



Idawc • Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County

The right to learn, the power to achieve

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Happy New Year!

From the staff and Board of Directors at LDAWC, we wish you and yours a very happy New Year. We hope that all your hopes, dreams and resolutions come true and that 2018 is a truly memorable year! We at LDAWC are looking forward to a number of things this winter and spring, especially the upcoming offering of Reading Rocks. This reading program designed for struggling readers and those with learning disabilities brings students together with a volunteer tutor where they work one-on-one on three areas of literacy: sight words, fluency and phonics. We're excited to be offering the program to approximately 20

students in 2 locations in Guelph and to 10 students in Arthur. These numbers will be dependent on volunteer recruitment, however. We are still in need of 10 volunteers for the Guelph locations. If you or anyone you know might want to participate in this opportunity, please let us know!

We also have some interesting workshops coming up for both parents and adults. We're planning a couple of transition planning workshops for February and April (transitioning to post-secondary and transitioning to high school). We also have a workshop for adults and professionals on accommodations and relationships in the workplace – for those with LDs and ADHD. We'll round out our workshops with LDs and Mental Health (anxiety and depression) in May.

If you have any questions or comments, we always want to hear from you and are just a phone call or an email away. Reach us at (519) 837-2050 or info@ldawc.ca.

Are you an Adult and Suspect You May have ADHD?



Totallyadd.com has a number of online resources, such as an ADD screener (Self-report), the DSM-5 ADHD Diagnostic Criteria, and cheat sheets to the ADD & Mastering It video. Find all of these at this link: <https://totallyadd.com/download/>

For instance, the ADD & Mastering cheat sheet provides 36 strategies to help adults with ADHD cope. For example:

Tip #1 – Accept It! – Once you’ve obtained a diagnosis, try it on, be cool with it! It’s been there all along, now you know. Now you can actually master it.

Tip #12 – Don’t Apologize – You are not your symptoms. You have a different mindset. It creates challenges. Which you are learning to master. Simple as that.

Tip #16 – Simplify – Reduce your stuff. Simplify. Don’t cram your schedule with stuff you never do. Get real.

Tip #33 – Get Real About Time – Note how long tasks actually take. Leave early to allow for unexpected delays. Being on time feels good.

For all tips, go here: <https://totallyadd.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/ADD-and-MASTERING-IT-Cheat-Sheet.pdf>

Experts Weigh In: “What Should I Do When My Child Says ‘I’m Dumb’?”

By The Understood Team – all contributors hold either a Masters or PhD in their respective areas of expertise. For details, click on the article link at the end.



It may be one of the most painful things to hear your child say: “I’m dumb” or “I’m stupid.” Your immediate reaction might be “No you’re not!” But is that a helpful way to respond? How you react can have a positive impact on your child’s [self-esteem](#) and his motivation to keep working on his challenges.

Here, five experts weigh in on what to do if your child says he's dumb.

What's the most helpful way to react?

Mark Griffin: It's critical to acknowledge that your child feels like he's not measuring up. You don't want to just brush his concerns away or simply tell him that you think he's smart. He knows you'll say that because you're his parent and love him. It's your job! He needs to hear about his strengths and to feel you have concrete reasons to believe he'll be successful.

Donna Volpitta: Focus on the idea that this feeling is a reaction to a situation, not a trait he has. It's not about being smart or not smart. He's just feeling frustrated about specific things.

Try to understand what's making him feel this way. Help him realize that he can be in control of finding strategies that can help him with the challenge. Talk about different options he has.

Bob Cunningham: The most helpful way to react depends a lot on the situation. Say your child is having difficulty with a task, like homework. In that case, a matter-of-fact response reminding him that he's just having trouble with one specific thing usually works best.

Sometimes, though, kids will make a statement about being dumb or feeling stupid seemingly out of the blue. Or they may bring it up a few times over a couple of days. In those cases, having a short conversation usually helps.

In any of these instances, an overly emotional response from you will likely not make the situation better. It's important to be supportive and caring, but it's equally important to be realistic. Otherwise, what you say may not seem credible to your child.

Jenn Osen-Foss: Be calm, but respond immediately. That provides clear and constant feedback that counters the comment.

Annie Fox: Before getting too upset and running the risk of overreacting, remember that context is everything. Take on the role of a detective with a mission to find out as much information as possible before weighing in.

