning should be fun so finding the right vehicle can be one of the keys to success.

## **Additional Tips for Successful Learning Include:**

- Designate a study area in your home
- Create a daily study routine
- Participate in class discussions and learn from your peers
- Let your teacher know when you need assistance
- Choose an accredited school
- Choose a course of study, degree or diploma that meets your goals
- Set realistic targets
- Block out distractions
- Plan weekly recreational and relaxation time
- Don't underestimate or overestimate yourself
- Take your learning seriously
- Use the knowledge of understanding learning styles to work smarter, not harder

LDAO Communique– Lisa Trudel

## **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 at: [www.ldatschool.ca](http://www.ldatschool.ca)

- 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 resources available in French, please visit: [www.TAaLecole.ca](http://www.TAaLecole.ca)

# Selections from the Mental Health App Library

It never ceases to amaze me what you can find while trolling the Net. While researching apps we came across an entire mental health app library housed at The Scarborough Hospital (TSH) which is the only Canadian hospital to offer a Mental Health App Library.

TSH physicians and therapists have assessed each of these apps for quality, and curated them with Mental Health Adult Outpatient programming in mind. These apps are meant to complement prescribed treatment plans, and are not intended to replace any professional treatment.

## **Anxiety: Stop Panic & Anxiety Self-Help**

This app assists you in managing symptoms of panic, and developing skills to challenge fearful thinking.

**Apple:** <https://itunes.apple.com/ca/app/self-help-for-anxiety-management/id666767947?mt=8>

**Android:** <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.uwe.myoxygen&hl=en>

## **Mindshift**

This app helps you to identify thoughts that play a role in anxiety, and to develop more constructive ways of thinking. It also recommends active steps you can take to better cope with your anxiety.

**Apple:** <https://itunes.apple.com/ca/app/mindshift/id634684825?mt=8>

## **Relaxation**

**HeadSpace** - This app reviews meditation and mindfulness exercises that help reduce feelings of stress.

**Android** - <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.getsomeheadspace.android&hl=en>

## **Take a Break! Guided Meditations for Stress Relief**

This app provides guided meditations that help reduce feelings of stress.

**Apple:** <https://itunes.apple.com/ca/app/take-break!-guided-meditations/id453857236?mt=8>

## **Depression**

**Android**

### **MoodTools – Depression Aid**

This app uses the concept of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy to help you identify and challenge negative/distorted thinking patterns. It also suggests helpful behaviours to help you reduce the intensity of your distressing emotions.

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.moodtools.moodtools&hl=en>

## **What's Up**

This app highlights the connection between irrational thinking and depressive symptoms. It describes methods to overcome such thoughts, and assists you with setting goals and practices to reduce your feelings of distress.

<https://itunes.apple.com/en/app/whats-up/id968251160?mt=8>

## **Depressioncheck**

This app helps you assess your level of depression, and generates a report to explain your symptoms. It can be used to monitor your recovery while undergoing treatment.

<https://itunes.apple.com/ca/app/depressioncheck/id398170644?mt=8>

### **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) PTSD Coach Canada**

This app provides information about PTSD, helps you track symptoms, and suggests easy-to-use tools that can help you handle stress symptoms.

**Android:** <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=ca.gc.veterans.ptsd.ptsdcoach&hl=en>

**Apple:** <https://itunes.apple.com/ca/app/ptsd-coach-canada/id616851357?mt=8>

Be sure to visit the library to check out some of the other apps addressing sleep and other concerns for people with mental health issues. Check them out at : [www.tsh.to/areas-of-care/mental-health/mental-health-app-library/](http://www.tsh.to/areas-of-care/mental-health/mental-health-app-library/)

LDAO Communique Fall 2016

# The Abilities Connect Fund

## **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 Lesly Cole at 416-482-5222 ext. 2390.  
LDAO Communiqué...Spring 2016

## **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/behaviour 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 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 remains 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> LDAO Communiqué

## Shelf Life

**The following are books to enlighten and inspire and help you learn a little bit more about and embrace your LD/ADHD!**

### **STUPID:**

He sees the world in clear, sharp focus through his camera lens. A maze of shadows and objects turn black, then ominous. Other shapes loom large as he moves the lens into focus, or disappear from view as he shifts the angle of his camera.

Martin lives and excels in the creative vision of his mind's eye and through his camera lens. Brought together, he creates a world of moving stills, cut away shots and angles to tell the story of energy and movement.

