

**Learning
Disabilities
Association
of
Alberta**



Our Thanks ...

Alberta Education:

The Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta appreciates the generous Education Support Grant for Non-Profit Educational Organizations provided by Alberta Education.



Randy Anderson Learning Foundation/Edmonton Community Foundation:

The Randy Anderson Learning Foundation, an organization dedicated to supporting people with learning disabilities, has provided a generous grant to the LDAA to support its ongoing operation. The LDAA wishes to extend its sincere thanks to Larry Anderson for his history of philanthropy in memory of his brother, Randy Anderson.



TELUS Community Foundation:

The Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta is the proud recipient of a grant from the TELUS Community Foundation. The grant was awarded to help the LDAA create myTransitions.ca, containing information for students with learning disabilities progressing to post-secondary education and the workforce.



Edmonton Public School Board:

Edmonton Public Schools has supported the LDAA in a variety of ways. From disseminating information about events to the work on the Right to Read program, the District has been gracious in helping the Association work towards the achievement of its mission.

Janssen-Ortho Pharmaceuticals:

Through the partnership and support of Janssen Ortho, the Association was able to host an information session by international expert on ADHD, Dr. Russell Barkley.



Victoria School for the Visual and Performing Arts:

In a myriad of ways, Victoria School has been amazing in their support of the Association.

Volunteers and Active Supporters:

It takes an army of volunteers and active supporters to operate organizations like the LDAA. In 2009-10, the LDAA was indebted to the following group of wonderful individuals who supported us in a number of ways. To all, a huge thanks! To any we may have missed, our apologies.

Alix Ward
James Wilson
Michele Pentyluk
Allen Sheppard
Jane Pederson
Monica Ellis
Anil Sood
Janice Mills
Murray Wentland
April Johnson
Janice Nelson
Natasha Pentyluk
Bev Oscar
Joanne Heckbert
Nico van der Kley

Bonnie Blankert
Jodine Chase
Noreen Rude
Brad Burns
John Beaton
Patty James
Brenda Martin
Sharon Schuurmans
Pamela Mayne-Correia
Brent Smith
Judy Craig
Paul Reid
Carrie Sandboe
Julie deBoer
Rachel O'Brien

Catherine Ripley
Kate Steidl
Raven Fowler
Cindy Sulderitsch
Kate Welsh
Ray Bergstra
Colin Reid
Kathryn Burke
Rose Prefontaine
Daniel Goerz
Kelly Lehman
Sandy Bray
Deborah Brandell
Ken Chapman
Dexa Stoutjesdyk

Kyle Reid
Sheryl Krill
Dina Hendzel
Kristin Morrison
Sonja MacAndrew
Eryn Murray
Linda Siegel
Stracey Smith
Geoff Jackson
Lloyd Linkiewich
Susan Vinci
George Welsh
Lori Shortreed
Sylvia Hannah
Gloria Chalmers

Lori Wentland
Tracy Linkiewich
Gordon Bullivant
Lorrie Goegan
Tracy Linkiewich
Guy Almberg
Lynda Pierce
Wakako Dillon
Gwyneth Turner
Madhu Sood
William Radvanyi
Heather Reimer
Marty Hornstein
Willians Vidal
Carolyn Barker

Greetings from the LDAA President



Ah yes, it is the time of year again to sharpen the blades on the lawn mower, dust off the lawn furniture, and to sit down and reflect on LDAA's 2009/2010 fiscal year. The old adage, "Time flies when you're having fun" maybe true, but time also flies when you are working hard. It really whips by when you're having fun and working hard. And the time has certainly flown since last May when we held our AGM in Calgary hours before Calgary Chapter's spectacular event with Rick Mercer. There has been a great deal of activity across the Province over the last year as the provincial office and the chapters continue to enhance awareness and to offer support to individuals with learning disabilities and ADHD. I believe that it is safe to say that despite that fact that the LDA network has no shared governance, we are united by a common purpose and are working towards our common goals with increasing collaboration. This is no small feat. The chapters and the provincial office have evolved independently. There are some important differences in the demographics of each area that is not conducive to a one-size-fits-all approach to service delivery. And Alberta is a big province. I think that it is also safe to say that within our network there are some big personalities. What a thrill it is to see people from such a distance with such a variety of backgrounds working together to make significant changes. Grassroots approaches along with political lobbying are forces that result not only in changes in policy but real changes in practices as well.