For example, does "I'm dumb" reflect your child's true feelings about himself? Or was he just frustrated by an inability to master a task? Is he repeating an insult he heard from a classmate or sibling? Calmly talk to your child and find out as much as you can.

What are helpful things you can say?

Bob Cunningham: No matter the situation, it's important to acknowledge your child's feelings. You can try saying something like, "I'm sorry you're having a hard time. I know it's frustrating, but that doesn't mean you're dumb." If your child was reacting to something that's challenging, you can often leave it at that and move on.

If a longer conversation is needed, you could open it by saying, “It makes me sad when you say that because I know it isn’t true. You’re great at swimming, art and math. So tell me why you feel this way.” This will open up the conversation and will allow you to get a sense of what is going on.

Donna Volpitta: Respond calmly to his comment by saying, “What makes you feel that way?” By doing that, you open up the conversation. From there you can focus on understanding why he’s feeling that way and how he can take action to feel better.

Jenn Osen-Foss: Use “I” statements like “I don’t believe that’s true.” If you’ve never discussed your child’s learning or attention issues with him, this is a good time to explain them in age-appropriate terms. It’s helpful for kids to understand what’s going on in an age-appropriate context.

If your child is in grade school, just explain that taking longer to do something doesn’t mean he’s not smart. If he’s older, you can talk about his specific learning difference in more specific detail.

Mark Griffin: Use clear, concrete responses that let him know he is really capable. But you can also acknowledge that he faces difficulties in some areas.

It’s important to consistently reinforce his strengths and talents. Honest praise can do wonders for kids who struggle. You might say things like, “You’re a smart kid who sometimes has trouble with reading. You know more about sports than anyone in the family and you can fix anything around the house! You’ve also done some incredible work on the senior citizen project in town.”

Annie Fox: Ask what your child means by the word “dumb.” It might not mean the same to him as it does to you. Once you get clearer on his meaning, ask: “What’s making you feel that way?” Or, “What just happened that made you feel ‘dumb’?” Calm, respectful, open-ended questioning will put your child at ease and allow him to speak from the heart.

Remind your child that there are different ways of being “smart” and different learning strengths. Show that you’re well aware of areas in which your child shines by catching him in the act of doing something right.

What’s important to avoid saying?

Donna Volpitta: Your immediate natural reaction when your child says, “I’m dumb” may be to say, “No, you’re not!” But that’s not particularly helpful. That reaction doesn’t encourage a discussion—it’s more likely to end it. Also, you’re not going to change your child’s feeling that he’s “dumb” by contradicting it.

Bob Cunningham: When your child is feeling bad about himself, it’s tempting to talk about your own struggles or the struggles of his siblings or friends. This usually doesn’t make the situation better. It’s more helpful to focus on him and his frustration or feelings.

You also might be tempted to tell him that whatever he is facing is no big deal. This also usually backfires.

Jenn Osen-Foss: Try not to sound accusatory, such as exclaiming, “Don’t say that!” Consider your tone when you respond. Avoid raising your voice or scolding your child. Scolding in particular could undermine the message you’re trying to convey.

Also, try not to respond to your child by saying, “You’re wrong.” Saying that may make him feel that he can’t even criticize himself correctly.

Mark Griffin: Short, simple, “I’m your parent and I love you” statements may not be helpful. Kids need to know *why* you think they’re really not “dumb,” but are capable. If they don’t believe they’re smart, they need constant reinforcement of why *you* think they are! They want concrete examples to hang on to during their struggles.

Give your child examples of when you saw him doing something successfully. The more specific you are, the better. Kids with learning and attention issues often feel their difficulties are overwhelming and they’re never going to get it right. It’s important to acknowledge that it’s a big challenge. But it’s not an impossible one.

Other Things You Can Do

You are the first line of emotional support for your child. But there are many other people who can help your child when he has negative feelings or experiences a drop in self-esteem.

Talk to him about the people at school who can give emotional support. And if his feelings persist, it can be a good idea to watch for behaviour changes that may be signs of depression.

Source: <https://www.understood.org/en/learning-attention-issues/understanding-children/challenges/talking-with-your-child/experts-weigh-in-what-should-i-do-when-my-child-says-im-dumb>

Strategies That Work for Students Grade 9 to 12 with Dyslexia



By: Shirley Kurnoff

David, Michael and Audrey all have been diagnosed with dyslexia. David is a freshman at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, AR; Michael is a 10th-grader and Audrey, an 8th-grader. Ginger is a high school teacher at a school for dyslexia. With years of experience in parenting and teaching LD students, she shared some of her "strategies that work":

1. Homework:

- Consistently use any tutorial times before, during or after school to complete homework.
- Do as much work as possible during study hall.
- Use an aide at school as a help source.
- Find a tutor. In my experience, there is too much of a power struggle between parent(s) and child. I have helped very little with homework.
- Tutoring 1 to 2 times a week, depending on the subject matter.

