



# LD Connections Newsletter

## February 2017

### Learning Disabilities in the Workplace

LDAWC has been very busy over the past month! Our pilot Reading Rocks direct programming begins in February and we have thirty kids registered to benefit from this dynamic program.

We held a Technology session on January 21<sup>st</sup> that was a great opportunity for participants to navigate the google chrome suite of software.

We have a number of upcoming workshops that we hope are of interest to you – check out our events page for details.

We would like to thank Guelph Storm for providing us with the opportunity to sell 50/50 tickets at the January 6<sup>th</sup> game. We would also like to thank our wonderful volunteers.....a special thank you to Brad, Jen, Aaron and Jeremy for your help with our 50/50 ticket sales. This year the lucky winner was Nicole P of Guelph and she won \$1760.50. LDAWC will be use their portion of the sales for workshop honorariums and outreach.



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## Survey on the Work Accommodation Needs of Young Adults with a Disability

<http://www.idao.ca/survey-on-the-work-accommodation-needs-of-young-adults-with-a-disability/>

A new survey is hoping to learn about the types of job accommodations, modifications, and benefits young people with disabilities require when transitioning from school to work.

Young adults with disabilities are asked to complete a 15 minute confidential online or mobile survey about the workplace supports they might need to help find and/or maintain employment. Students, as well as those who are employed, not employed, or looking for work are invited to participate. If you choose to take part in the survey, you will be entered into a draw to win an Apple iPad mini.

The survey is led by the **Institute for Work & Health**, in partnership with the **National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS)** and **McMaster University**. Data will be made anonymous and analyzed by the research team to bring awareness to the types of supports that young people with disabilities require. Findings will also be shared with policy-makers, employers, and community-based organizations.

**To learn more about the study and complete the online survey click here:**

[https://iwhca.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\\_0p3zB6vo00wZY1v](https://iwhca.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_0p3zB6vo00wZY1v)

If you would like more information about the study, or if you would like to complete the survey over the phone, please contact Julie Bowring at 416-927-2027 ext. 2105 or [jbowring@iwh.on.ca](mailto:jbowring@iwh.on.ca).

## GUELPH STORM TICKETS FUNDRAISER!!!!



**\$1 FROM EACH TICKET SOLD  
WILL BE  
DONATED TO THE UNITED WAY**

March 12<sup>th</sup> @ 2:00pm vs  
London Knights

March 17<sup>th</sup> @ 7:30pm vs  
Sarnia Sting

**\$17.50 each- box office  
price is \$24.00!**

**Tickets can be purchased  
online by visiting  
[www.idawc.ca](http://www.idawc.ca) or call our  
office at  
519-837-2050**



Generously Funded by United Way of Guelph Wellington Dufferin



## Learning Disabilities in the Workplace

<http://employabilities.ab.ca/2013/07/learning-disabilities-in-the-workplace/>

*Article from Ability & Enterprise Newsletter –  
Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work*

Learning disabilities are often associated with difficulties in school but, given that they are lifelong and permanent, they can also have major impacts in the workplace. As an invisible disability, it is often not possible to know that an employee has a learning disability unless they disclose it but given that 1 in 10 Canadians has a learning disability it is likely prevalent amongst many employees in the workplace.

### **What are learning disabilities?**

Learning disabilities (or LD's) refer to various disorders associated with challenges in acquiring, organizing, retaining, understanding or using verbal and/or nonverbal information. This includes areas related to oral language, writing, reading, and/or or mathematics.

LD's effect many different areas of an individual's life and they are often described based on these impacts. Some common categories include organization and focus, social life, physical interaction, academics or

processing (integration, input, output etc). For example, an individual described as having a LD impacting organization and focus may have difficulties with executive functions and struggle with organizing and planning. In other instances a specific type of LD is described, such as dyslexia which is associated with difficulties processing language and impacts reading, writing and spelling. It is important to note that there are many different ways to categorize and describe LD's.