What is the role of the LDAA? Our role is not direct service delivery. We are the behind the scenes people, working to create and solidify relationships with political policy makers, academics, educators as well as within the LD network. Thanks to the masterful work of our Executive Director, the LDAA is working closely with Alberta Education to ensure that our input is solicited and heard with regards to changes in education. The provincial organization has also developed strong ties to the academic community and experts in the field of learning disabilities and ADHD. Dr. Linda Siegel, world renowned expert in dyslexia, plays an integral role in the Right to Read Committee-a board subcommittee working on the development of a province-wide early intervention program. Social media has blossomed into an invaluable tool used to reach a massive audience at the click of a mouse. A unified web strategy is in the works so that the LD network in Alberta minimizes the duplication and redundancy that currently exists. And this is just a taste of some of the LDAA's initiatives over the last twelve months.

It is exciting to be a part of this process, but it is overwhelming at times. There is much to do and I am not a patient woman. If the day only had 36 hours we may be able to achieve everything we hope for in a shorter period of time. What is certain to me is that the next year will zip by as quickly as the one before. I plan to enjoy the ride.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Pentyluk".

Michele Pentyluk

Message from the Executive Director



I am writing this message having completed a full year in the position of Executive Director. Work is wonderful when it is combined with one's passion. I am passionate about supporting people with learning disabilities to achieve their full potential and consider it a privilege to represent the LDAA as its Executive Director.

The LDAA fulfills a vital role in our province. In partnership with the Chapters, our network collectively represents 369,000 Albertans with learning disabilities. Our mission is to maximize the potential of these individuals. The Chapters fulfill this responsibility through direct programs and services. The focus of the provincial body is to shape public policy and work to build a deep understanding about learning disabilities. Our work is achieved by an army of dedicated individuals committed to positive change. We are a positive and value driven organization.

There were many notable highlights of 2009-10. Members of our network have been actively involved in the "Setting the Directions" consultation process. This Alberta Education initiative will fundamentally change the manner in which special education is delivered in our province. The LDAA has been invited to many tables to provide input. Examples include the input that the LDAA provided on Teaching Quality Standards and Alberta Education Curriculum Reviews. The LDAA's Annual Conference continues to be regarded as the premier professional development event on learning disabilities for educators and other professionals. The 2009 Annual Conference, hosted by the Edmonton Chapter, was a programming and financial success in the midst of a worldwide flu-epidemic. The LDAA completed a universal screening tool to identify children in Kindergarten and

Grade 1 at risk for reading difficulties. And, at both a provincial and local level, we emerged as a "go to" organization with the traditional media to speak to issues of special education. At the same time, we significantly enhanced our social media presence.

The challenge in 2010-11 will be to build upon the momentum. The Annual Conference hosted by the Calgary Chapter promises to once again set the bar for excellence. The LDAA is well positioned and respected for its input about Special Education Reform and will not doubt continue to play a role as the implementation of reform continues. And, as the year progresses, we will be investing efforts to continue to spread the word about learning disabilities.

We stand on the shoulders of others. I am indebted to the army of volunteers who are profoundly dedicated towards achievement of our association's mission. You inspire me. I am grateful for the support and collective wisdom of members of our board. Thanks must also be extended to the staff and volunteers of the three Chapters. And finally, the day to day management of the LDAA is made so much easier by the collective efforts of Dina Hendzel (Communications and Administration), Gwyneth Turner (Financial) and William Radvanyi (Web and Information Technology).

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathryn Burke". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kathryn Burke
Executive Director
Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta

Highlights 2009–10: A Year in Review

Right to Read- Screening and Early Intervention

The LDAA believes ALL children in Kindergarten or Grade 1 in Alberta schools should be screened for risk for reading problems. With the hard work of an expert panel of volunteers, the LDAA completed the “Reading Readiness Screening Tool” in the summer 2009. The RRST is designed to be administered by teachers in their classrooms. Efforts are underway to establish normative values for the RRST and to have those results published in peer reviewed journals. With the exceptional support of Victoria School in Edmonton, a 30 minute DVD was also produced providing detailed instructions on the optimal use of the RRST. A website was also launched in February 2010 at www.RightToRead.ca; the site will be the central repository of information on the Right to Read initiative. The initial launch of the site was used to support the LDAA’s involvement with a pilot project with Edmonton Public Schools regarding the use of the North Vancouver School District’s play based phonetics program entitled Firm Foundations. The Right to Read initiative will continue to be a major priority in 2010-11.