2. Research Papers:

- Divide research into small components. Here, a calendar is critical for planning. Use a large desktop or wipe-off type.
- Take a class on writing research papers at your school or community college. If a course isn't available, I recommend the following handbook: Writing The Research Report ISBN 0-03-047073-0; Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.

3. Management:

- Schedule study hall for last period. My oldest son who participated in varsity football and track all four years of high school, always requested his study hall at the end of the day. He would get as much homework as possible done at this time.
- Take an organizational skills course at school or at your local college. This will help with filing and organization at home and scheduling at school.
- Use a tub file to file back assignments and tests. In this way, they can be pulled out at later date for exam studies.
- Take a time-management course at school or at your local college. This will help you prioritize your time. Time management is the key to a successful college experience. Why not start in high school?
- Use a calendar to break up long-range assignments into smaller pieces. Most students with dyslexia get very overwhelmed with large assignments.

4. General:

- Buy your own textbooks. Writing in the margin, highlighting and defining words in a textbook are critical for comprehension. I try to buy all history and science books from the publisher. Textbooks on tape haven't been effective for my children, but reading aloud and paraphrasing often are very helpful study techniques.
- Use computers on a daily basis for word-processing and spell checking. They have been the "saving grace" for our children. I have seen computers literally change the lives of children with dysgraphia, severe dyslexia, and oral and written expression problems.
- Be involved in sports or an extracurricular activity. Sports have served as great outlet for frustration in the academic area and as area of success in our family. I trained under Dr. Lucious Waites at the Texas Scottish Rite Hospital, and he always told parents, as well as therapists, NEVER to take their LD children out of an extracurricular activity where they were experiencing success, even at the detriment of academic performance.

5. Psychology:

- Be your own self-advocate. Most teachers appreciate students who speak up about their special needs. There are some who don't -- tread carefully with them! Ideally, students must be proactive to be successful!
- Seek professional counseling if needed. This has served a big purpose in my family. As you know, learning problems can and often do turn into emotional problems if left alone. I didn't want any problems to fester.

I hope some of these coping strategies work for your child. They certainly did for ours.

Source: http://www.idonline.org/article/Strategies_That_Work_for_Students_Grade_9_to_12_with_Dyslexia

Guelph Storm - Help Us Fundraise!

Tickets are \$17.50 each (reg. adult price \$26)

Help support LDAWC and The United Way! By purchasing tickets to these Storm games we are able to run our 50/50 draw. This is a significant fundraiser for us every year so help us be able to participate.

1 game date left:

Sunday, February 11, 2:00 PM – Guelph vs. London Knights

To order tickets email info@ldawc.ca or call (519) 837-2050.



Upcoming LDAWC Events & Workshops

January's FREE Peer Support Network

About our Peer Support Network:

The LDAWC peer support network's goal is to provide an informal setting to share experiences, challenges, successes and resources. Living, learning and/or working with a LD, or supporting a family member with LD, has its ups and downs. Come learn from others.



Benefits are:

- Learning about relevant resources, supports and strategies
- Insights into what has and hasn't worked for parents and families
- Learning you and your student aren't alone through shared ideas and experiences
- Reduced stigma and stress

About our Facilitator:

Gabriele Wright is a parent member of the LDAWC Board, and has learned a few key things about LDs from the ground up. From early primary to high school, Gabriele has found that not only reading about her daughter's LD ...but talking with and learning from others was beneficial. As her family is now working on passing the (self-advocacy) torch to their daughter, it's still beneficial to share experiences and resources with others through informal peer networks.