No matter how LD's are categorized these disorders affect learning in individuals who otherwise demonstrate at least average intelligence and, in order to be diagnosed, an individual must exhibit clinically significant discrepancies between average abilities in one or more categories. Diagnosis is a complex process and, in Ontario, testing by a registered psychologist (or associate) is required.

### **Accommodating learning disabilities in the workplace**

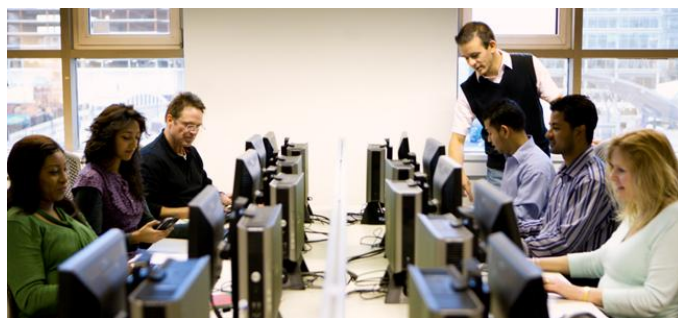
The barriers faced by employees with LD's and accommodations to address them depend on a variety of factors including how the LD(s) impacts the individual, the nature of the job and job tasks and whether they already have

strategies in place. Some employee's may have had accommodations in the past, such as in school or previous jobs and may be very familiar with their barriers and strategies to address them. Other employee's may be newly diagnosed or unfamiliar with accommodations or strategies. Some signs of LD's in adults include; spelling errors, misreading information, difficulty interpreting information, poor grasp of abstract concepts, works slowly, struggling to summarize information and many other's.

### **Accommodations**

"Soft" workplace accommodations are one's which do not pertain to equipment or products. Some examples commonly recommended for LD'S include alternative work arrangements, flexible hours, eliminating problematic non-essential job tasks, and modifying the way information is presented. For example, an employee with an LD impacting social skills may struggle with interacting with co-workers and may benefit from accommodations such as working from home and/or making work social functions option. For an employee whose LD makes it difficult to communicate verbally an accommodation may be to provide advanced notice of meetings and what will be covered to allow them time to prepare. An employee whose disability impacts time management may put several strategies in place themselves such as making to do lists and checking items off as complemented and having employer or co-worker send reminders for meetings and deadlines.

"Hard" workplace accommodations include technology, equipment and modifications to the physical environment. For example for LD's which impact reading audio tapes or screen reading software can be beneficial whereas for employee's whose disabilities impact writing voice output software can be beneficial. For LD's which impact math there are several options of calculators such as one's which "talk" as well as fractional and decimal calculators. There are also a variety of products including one's which track time use and set reminders for those whose organizational skills are impacted.



In many instances accommodations for LD's involve a mixture of both hard and soft accommodations. An employee with an LD impacting reading may benefit from hard accommodations such as converting audio and text as well as strategies such as allowing verbal in place of written responses. Similarly for an individual with difficulty spelling they may be provided with an electronic or talking dictionary in combination with being able to have more flexible deadlines to edit their written work or have it edited by a co-worker.

## Challenges

There often are challenges for both employees and employers in accommodating LD's in the workplace. For employees one major challenge beyond the impacts of their LD is disclosure; given that LD's are an invisible disabilities individuals must choose whether to disclose or



not to their employer. Common reasons for choosing to disclose include that accommodations are needed to do their job effectively, to provide an explanation for why they are struggling and that they feel comfortable with enough in the workplace/with employer to disclose. Some employee's may even choose to disclose at an interview or before accepting a job or promotion so you can discuss the accommodations you require.

However, for a variety of reasons, employees may choose not to disclose. Some employee's may either not require accommodations or already have strategies in place themselves. Other reasons' employee's may not disclose include feeling they lack a supportive environment, fear of discrimination and stigma; such as that disclosing will cause other's to see them as inept or lacking intelligence.