Enhancing Awareness about Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

One objective of the LDAA is to enhance understanding about ADHD. In the spring 2010, the opportunity arose to partner with Janssen Ortho to host information sessions in Edmonton and Calgary with international ADHD expert, Dr. Russell Barkley. Over 800 people in Edmonton and Calgary attended the public lectures, with the Calgary Chapter hosting the session for southern Alberta. The lectures were positively evaluated, and preliminary plans are in place to have Dr. Barkley return to Alberta in the Fall 2011.

Embracing Social Media

The LDAA explored and then embraced social media in 2009-10. The Association’s Facebook page rapidly gained members. The primary purpose of the Group Page is to provide links to events and credible sources of information. Increasingly, questions about learning disabilities and ADHD are posted on the site, with advice being provided not only by the LDAA staff, but by volunteers and experts who form part of the group. The LDAA also dove into the world of Twitter and has used micro-blogging to advertise events including the annual conference and the Dr. Barkley sessions on ADHD. As the LDAA’s website is redesigned in 2010-11, it will embody a significant social media element.

Perspectives Magazine

What began in 2008, continued very successfully in 2009-10. Perspectives Magazine, produced by the Calgary Chapter, continues to serve as a provincial vehicle to spread information and awareness about learning disabilities. The LDAA contributes articles; inserts enable the Edmonton and Red Deer Chapters to highlight local events.

Getting Ready for Post Secondary Education or the Workplace – Supporting the Transition Process

The LDAA was the recipient of a grant from the TELUS community foundation in 2009. The grant has been dedicated to the creation of a website at www.myTransitions.ca containing information about the transition to post secondary education or the workplace for people with learning disabilities. Efforts in 2009-10 involved creating the content. A draft of the site will be posted early in 2010-11.

Conference 2009 – Edmonton

The Annual Conference was held in Edmonton in November 2009. Unlike many conferences, the planning committee also created contingency plans to address the possible impact of the world wide flu epidemic that reached its apex during the week the conference was held. The conference was both a programming and financial success, notwithstanding the challenges of flu and worldwide recession. Conference evaluations were uniformly positive, and conveyed the message that the sessions were both practical and informative. Several media spots resulted from the Conference, contributing to enhanced awareness of learning disabilities in the greater Edmonton area.

Setting the Direction for Special Education Reform

Volunteers and staff alike at both the Provincial and Chapter level were heavily involved in the consultation process associated with the Alberta Education sponsored Setting the Direction for Special Education. Representatives of the LDAA were involved with staged consultation sessions in various corners in Alberta. As implementation of the recommendations to reform continues, the Association will continue to be involved.

LDAА Financial Statements

Statement of Operations for the year ending March 31, 2010

	2010	2009
Revenues:		
Alberta Education Grant	\$71,000.00	\$70,000.00
Membership Fees	\$8,122.00	\$5,338.00
Donations	\$10,005.00	\$2,180.00
Interest	\$7,466.00	\$5,887.00
Casino Income	\$0.00	\$82,528.00
Share of Net Conference Revenues	\$5,218.00	\$0.00
Conference Income	\$0.00	\$35,486.00
Other	\$1,299.00	\$734.00
Donations Carried Forward to 2008-09	\$0.00	\$10,000.00
Grant Carried Forward to 2009-10	\$29,150.00	(\$29,150.00)
Grant Carried Forward to 2010-11	(\$29,583.00)	\$0.00
Casino Income Carried Forward to 2008-09	\$0.00	\$24,497.00
Casino Income Carried Forward to 2009-10	\$84,752.00	(\$84,752.00)
Casino Income Carried Forward to 2010-11	(\$56,664.00)	\$0.00
Total Revenue	\$130,765.00	\$122,748.00
Expenditures:		
Contracted Staff Services	\$67,169.00	\$63,313.00
Administrative / Office Expenses	\$9,043.00	\$9,578.00
Audit	\$2,601.00	\$2,696.00
Insurance	\$4,457.00	\$3,920.00
Staff and Volunteer Travel	\$12,812.00	\$7,246.00
Annual Conference (Red Deer 2008)	\$0.00	\$37,371.00
Membership Fees to LD Assoc of Canada	\$5,088.00	\$2,560.00
Programs and Public Awareness	\$17,641.00	\$8,502.00
Total Expenditures	\$118,811.00	\$135,186.00
Excess (Deficiency) of Revenue Over Expenditure	\$11,954.00	(\$12,438.00)
Balance at Beginning of Year	\$243,200.00	\$255,638.00
Balance at End of Year	\$255,154.00	\$243,200.00

Financial Statements pertain to aggregated transactions for the LDAА's regular and casino accounts, and for the Mandin Memorial and Endowment Funds.