Diagnosed with ADHD in grade eight, Martin refuses to accept it. It doesn't make sense to him. But he struggles at school where he can't read and he's failing every course. Everyone calls Martin stupid. His father calls him lazy and stupid, a real slacker wasting his life taking pictures and shooting videos instead of studying.

A chance meeting with Stick among the ruins of an old brewery changes the course of Martin's life.

Martin is there filming a crumbling building surrounded with scraps of life's broken bits — wooden barrels, bottles, old tires. Stick uses the roof, walls, pipes and alleys as his obstacle course for parkour to move swiftly from one place to another.

Martin offers to film Stick and his group of friends doing their jumps and twists, mid-air somersaults to enter a video contest. He's sure he'll win and be able to show his father that he is very good at something — movie-making.

The ending of the novel moves too quickly through Martin's discovery that he has dyslexia. However, the parallel between dyslexia and parkour described through the discipline and training required to work with 'dyslexia-controlling techniques' to achieve good grades, and the physical training and discipline necessary to excel in parkour is compelling. That Martin is able to achieve 80% grades in the space of three weeks is incredible.

The happy ending is a bit too treacly. Still, the story flows at an energetic pace with enough tension through plot turns and twists to keep readers engaged.

LDAO Communique by Kim Firmston - James Lorimer & Company Ltd., Publishers 2014

### **How I Learn: A Kid's Guide to Learning Disability**

Brenda Miles, neuropsychologist, and Colleen Patterson, psychologist, have written a simple-to-understand book for younger children, called *How I Learn: A Kid's Guide to Learning Disability*, using colourful illustrations by Jane Heinrichs. A young boy with reading difficulties talks about learning 'in a different way' but also about all the things that he is good at. He tells about a couple of his friends who have other difficulties, one in math and one in writing, and explains that there are different kinds of LD's. His main positive message, repeated many times, is one of acceptance: "and that's OK." He gives examples of "smart things to help us learn" and ends with "When we do smart things to help us learn, we feel like we can do ANYTHING! And that's better than OK. That's GREAT!"

The authors include a Note to parents, Caregivers and Professionals, with guidelines for using the book, and 'Smart Strategies' to try.

LDAO Communique: By Brenda Miles and Colleen Patterson-  
Magination Press

## **L. D. A. K. EXECUTIVE**

**2016 - 2017**

President	Lynn Sadlowski
Past President	Gail Eaton-Smith
Vice President	
Treasurer	Pat Dudley
Secretary	Djenana Jalovcic
Members at Large	Amanda Chapman Shauna Dick Patricia Rots Pam Serff

## **RESOURCE CENTRE HOURS**

**Tuesday-Wednesday-Thursday**

**11 am—3 pm**

**(or by appointment)  
Saturday & Sunday Closed**

**Resource Centre Co-ordinator  
Lana Greenwood**

### ***Disclaimer***

*THE LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION does not endorse or recommend any of the facilities listed or any of the methods, programmes, products or treatments offered by such facilities.*

*Our aim is to keep the community informed about services and facilities that are available to people with learning disabilities.*

*We urge consumers and service providers to review carefully any programmes and services listed in order to select those which will meet most appropriately the identified needs of the person with learning disabilities.*

## **Membership Application**

We encourage all individuals interested in learning disabilities to become a member of the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO), and by doing so automatically become a member of Kingston chapter (LDAK). Visit the LDAO website for further information and benefits of memberships, and a secure online application form.

See <http://www.ldao.ca/about/membership/>

If you wish to use cash or cheque, print out the online form and submit to us directly at our new address (below) and we will submit your application to LDAO.

Learning Disabilities Association Kingston  
817 Division St. Unit 108  
Kingston, ON K7K 4C2

Be sure to check out our website at  
**[www.ldakingston.com](http://www.ldakingston.com)** and find us on  
**Facebook** for current news!

**Like us on Facebook!**

## **Interesting Websites....**

### **Digital and Media Literacy**

MediaSmarts provides current information for parents and teachers about digital and media literacy issues.

(e.g., What to do if someone is mean to you online, Media Literacy 101, Excessive Internet Use, Parenting the Digital Generation)

***<http://mediasmarts.ca/digital-media-literacy>***

### **Smart Kids with LD**

Smart Kids with Learning Disabilities is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing useful, authoritative information from experts, practical advice and support from parents, and inspiration from successful adults living with LD and ADHD.

***[www.smartkidswithld.org](http://www.smartkidswithld.org)***