For employers and managers there are also challenges. These include the fact that they may not fully understand or be aware of the LD and how it impacts the employee and have difficulty distinguishing between the impacts of an LD vs. preference or a lack of effort or motivation. There are also cases where the employee's disability may impact a vital part of the job and, even with accommodations; it is not a good job fit. One major challenge for both employees and employers/manager's is knowing what accommodations would be beneficial and help both parties to work effectively.



[www.raisingmallsouls.com/animalschool/animalschool.swf](http://www.raisingmallsouls.com/animalschool/animalschool.swf)

You will find a very cute video about the strengths and weaknesses students may have and what happens to them in school. Could your child be a polar bear, a fish, a squirrel, a duck, a kangaroo or maybe a bee? Check it out!



## Are you looking to meet other parents and share your experiences?

Join us for our Peer Support Network sessions.  
Rotating topics and open forum.



Join us on these Wednesday's @ 7:00pm

February 22<sup>nd</sup>  
May 24<sup>th</sup>

March 22<sup>nd</sup>  
June 14<sup>th</sup>

April 26<sup>th</sup>

This program is located at RLB Guelph, 197 Hanlon Creek Blvd Unit 103

If you're interested in attending, please register  
by email at [info@ldawc.ca](mailto:info@ldawc.ca) or by calling 519-837-2050

## Best Practices and Accommodations for Various Learning Disabilities

<http://www.youth2youth.ca/en/employers/best-practices-and-accommodations-for-various-learning-disabilities>

Accommodation is most often legally defined as the extent to which an employer, provider of goods, services or housing available to the general public is required to make modifications that would assist the integration of people with disabilities, and other disadvantaged groups, short of undue hardship.

### Accommodation Requires Needs Assessment

Here are four steps to take with your employee to assess the need for accommodation:

1. Determine the purpose and the essential functions of the job.
2. Establish what kinds of job-related limitations are caused by the disability.
3. In consultation with the employee, determine what possible accommodations could be considered and how effective each one would be in helping the employee to perform the essential functions of the job.
4. Determine which accommodations the employee would prefer.

### Getting The Job Done – Performance, Productivity and Accommodation

Before accommodation strategies can be initiated, it is necessary to define the essential functions of the job. Essential functions are the specific duties necessary to do that particular job.

Defining essential functions calls for analyzing the purpose or goal of the job rather than just listing the tasks the job has usually entailed. This means looking at what you are trying to accomplish, not the way you have always done it. Here are some questions to consider:

- If a task an employee is sometimes asked to perform is not essential to the job, can you trade it with or reassign it to another employee?
- Can the way this task is performed be changed?
- Is this task essential?
- Is there any equipment or technical device that would aid in the performance of the task?
- Is there a use of equipment that is absolutely necessary for the economic and safe performance of the task or can it be eliminated?
- If you are accustomed to the performance of a certain task at a certain time, is that schedule important?
- Is it imperative that this position be full-time, or can the duties be pared down to accommodate a part-time worker?
- Must all the tasks be performed at your place of business during your regular business hours?
- You should also determine whether the employee can fulfill the job's requirements in practice, rather than assuming the worst.
- As an employer, you may be vaguely aware of what a learning disability is, and the obligation to provide reasonable accommodations, but you may not know how to match an accommodation with an employee's specific need. Accommodations during the interview and competition refer to making changes to the process to ensure that persons with learning disabilities are able to compete fairly and equitably.

### Employers must:

- be willing to enter into a mutual agreement in offering accommodations;
- be willing to explore all the options in the types of accommodation needed for the particular interview the candidate is undergoing; and
- make sure that the accommodation and/or solution is mutually satisfactory.