Complete audited financial statements can be obtained by contacting the Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta.

A Look Back at the History of the LDAA

The LDAA has a proud history of service in Alberta. The Association was registered on December 11, 1968 under the name Association for Children with Learning Disabilities. It was reactivated again in June 1974. In 1982, its name was once again changed, this time to the Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities. Its current name was registered in May 1987 as the Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta.

A look back through the Association Annual Reports clearly reflects that many of the challenges remain the same in 2010 as they were when the association began in 1968. The historical review also reflects the legacy of 42 years of service that the Association has provided in Alberta.

The following captions some interesting highlights from Annual Reports since the reactivation of the association in 1974. They are intended to provide snippets or a general flavor of issues and priorities over four decades of the LDAA's existence.

1975 Association activities included "... initiating action re our concern about the need for making optional oral exams available to the learning disabled adolescent and adult in areas such as: driver licensing, tradesman certification, etc."

1976 "...education of handicapped children must be fully accepted as a public responsibility and adequate public resources be made to discharge this responsibility in the classroom."

1977 "An article, published in the Canadian Magazine, entitled, "Frustration Unto Death," describing the horror of the suicide of a fifteen year old dyslexic student driven to such an act because of frustration stemming from lack of understanding and services available in a BC School district, brought a veritable avalanche of letters and telephone calls to the Alberta AALD office in Edmonton..."

1978 "On February 24th, 1978, [the Association] presented a brief to the University of Alberta Senate, asking them to consider the formation of a Task Force to look into professional training in the field of learning disabilities in our universities in Alberta."



1979 "University of Alberta Senate Committee on Learning Disabilities Task Force Recommendation 6-1: It is recommended that an interdisciplinary Centre for the Study of Learning Disabilities (CSLD) be developed at the University of Alberta."

1981 "A Scholarship Fund has been established...called the Siobhan Reid Memorial Scholarship Fund." (1981)

1982 The first Siobhan Reid Scholarship Award was awarded to Jac Andrews.

The University of Alberta Senate Proposal for an Institute for the Study of Learning Disabilities undergoes deliberation by Alberta Advanced Education, Alberta Education and Alberta Education and Community Health.

1983 "Through the work of our committees, we have had considerable input to Government. The advocacy and perseverance of our organization has significantly impacted on the level and quality of direct services to the learning disabled in the province..."

1984 "The Computer Committee was established to investigate the possible uses of computers in the instruction of the learning disabled."

1985 "As the Province of Alberta comes closer to instituting a new School

Act, our Association assists the process for Rights to Education by ensuring that the learning disabled person's potential is maximized in our schools."

1986 The Outstanding Achievement Award was created by the board, and the first recipient was Keith Fewster of Calgary for his major contributions at the local, provincial and national level.

1989 The City of Edmonton recognizes the Edmonton Chapter of the LDAA for achievement in the field of Social Services.

"... the Government should seriously evaluate the cost effective-

ness of education spending to ensure students are educated and able to be contributing members of adult society. Failure to do so frequently results in additional cost for social support to unemployed or illiterate adults. Initiatives should be undertaken for an inter-dependent strategy within government..."

1991 "We are most grateful to the Law Foundation of Alberta who is funding a proposal of the LDAA to develop an Appeal Process Guide outlining the steps for appealing the decisions of the employees of school boardsit will identify the required rules of natural justice."

1992 "I feel I've received a condensed version of a university prep for doing the job I've been doing without any background in Special Ed..." Comments about the Provincial Conference held in 1990 hosted by the Calgary Chapter.

1993 "The Mandin Memorial Education Fund was established in 1993 in memory of Maurice, Susan, Islay and Janelle Mandin after their untimely death in 1991. The intent of the fund is to provide resources in the area of most need for children with learning challenges in Alberta to encourage these children to pursue their educational goals with enthusiasm and confidence."

1995 "...various LDAA representatives have met with school board trustees, school superintendants, MLA's and MPs. These individual efforts are critical to our long term success in keeping learning disabilities alive in the minds of our educational and political leaders."