When and Where: Wednesday, January 24, 7-8:30 PM; RLB LLP; 103 – 197 Hanlon Creek Blvd., Guelph

Note: 6 registrants are required to make this an effective session

Register here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/januarys-ldawc-peer-support-network-tickets-38681591682> or at our homepage: www.ldawc.ca

Other Community Events

Guelph ADHD and Asperger's Centre

"Parents of Kids with ADHD and Asperger's/ASD Class"

5 sessions, starts Tuesday January 9th, 8 – 9:30 pm

Join with ADHD and Asperger's experts and other parents/caregivers of kids of all ages with ADHD and/or Asperger's to get your questions answered, support from people who've been there and a hopeful perspective on your child's future. We see ADHD and Asperger's as a gift and focus on managing the negative symptoms while helping to find and harness the amazing super powers of our kids (like high intelligence, creativity, kindness, and hyper-focusing).

Part workshop, part support group, these sessions have been described as *"self-care I badly needed"*, *"a safe place to not feel guilty, for once!"*, and *"incredibly informative"*. We also offer refreshments and snacks!

For more information: <http://www.adhdinterrupted.com/support-groups--classes.html>

LDA Halton

“An Introduction to Educational Technology for Parents”

Wednesday, January 17th, 6:30 – 8:30 pm

This workshop will provide an introduction for parents on assistive technology including: Helping parents understand the learning struggles of many children with Learning Disabilities and why assistive technology is important in supporting these struggles; what parents might see on their child's IEP regarding assistive technology; what kinds of software programs can assist children with Learning Disabilities; how parents can advocate and assist their child while maintaining their child's independence in using their assistive technology devices.

Presented by Ryan Hamilton, B.Ed., Peel District School Board

Cost: \$30 for non-members

Registration: <https://ldahalton.ca/solutions-learning-lecture-series/>

LDA Peel Region

“Walk A Mile In My Shoes”

Presented by Integra

Monday, January 28th, 7:00 PM

Chinguacousy Library, Brampton

Cost: FREE

Register: lmastrocola@ldapr.ca

This experiential workshop is designed to give participants an understanding of the challenges associated with living with a Learning Disability by engaging them in a series of activities. Participants will gain knowledge about current thinking in the field and a practical understanding of how they may affect mental health and everyday life.

“Assistive Technology Supports for Learning Disabilities”

Presented by Microscience Computers

Thursday, February 22 at 7:00 PM

Mississauga Central Library

Cost: FREE

Register: lmastrocola@ldapr.ca

This workshop will provide an opportunity to learn about and try out various assistive technology accommodations and supports available for individuals with Learning Disabilities.

“Understanding Anxiety and Learning Disabilities”

Presented by Integra

Tuesday, March 27 at 7:00 PM

Chinguacousy Library, Brampton

Cost: FREE

Register: lmastrocola@ldapr.ca

In this introductory workshop, participants will gain an understanding of anxiety, when to be concerned, approaches to treatment, and the relationship between anxiety and Learning Disabilities.

LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO
MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL APPLICATION FORM



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Association of Ontario

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Date _____

Name _____

Member #: _____

Chapter #: _____

Address _____

City/Province/Postal Code _____

Please check this box if you agreed to receive your copies of Communiqué by e-mail in the future

Email address: _____

(please print clearly)

Type of Yearly Membership (please check one)

Family/Individual \$50.00 Professional \$75.00

Institutional \$125.00 Student \$20.00 (ID # Required) _____

Type of Payment

Cash (only if paying in person) Cheque Money Order Visa Master Card

Card # _____ Expiry Date: _____

Name as it appears on the Credit Card: _____ Signature: _____

I would like to volunteer: at the local level at the provincial level

Benefits of Membership for all members:

- Member fee rates to all LDAO programs and services, including online workshops/courses, etc.
- Member fee rates to all chapter programs and services, where available
- 2 issues of the LDAO Newsletter Communiqué – by mail and now electronically to those who chose to receive their issues to a designated email address
- Chapter newsletters (frequency varies from chapter to chapter)

For Professional and Institutional Members only (In addition to those mentioned above)

- Professional members will receive 5 hard copies of each issue of Communiqué to use as they choose (if a member elects to receive their copy of Communiqué by email we will still send hard copies) and 5 member fee rate entitlements to any **LDAO** programs and services, including online workshops/courses, etc.
- Institutional members will receive 10 hard copies of each issue of Communiqué to use as they choose (if a member elects to receive their copy of Communiqué by email we will still send hard copies) and 10 member fee rate entitlements to any **LDAO** programs and services, including online workshops/courses, etc.

Please make all payments payable to **Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario** and forward to:

LDAO Membership Coordinator

365 Evans Avenue, Suite 202, Toronto, ON M8Z 1K2

Phone: 416-929-4311, Fax 416-929-3905



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