### Persons with learning disabilities must:

- tell employers what their specific needs are;
- suggest the kinds of accommodations that will meet their specific needs; and
- enter into a partnership with the employer, whatever the agreed-upon accommodation.
- The following list provides a description of the major types of learning disabilities, along with workplace examples, and solutions in modifying the interviewing process. Solutions offered may in fact be helpful not only during the interview process but also later in the workplace.

#### 1) Information Processing Problems: Auditory Perception Problems

Difficulties in receiving and/or processing accurate information from their sense of hearing. This may be characterized by an inability to hear one sound over background noises or hearing the difference between similar sounds and/or sounds in order. There may be difficulty in remembering a series of commands or instructions or in retrieving stored information.

##### *Examples:*

- difficulties hearing verbal instructions or questions if there are other noises in the room;
- slowness in responding to verbal questions or instructions;
- poor information sequencing; and
- poor listening skills.

##### *Solutions:*

- reduce background noises (telephones ringing, noisy machinery or background conversations);
- allow sufficient time for instructions or questions to be repeated;
- let candidates sit near interviewer(s), speak slowly and deliberately, allow time for the candidate to process information;
- provide written copy of instructions;
- whenever possible provide a copy of the questions;
- demonstrate exactly what needs to be done, rather than describing the task; and
- encourage note-taking.





## 2) Information Processing Problems: Visual Perception Problems

Difficulties taking in and/or processing information from the sense of sight, which may be characterized by difficulties in seeing specific images or picking out an object and/or in seeing things in the correct order and/or in seeing the difference between two similar objects such as "v" and "u". There may also be difficulties perceiving how far or near objects may be.

### *Examples:*

- incapacity to find key information provided in written form;
- inability to pick out one line of print from another;
- interferes with the ability to read, compute or complete an inventory or a budget;
- interferes with a person's ability to read as quickly as others;
- difficulties filling out an application form; and
- may be clumsy, trip or bump into things.

### *Solutions:*

- provide a room with minimal physical distractions;
- provide a written exam in an alternative format such as on tape;
- provide voice-activated computers for written material;
- give verbal instructions;
- provide a talking calculator;
- provide information on tape; and
- give time to complete the task.

## 3) Academic problems

Difficulties in the ability to use language and to express oneself in reading, writing, spelling, and/or mathematics. There may also be difficulties sounding out letters, confusing words that sound similar, and expressing thoughts on paper.

### *Examples:*

- not able to write exams;
- frequent spelling and grammar mistakes;
- unreadable penmanship, poor spelling; and
- unable to do simple calculations.

### *Solutions:*

- provide information on tape;
- provide a computer and/or spell checker;
- allow extra time for written tests;
- allow a reader to read test questions aloud;
- provide verbal instructions that are clear and simple;
- demonstrate exactly what needs to be done;
- put the information on tape;
- use a colour pen to highlight key information or instructions;

- allow assistive technology (such as audio and visual aids, word processors, spell checkers, proofreading computer programs, voice-activated computers, calculators, tape recorders) to enhance performance;
- allow more time for reading and writing; and
- preview information in order to prepare for interview.

#### 4) **Motor, temporal and organizational problems**

Difficulties in moving one's body to achieve its goals, perception of time and space, and the sequencing of information.

##### *Examples:*

- difficulty in using the hands while writing;
- showing a lack of organization in written work;
- arriving late or unusually early;
- inaccurate movement such as clumsiness, awkwardness or stiffness;
- confusion between left and right;
- difficulty telling time; and
- tendency to reverse letters and numbers.

##### *Solution:*

- use timers or verbal response as reminders;
- map information;
- allow extra time for travel between interviews;
- use alarms or bells, etc. to signal changes;
- use visual cue to indicate change;
- allow candidate to work at their own pace; and
- allow extra time to process information.

#### 5) **Attention Problems**

Difficulty sustaining attention during a long period of time characterized by distractibility, inconsistent performance and/or problems focusing on details.

##### *Examples:*

- easily distracted by background noises during an interview;
- difficulty paying attention to verbal instructions or questions, sometimes not remembering or understanding verbal information; and
- fidgeting, need to be on the move (feet/pencil tapping).