1998 "The LDAA recognizes that many Albertans are not aware of learning disabilities or their impact."

2000 The LDAA refines its organizational mission as "Supporting people with learning disabilities so that they develop to their full potential."

"Networking continues with government agencies and other non-profit organizations. The LDAA is a member of the Alberta Disabilities Forum made up of not for profit organizations"

2006 A priority for the LDAA is to "...actively engage in a public policy discussion around Special Needs education with the express purpose of working with Alberta Education to more fully meet the needs of students with LD. A

subsidiary purpose, but one that is important given that LD is lifelong, is to broaden the public policy discussion beyond education to include the other social development departments of the provincial and federal government."

2007 "At the provincial level, we strive to strengthen our collaborative efforts with government agencies that work directly with people with learning disabilities, be it through the education system, post secondary or workplace."



2009 "A grass roots campaign also rages on. While we believe it is essential that public policy is put in place to ensure equal rights and access, we also know that what happens in our homes, schools and communities is often at odds with policies, rules and laws. Providing accurate, practical and timely information to people in the trenches, helps ensure that best practices are implemented in our schools and workplaces."

Recognizing Excellence in 2009–10



Rose Prefontaine – 2009 Outstanding Achievement Award Recipient

The LDAA board, will, at its discretion, award an individual the association’s “Outstanding Achievement Award.” The honor is bestowed periodically to a person, who in the unanimous opinion of the board has achieved excellence in their volunteer or professional capacity in maximizing the potential of individuals with learning disabilities.

The recipient of the Outstanding Achievement Award for the 2009-10 year is Rose Prefontaine of Edmonton, Alberta.

The LDAA Board was enthusiastic to name Rose as the recipient of the Outstanding Achievement Award. She is a person who has labored with passion and integrity behind the scenes within both the Provincial and Federal Government to support people with disabilities. A particular passion and focus of her work has been to enhance access to post secondary education for people with learning and other disabilities. Her achievements illustrate the integral and important role members of the civil service plan in our province and country.

Rose is presently serving as a project specialist with Advanced Education and Technology. She is the parent of an adult daughter who has a disability; she has been a tireless volunteer and advocate for people with autism spectrum disorder.

Previous Recipients of the Outstanding Achievement Award

Brenda Martin (2008)
Teddi Doupe (2007)
Carol Mairs (2006)
Gordon Bullivant (2006)
Calgary Learning Centre (2004)
Judy Craig (2004)
Mark Rota (1997)
Dr. Marilyn Samuels (External 1996)
Brenda Brown (1995)
Dr. Harvey Finnestad (External 1995)

Isabelle Reid (1994)
Bob Reid (1994)
Ruth Lemke (1994)
Betty Finch (1994)
Thelma Scambler (1994)
Gayle James (1994)
Marlene Flynn (1994)
Evelyn Unger (External 1994)
Dr. Fred French (External 1994)

Barbara Coloroso (External 1994)
Mr. & Mrs. D. Harvey (External 1994)
Don Nelson (1994)
Kay Vaughan (1992)
Keith Fewster (1987)

People recognized with the Outstanding Achievement Award become honorary lifelong members of the Association.

Siobhan Isabella Reid Memorial Scholarship

The Siobhan Isabella Reid Memorial Scholarship was established in 1982. Scholarships are presented annually to a full-time student attending an Alberta University. Scholarship recipients must be in a program of study that will enable him or her to assist children or adults with learning disabilities. Scholarship recipients are evaluated on:

- Contributions to community or campus life
- Academic record
- The Award Committee's perception about their future potential to assist children and adults with learning disabilities.

Many fine submissions were received for consideration of the Reid Memorial Scholarship. The LDAA exercised its right to name two high quality award recipients.

Laura Walden is currently completing a Master Program in Applied School Child Psychology at the University of Calgary and was one of two recipients in 2009. She was joined in this honor by **Camille Dubé**, who is currently enrolled in a Master of Science Program in Rehabilitation Medicine and Occupational Therapy.

Mandin Award

The Mandin Award was established in 1991 in memory of Maurice, Susan, Islay, and Janelle Mandin. Maurice and Susan

Mandin were teachers with a sincere interest in children with special needs. Isaly and Janelle, their daughters, were students. The Award has two purposes. The primary one is to provide resources that will have the greatest positive impact for children from age 4-21 within Alberta. The second goal is to encourage those children who receive funds to pursue their educational goals with enthusiasm and confidence.

