



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

*The right to learn, the power to achieve*

817 Division St. Unit 108 (Phone) 613-546-8524

Website: [www.ldakingston.com](http://www.ldakingston.com) E-mail: [ldak@ldakingston.com](mailto:ldak@ldakingston.com)

## **Fall 2016 Newsletter**

**LDA Kingston has moved to a new location!**

**Our new home is located at 817 Division St. (FACSFLA) Kingston, Ontario**

### **Upcoming LDAK Fall Workshops**

Time: 6:30 - 8pm Location: 817 Division St. (FACSFLA)

Limited Seating. The sessions are free but pre-registration is required by calling or emailing:  
[ldak@ldakingston.com](mailto:ldak@ldakingston.com) 613-546-8524

#### **October 18th: Exploring Assistive Technology- What is it? How can it help my child?**

**Presenter:** Lisa Delaney, OT Reg. (Ont.) of Compass Occupational Therapy Solutions

Assistive technology is frequently recommended by psychologists, educators and occupational therapists to support students who would benefit from support in learning and need tools to demonstrate their learning. The goal of this session is to broaden a parent's understanding of the features of assistive technology and how it can support their child's learning and productivity.

#### **November 15th: ADHD and Mental Health: How To Support Your Child or Student**

**Presented by** Queen's Nursing Students in collaboration with LDA Kingston

The goal of this workshop is to increase your understanding of the relationship between Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and mental health in the adolescent and young adult population. You will work towards gaining confidence in your ability to provide support and practicing strategies for success within your role. Parents, educators, and other community members are encouraged to attend.

### **LDA Kingston Open House to celebrate our 35 Year Anniversary**

Please plan to join us at our Open House to celebrate our 35 Year Anniversary from **4:30-6:30 p.m.**,

**October 18th** at our new location – 817 Division Street. Light refreshments will be served, the building is fully accessible and parking is free. If you are unable to attend, but would like to find out more about us, or help us make a difference through offering your time, your talent or by making a monetary donation, you can reach us at the addresses and/or web site listed below. LDAK receives no government funding to maintain its resource library or provide outreach; we rely solely on donations, corporate sponsorship and contributions generated through fundraising efforts. For further information, or to make a donation, please contact: Lynn Sadlowski, President LDAK 817 Division Street, Unit #108 Kingston, ON K7K 4C2 613-546-8524 (office) 613-539-0661 (cell) [lynns.ldak@gmail.com](mailto:lynns.ldak@gmail.com) [www.ldakingston.com](http://www.ldakingston.com)

## What's Happening.....

### Mark your Calendars!

**Peg Dawson**, the author of “**Smart but Scattered**” <http://www.smartbutscatteredkids.com/> will be presenting to parents on Wednesday, November 9<sup>th</sup> and to teachers and professionals on Thursday, Nov. 10<sup>th</sup>.

Please contact Lynn at Spotlight Learning for registration details.  
613-539-0661, [lynn@spotlightlearning.ca](mailto:lynn@spotlightlearning.ca)

### 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](mailto:adhdpsgkingstonon@gmail.com) 613-389-3894    [www.adhdsupportgroup.ca](http://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)



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

Learning Disabilities 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 friendship, 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 behavior 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 groups 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

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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 words. 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 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 personnel including the current classroom teachers, special education teachers and the principal or vice-principal. Other professional 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

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

review the IEP or to have an IPRC meeting. 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 strategies 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 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 as 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 professional. 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 realize 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/)

LDAO Communique - Hadley S. Koltun, Ph.D., C. Psych, Psychologist, JVS Toronto

## WEB HEAD: Apps for Kids with Reading Disabilities

It seems like every day someone's got a new app for something. Need to find your parked car? 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 Dreamer 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 "Parents Pad." Designed for preschoolers, the app is cool enough to appeal to young grade-schoolers, too. Cost: First chapter free, \$25.00 for all six

### **Dyslexia Tool Box**

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

LDAO Communique

# October is Learning Disabilities Month

## **“Don’t Dis My Ability” Making the Invisible Visible!**

Throughout October the Learning Disabilities Associations of Ontario will be marking LD Awareness month. “People too often define the life of someone living with Learning Disabilities by the areas where they need support such as math, reading, writing or organizational skills. Too often other negative labels follow, Dumb, Lazy or Disruptive. Nothing could be further from the truth” said Lawrence Barns, President and CEO of LDAO. “The goal of this campaign is for people to see the areas of strength and abilities which often get overlooked.”

### **The Stats:**

**1 in 10 people in Ontario are impacted**

**35% of students with LDs drop out of school**

**62% of students with LDs will be unemployed a year after graduation**

**36% of youth in correctional facilities have specific learning disabilities**

**Almost 50% of adolescent suicides have a diagnosis of an LD (Source LDAC Pacfold survey)**

**Together we can change this!**

## **Hospital for Sick Children Research**

Families needed for **SickKids** research study on the genetics of reading disabilities.

### **Who can apply?**

Children aged 6 to 16 who struggle with reading, and their parents

### **What's involved?**

1. Eligibility screening
2. Eligible families come to SickKids for one full day of study participation, involving the following:
  - \* Psycho-educational assessment for the child
  - \* Parent interviews and questionnaires
  - \* Blood sample from child and parents
3. Following participation, families will receive a detailed report describing the results of their child's psycho-educational assessment, which may be helpful with educational planning

### **How do I apply?**

Contact Kirsten Blokland, PhD:

416-813-8207 or [kirsten.blokland@sickkids.ca](mailto:kirsten.blokland@sickkids.ca)

This study is funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research.

Study recruiting participants until March 2019, and possibly beyond.

## **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 Serf

## **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**

LDAO has a new online membership application, with a secure payment option, that you can use if you like.

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

If you want to use cash, or cheque, you should fill out the online form and print it out and give that directly to us, and we will submit your membership application for you to LDAO.

LDAK new mailing address:  
817 Division St. 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....**

**Isaac Asimov**  
***“What is Intelligence Anyway?”***

<http://talentdevelop.com/articles/WIIA.html>  
from “It’s Been a Good Life” autobiography

### ***Through your Child’s Eyes***

Simulations related to learning and attention issues  
<http://www.understood.org/en/tools/through-your-childs-eyes>

Visit the **LDAO** provincial association website for a wealth of links to websites and online resources about LD and related issues.

<http://www.ldao.ca/websites-and-online-resources/>