##### *Solutions:*

- give clear directions in small single units, rather than one long installment;
- repeat all information several times until understood;
- allow person to get up and move around at intervals; and
- allow extra time.



## 6) Social Skills Problems

Difficulties in assessing one's impact on others, acting impulsively and not having the ability to judge non-verbal body language.

*Examples:*



- standing too close;
- inappropriate body language and/or talking too loudly or too softly; and
- inability to read facial expressions, body gestures and/or tone of voice.

*Solutions:*

- avoid sarcasm, say what you mean;
- don't expect hints, body gestures to convey information;
- allow extra time;
- maintain eye contact; and
- paraphrase information to convey the message.
- Persons with learning disabilities will not require all of the above accommodations, but employers can assist interview candidates and employees by identifying and mutually agreeing upon appropriate accommodation based on their strengths and weaknesses.

*Source:*

*Barriers-free Interviews and Competitions, Learning Disabilities Association of Canada.*

How can I get free money for my kids?	What do I need to do to get the Canada Learning Bond?	Canada Learning Bond Facts
<p><b>Get the Canada Learning Bond!</b></p> <p>This is a Government of Canada program that provides <b>\$500</b> in education money to children born on or after January 1, 2004 whose families receive the National Child Benefit Supplement. And, the Government will add <b>\$100 more every year</b> your child is eligible, up to age 15. Your child could get up to \$2,000.</p> <div data-bbox="212 1404 454 1558" style="background-color: yellow; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p>Free money. For your kids. Yes, really.</p> </div> <p> <b>www.smartsaver.org</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1</b> Visit a Service Canada Office to get your child a Social Insurance Number (SIN).</li> <li><b>2</b> Start a Registered Education Savings account (RESP) that is right for you. Make sure the provider you choose signs you up for the Canada Learning Bond. Visit SmartSAVER.org for our list of no-cost, no-risk plans.</li> <li><b>3</b> Grow your child's savings. Even if you can't contribute, the Government will deposit the Canada Learning Bond in your account.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All eligible children receive at least \$500</li> <li>• No family contribution is required to start an RESP or to receive the Bond</li> <li>• If you do make a contribution, the Government's Canada Education Savings Grant will add up to 40% more</li> <li>• Some RESP providers charge fees. Visit SmartSAVER.org for our list of no-cost, no-risk plans.</li> <li>• Act now and you can get your additional Learning Bond payments. When you apply you will receive \$500 plus \$100 for every year your child was eligible</li> </ul> <p><b>What's the catch?</b></p> <p>The Canada Learning Bond can only be used for your child's education after high school or later on. Your child has up to 36 years to use it. The Canada Learning Bond can be used for part-time or full-time studies at college, university or other qualifying schools in Canada or outside the country.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">with help from </p>



**75** United Way  
Guelph Wellington  
YEARS Dufferin

Generously Funded by United Way of Guelph Wellington Dufferin



**Idawc** • Learning Disabilities  
Association of Wellington County

*The right to learn, the power to achieve*

## **Upcoming Workshops- Winter/Spring 2017**

### **February 22<sup>nd</sup> 2017- Optimal Nutrition for Healthy Brains and Bodies**

Learn how nutrition supports learning and how to be a healthier version of yourself to increase brain and body function.

Fergus Sportsplex 550 Belsyde Avenue East- 10:00am- 12:00pm

### **March 27<sup>th</sup> 2017- You and Your School- Building Healthy Relationships**

Establishing and maintaining positive relationships is a huge bonus when working with your child's school, come and learn some new skills around supporting this process!

Fergus Sportsplex 550 Belsyde Avenue East- 10:00am- 12:00pm

### **April 26<sup>th</sup> 2017- Success Today! Simple Interventions to Allow Children to Succeed**

With so much technology available come and learn what may be the best intervention for your child, and how you can best support their success.