Erik Brink is the 2009 recipient of the Mandin Award. He was nominated by his school guidance counselor, who wrote how impressed she was by Erik in his determination to do well in school by compensating for some attention deficit problems. The award was used to help Erik take Diploma Review Classes.

Right to Read Project — Certificates of Recognition

An organization like the LDAA is fuelled by volunteers. In some instances, a volunteer will go well above and beyond in their support of an effort. At the President's Luncheon at the 2009 Conference, the LDAA chose to honor two individuals for their amazing contributions to the Right to Read Project.

Geoff Jackson, at Victoria School for the Performing and Visual Arts in Edmonton, Alberta was presented with a Certificate of Recognition for his work in filming and producing a video on the use of the LDAA's Reading Readiness Screening Tool. At the same luncheon, **Sylvia Hannah** was recognized for her major role in writing the script and appearing as the instructor in the video.

LDAA Board 2009–10

Michele Pentyliuk	President	Edmonton
Bonnie Blankert	Vice President	Calgary
Judy Craig	Secretary	Edmonton
Madhu Sood	Treasurer	Edmonton
Sandy Bray	Director	Calgary
Brent Smith	Director	Red Deer
Kelly Lehman	Director	Tofield
Dr. Kristin Morrison	Director	Brooks
Julie de Boer	Director	Medicine Hat
Noreen Rude	Ex Officio	Calgary
Carrie Sandboe	Ex Officio	Edmonton
James Wilson	Ex Officio	Red Deer
Lorrie Goegan	Vice President, Learning Disabilities Association of Canada and Alberta Delegate to the Learning Disabilities Association of Canada	Calgary

Officials 2009–10

Kathryn Burke	Executive Director	Edmonton
Dina Hendzel	Communications Director	Edmonton
Gwyneth Turner	Accounting	Edmonton
William Radvanyi, Trendsetting Services	Web and Information Technology	Edmonton

Edmonton Chapter Report

The past year has been a very busy and productive one for the Edmonton Chapter. Considerable time and effort of staff, board members and ever committed and dedicated volunteers was expended on the final planning stages and implementation of our highlight event of the year - the LDAA Mind, Body, Spirit conference in November 2009. This specialized learning event, hosted by the Edmonton Chapter, brought together educators, parents and professionals and offered many informative and dynamic sessions and was described by many as "one of the best conferences I have ever been to."

Other Chapter highlights over the past year include:

Tried and True Programs

- 5-part "Taking Charge" parent workshop
- "Beyond Words" social skills summer camp for adolescents
- monthly parent support meetings
- monthly "Parent Information Series" that included a broad range of topics from Homework Tips and Tricks and Sensory Awareness Strategies to Assessment and Assistive Technology

New Services

Adult Support Services – A dedicated staff member with specialization in adult learning disabilities was hired to support the growing number of calls from adults with LD and ADD/ADHD with advice, resources and referrals with employment, study, assessment or other concerns.

Community Partnerships

Many new partnerships with other charitable service organizations, professional experts and learning institutions offering key supports and services for our membership and community have been created. This has resulted in a greater availability and access to programming and services for overlapping clients of each organization. Such key partnerships have included:

- CHADD Edmonton Satellite Chapter with its' ADHD support groups and information sessions;
- Social skills programming with local psychologists;
- KIDS (Kindergarten Inclusive Developmental Services) - joint parent information sessions;

Outreach and Community Awareness

The chapter participated in many outreach and community awareness such as:

- The Greater Edmonton Teacher's Convention
- 8th Annual Literacy and Learning Day conference
- Dr. Russell Barkley, Understanding ADHD Public Presentation (LDAA/Janssen-Ortho sponsored event)

- Alberta Education's Setting the Direction for Special Education initiative
- Edmonton Public School Board's special education public consultation
- Various individual school information sessions and resource fairs

Substantial Increases in

- attendance of parents and professionals in the monthly parent information sessions and workshops
- calls and email requests for information and assistance to our office
- requests for information and outreach presentations by community organizations and schools.