Community Living Guelph 8 Royal Road- 7:00pm-9:00pm

### **May 31<sup>st</sup> 2017- Transitions to Secondary and the IEP process**

Navigating the IEP process sometimes raises questions, come and learn how this process may look different as your child enters secondary school.

Community Living Guelph 8 Royal Road- 7:00pm-9:00pm

### **June 14<sup>th</sup> 2017- Supporting Summer Learning through Tutoring**

Schools almost out but children still need some support over those summer months, come and learn how to support your child and keep them engaged during those summer months.

Fergus Sportsplex 550 Belsyde Avenue East- 10:00am- 12:00pm

*\*Fees for our workshops are \$10 for members of LDAO and \$15 for non-members, to register as a member please refer to page 15 of this newsletter.*

## Useful Links

Canadian ADHD Resource Alliance

<http://www.caddra.ca/>

People for Education

<http://www.peopleforeducation.ca/profile/child-advocacy-project-cap/>

LDA Ontario

<http://www.ldao.ca>

Special Needs Ontario Window (SNOW)

[www.snow.idrc.ocad.ca](http://www.snow.idrc.ocad.ca)

Totally ADD

<http://totallyadd.com/>

The We All Learn Differently Organization

[www.thewald.org](http://www.thewald.org)

Learning Potentials

[www.learningpotentials.com](http://www.learningpotentials.com)

Family Anatomy

[www.familyanatomy.com](http://www.familyanatomy.com)

## Contact us

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Mailing address: 233, 17A -218 Silvercreek  
Parkway N. Guelph N1H 8E8

Email address: [info@ldawc.ca](mailto:info@ldawc.ca)

Website: [www.ldawc.ca](http://www.ldawc.ca)

*Don't forget to like us on facebook for the chance to learn about information and events happening in your communities!*

[www.facebook.com/LDAWellingtonCounty](http://www.facebook.com/LDAWellingtonCounty)



*You can also find us on Twitter!*

*@lda\_wellington*



## Events

See page 12 for LDAWC's current events. Upcoming events for other organizations are listed below:



Workshop: "Executive Functioning Strategies"

LDA Milton

**March 29 @ 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm**

**Free**

<http://www.ldao.ca/event/workshop-executive-functioning-strategies-milton/>

Workshop: "Surviving After School Homework at Home- Strategies and Tactics"

LDA Burlington

**April 25 @ 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm**

**Free**

<http://www.ldao.ca/event/workshop-surviving-after-school-homework-at-home-strategies-and-tactics-burlington/>

Parent Tool Kit Workshop: "Organizing the Disorganized Learner"

LDA Oakville

**May 17 @ 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm**

**Free**

<http://www.ldao.ca/event/parent-tool-kit-workshop-organizing-the-disorganized-learner-oakville/>

Workshop: "Investigating ADHD"

LDA Hamilton

**June 14 @ 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm**

**Free**

<http://www.ldao.ca/event/workshop-investigating-adhd-hamilton/>

LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO  
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM



Mr.  Mrs.  Miss  Dr.

New Membership

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Business Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

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

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

**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 (payable to LDAO)  Money Order  Visa  Master Card  
Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name as it appears on the Credit Card: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Benefits of Membership for all Members:**

- Discount to LDA Programs and services
- Communiqué (Provincial) newsletter – 2 times per year (5 copies each printing of Communiqué for Professional and 10 each for Institutional members)
- National newsletter – 1 time per year (5 copies each printing of National for Professional and 10 each for Institutional members)
- Chapter newsletters (frequency varies from Chapter to Chapter)

Please make all payments payable to LDAO and forward to:

LDAO Membership Coordinator

365 Bloor Street East, Box 39 Ste. 1004, Toronto, ON M4W 3L4

Phone: 416-929-4311, ext 21 Fax 416-929-3905

Website: [www.LDAO.ca](http://www.LDAO.ca)



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