Contact Information:

Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta
Edmonton Chapter
5540 – 106 Avenue (St. Gabriel School)
Edmonton, AB T6A 1G3
Phone: 780-466-1011 Fax: 780-466-1095
Web: www.LDEdmonton.ca
E-mail: help@LDEdmonton.ca



Red Deer Chapter Report

The Red Deer Chapter experienced unprecedented growth in 2009-2010 with the demand from Central Albertans outnumbering the staff to accommodate their needs/requests. **Highlights for the year:**

- The LDAA-RD met and exceeded its expectations directly serving 470 families through programs and services. This does not include the number of phone calls or emails for information or referrals, drop-ins to the office or persons utilizing our Resource Library.
- The LDAA-RD's Summer One-on-One Multidisciplinary Reading, Writing and Math Tutoring Program exceeded expectations serving 13 students who were tutored by nine tutors 2 times per week over a period of 9 weeks.
- The LDAA-RD's ongoing after school Multidisciplinary Reading, Writing and Math Tutoring Program exceeded demand and expectations with a waiting list of students wanting to be tutored.
- The LDAA-RD's Kinship Day Camp for children ages 7 – 9 years who are experiencing difficulties with social skills met with great success and exceeded expectations.
- The LDAA-RD's Think Social 8 week-program for ages 10-12 years met with success.
- The Speakers' Series for Parents / Teachers / Professionals was launched in the spring of 2009 and continues to grow because of the quality of speakers and the discussions that follow.

Multidisciplinary Reading, Writing, Math Tutoring Program

Individualized tutoring in reading, writing and math utilizing a multidisciplinary approach and designed to suit the needs of the student in homework, school assignments, study skills and test preparation had enrollment of 43 students throughout the year. Some enrolled for the course of 18 sessions offered 2 times per week and several have continued with us 2 times per week for the past year, continually renewing their 18 sessions. Word of mouth referrals by satisfied clients has been very beneficial to our success. The Red Deer Chapter has tutored from ages 5 through to college level in all areas including how to write term papers. Unexpected this year has been the increase in students requiring math tutoring, a priority for many. We have qualified staff to assist adults as well. The program is designed and overseen by a qualified Special Education teacher.

Irlen Assessments

Scotopic Sensitivity / Irlen Syndrome is a perceptual problem that prevents an estimated 10-12% of the population from being able to learn, read, or study efficiently. During 2009, 42 people were assessed for Irlen Syndrome by a staff qualified Irlen Screener.

Social Skills

2009 was the launch of our Kinship Camp for ages 7-9 years. This was followed during the winter by an 8 week (1 ½ hours each session) Think Social Program. The success of these initiatives now has the Red Deer Chapter preparing for two Kinship Camps during July 2010, two Think Social Programs for ages 7 – 9 and for ages 10-12, and the development of two teen programs starting in the fall of 2010. The programs benefitted the children by providing them with the opportunity to learn about themselves, about others and about how to feel comfortable and confident in social situations. For some children who never have had a friend or have been invited to a birthday party, this opportunity opened the doors for a friendship that continued after the classes ended. Through continuous written updates on each day's activities and outcomes plus handouts and direct communication with the social competence coaches, parents benefitted as well so that the behavioural changes continued into the home environment with siblings and family and into the school with peers and authority figures. With class size limited to 3 children to each coach, meaningful learning occurred.

Parent / Teacher / Professional Development Presentations and Workshops

Starting in the spring of 2009, the Speakers' Series attracted parents/caregivers, teachers and professionals through topics such as 'Behaviour Management', 'Nurturing Self-Esteem', 'Demystifying Cognitive Assessments in Schools', and 'Understanding Learning Disabilities'. Also offered was the complete Rick Lavoie Series of 6 video workshops on how adults whether as the parent, teacher or professional can support those with learning disabilities at home or in the school environment. Additionally, Pediatrician Dr. David Roseman provided an educational forum on ADHD in children in the fall of 2009 followed by Psychiatrist Dr. Nagy Youssef on youth and adult ADHD in the spring of 2010. These sessions continue to be well attended by parents/caregivers, teachers and psychologists and Social Workers.

Resource Library

The Red Deer Chapter has a well-stocked Resource Library for the public. Members have sign-out privileges plus receive 4 copies of the Perspectives Magazine per year. Included in the Chapter Membership is membership with other Chapters, the Provincial and National Chapters and their publications.

Contact Information:

The Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta
Red Deer Chapter

Lower Level, 3757-43 Avenue
Red Deer, AB T4N 3B7

Phone: 403-340-3885

Fax: 403-340-3884

Web: www.LDReddeer.ca

E-mail: help@LDReddeer.ca

Calgary Chapter Report

The LDAA-CC was able to meet and exceed its' expectations for 2009 while providing supports, programs and services to over 4,500 Families. There were a record 330 members that joined the LDAA-CC and received the benefits of membership, some of these included:

- The LDAA-CC had 29,439 visits to their website and 2,131 calls to the office from individuals seeking information and resources.
- The LDAA-CC was pleased to provide programs, seminars and workshops to over 1,825 participants.
- The LDAA-CC introduced a new annual fundraiser with "An Evening with Rick Mercer". This event attracted a sold out house at 1,804 attendees and provided fabulous media exposure for people affected by learning disabilities.
- In 2009 the LDAA-CC added another session of the Athletic Coordination and expanded its residential camp program to attract over 222 children to the trademark Amicus Camp Programs.
- 2009 included an expansion of the distribution of the Perspectives Magazine with over 13,000 copies distributed.
- The LDAA-CC hosted its annual charity golf tournament raised over \$11,000 for the LDAA-CC this year, while also raising awareness about learning disabilities.

Social Skills

Five Social Skills programs were offered in Calgary in 2009. Two programs were for children with external social skills difficulties, two were for internal social skills difficulties and one was mixed. We once again partnered with Estelle Siebens Community Services, associated with Foothills Academy to run social skills programs, with a total of 113 participants.

Camp Amicus

This summer was the 27th year for Camp Amicus. Camp Amicus 2009 was a huge success with the highest registration numbers to date with 222 campers. The LDAA-CC offered eight camps for children age 8 to 17 with learning disabilities and AD/HD. The camps provided wonderful opportunities for campers to develop social skills, friendships and self esteem. Camp Amicus again had wonderful campers and staff involved in the program. This year also saw an increase in our returning campers, not only signifying the need for the camp programs, but also the desire to solidify friendships and understanding of social skills.

Athletic Coordination Camp

This was the second year that we offered the Athletic Coordination Camp and a session was added to meet the demand of our members. The camp uses athletic activities and concepts to improve fine and gross motor coordination while teaching the essentials of team building. There were 30 participants in this program.

"Learning Through Laughter" Teen Social Skills program

This is a new program that was launched this year. Reinforcing the social skills curriculum that the LDAA-CC is known for, this new program also taught the use of humor in social situations. With the help of two professional comedians facilitating the program, the participants had an amazing time helping each other to develop their own stand-up comedy routine. The participants then put on their own show to an audience at The Comedy Stop at the Blackfoot Inn.

Real Life Social Skills for Teens

This social skills program provided workshops on practical skills for children in grades 7 through 10. The teens participated in a variety of "every day" activities designed to teach the skills necessary for day-to-day life. Topics and activities included becoming familiar with public transit, restaurant etiquette, sportsmanship, a day at the mall, personal hygiene and job skills.

Parent & Educator Workshops

Our Calgary parent workshops were well attended with excellent facilitators that presented on issues such as 'Social Skills Reinforcement at Home', 'Medical Supports for AD/HD', 'Supporting and advocating for your child at school', 'Income tax and tax credits' and many other issues pressing to parents. The Calgary parent workshops are offered in partnership with the Calgary Learning Centre.

Boys and Girls Social Skills

In collaboration with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Calgary, this new social skills program provides opportunities for children to learn appropriate social skills, anger management, peer relations and problem solving skills which help to raise self esteem and help them to better integrate into society. This program is offered in two Boys and Girls Clubs and a third is being added in 2010.

Adult Support Group

Due to excessive demand, the LDAA-CC is now facilitating an adult support group for people over the age of 18. This group meets once a week and discusses workplace, social and behavioral issues that affect their lives. The group is facilitated by a registered Psychologist and has met with substantial enthusiasm and success.

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Our Mission

To support people with learning disabilities achieve their full potential.

Who We Are

We are a not-for-profit charitable association of parents and professionals linked to a network of Chapters in Calgary, Red Deer, and Edmonton.

What We Believe

Every person is unique and this must be respected and reflected in public policy.
Unwrapping the gifts of people with learning disabilities unlocks their full potential.
People with learning disabilities are a vast untapped human resource.
Early intervention and appropriate accommodation matter to everyone.
The consequence of Learning Disabilities not mattering is community wide and impacts resources in employment, mental health, justice, health, and other human services.
The loss of human potential is immeasurable.

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