



**United Way
Centraide**
Sudbury and/or District

Bigger and Better in Sudbury...and reaching out East and West

LDAS Moving Forward and Reaching Out with *The Right to Learn and the Power to Achieve*

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The LDAS is very proud to be a **United Way funded agency!** Thanks to the great community support to the 2011 United Way Centraide Sudbury campaign, LDAS has received funding for our student/ parent/ family support, our coaching, and our community outreach programs. The programs and services LDAS provide align very closely to the new United Way focus of “all that kids can be”.

Many more of the faces of children and youth with learning disabilities across northeastern Ontario will be happy and confident because of new commitments from the LDAS Board of Directors and our funding partners. During our full day Board retreat last month, we developed an action plan to maintain and enhance the programs and services we offer to students with learning disabilities, their parents and families, educators, and other professionals in the Sudbury area. With additional input and support from the school boards, we will be connecting with more families. With our focus of ‘working together for rising stars’, we will be reaching out to the over



Liz Brett-Dickie at the United Way Ceremony on December 15, 2011.

1000 students with learning disabilities locally. Recent statistics on the number of students with learning disabilities include the Rainbow District School Board with 830 identified students and the Sudbury Catholic District School Board with 284 identified students.

In September 2011, we received a \$10,000 Parent Reaching Out grant from the Ministry of Education to offer support to students with learning disabilities

including the North Bay area, and we will continue for the next few months to offer several partnership opportunities and workshops to communities in the Nipissing District. We are also optimistic that we will receive funding support for 2012 for our first application to

United Way Nipissing to replicate several of our successful programs in the North Bay area. The Near North District School Board has 1107 students identified with a learning disability, and the Nipissing Parry Sound Catholic District School Board have proportionate numbers.

(Continued on page 2)

Mission Statement

To support all individuals with learning disabilities in reaching their full potential in a community that values their unique abilities and contributions.

New Website Launch



A fresh look is on the way for the ldasudbury.ca website. Recently, we hired the services of local Sudbury communications firm, Bureau (bureaugroup.ca), located downtown on Elgin Street. The redesign will

incorporate our new logo and bring the site up to date. This branding move is an important step for The Learning Disabilities Association Sudbury Chapter and will help us reach more people effectively. Social media including streaming videos, a news blog, and Twitter feed will provide users with an interactive,

fresh experience.

Spearheading the redesign are Bureau founders Nico Taus and Frank Chartrand, professor of Graphic Design at Cambrian College.

The website launch in 6-8 weeks time will help reach a wider audience and draw repeat visitors, as we spread the word in Northern Ontario that we are here to educate and support parents, teachers and most importantly students. Visitors will be able to browse resources, services, and connect with our Sudbury resources as well as access contacts for satellite offices in Sault-Ste-Marie and North Bay. Once it's up and running, we will even be able to accept online donations.

Sign up to be notified when it goes live by following @LDASudbury on Twitter or send us your email address to be included in our mailing list @resource@ldasudbury.ca.

LDAS Moving Forward and Reaching Out

(Continued from page 1)

What a great opportunity to work together and make investments in these young people!

Last fall, the Ontario Trillium Foundation provided LDAS with a two-year \$50,000 grant “for working together for rising stars” to the East. We are developing an amazing network of community champions in Sault Ste. Marie and supporting them in building community capacity for a sustainable organization in the Algoma District. As we start to make inroads and build awareness and empathy, we conducted five classroom presentations with 751 students, three community presentations with 186 participants, and a great evening workshop for parents navigating the system. LDAS is back in Sault Ste. Marie for three days of presentations and workshops including the first meeting of the Algoma Community Champions Network to be held on Monday, March 1st at 10 a.m. hosted by Sault College.

This newsletter is dedicated to children and youth across northeastern Ontario and their support system from parents and families, extended families, dedicated

educators, and the community that values their unique strengths and abilities. Collectively we owe it to the thousands of these young people who have average to above average intelligence and tremendous abilities to continue to work together and reach out to support them in reaching personal success both educationally and in life.

Anyone in Sudbury, Manitoulin, Algoma, and Nipissing Districts can reach us directly by e-mail at info@ldasudbury.ca, Facebook, or by telephone. Our toll-free number is 855-522-0100. Our local number is 705-522-0100.



P A R E N T S

The Coaching Program: Would it Work for Your Child?

A coach is a mentor, a role model, a supportive friend; coaching is an exercise in trust. With this as our foundation, the LDAS-Laurentian University Coaching Program continues to reach young people with learning disabilities as well as teacher candidates.

Meeting every week in a local library for an hour and a half, an adolescent with an identified learning disability in Grades 7, 8, or 9 is matched with a coach from LU's third year concurrent education program. Together, the student and coach build trust and respect, the base for authentic learning for anyone.

To enhance the student's confidence and success as an active learner, the coach supports the student with activities: identifying learning preferences, establishing intelligence strengths, building a learning profile, sampling different learning strategies, and more.

These activities are part of the process in developing **self-advocacy**, a key to success for all individuals but especially for young people who are diagnosed with learning disabilities. Self-advocators know how they learn differently and take action to bring about success in learning (and in life!).

Adolescence can be a challenging time for all parent-child relationships. Parents want the best for their children, but it's not always easy when your child is starting to explore independence. This coaching situation may help a young person who needs a mentor who is willing not only to provide support in completing school assignments, but also to guide the individual in understanding him/herself as a **different kind of learner**.

Many of the young people who have taken part in the coaching program have found a supportive friend; as such, the coaching sessions are times for sharing past learning experiences and building new ones together. And that means hope!

So, want to get your child involved? He/she may not be enthusiastic at the idea of facing one's learning disability. However, we don't present the opportunity as more schoolwork or another possibility for failure. Rather, the Coaching Program offers young people with learning disabilities the opportunity for a

relationship with a mentor, one who wants to understand what learning differently means. In a one-on-one situation, the opportunities for success, regardless of the activity, are enhanced.

Applications for the program are made available in the spring through the resource teacher at your child's school or by contacting The Learning Disabilities Association of Sudbury at (705)522-0100 for more information.

Constructing Advocates Workshops coming this Spring

Sponsored by SEAC and LDAS

Contact our office for more details.

(705) 522 0100 or resource@ldasudbury.ca

Learning Disabilities Working Group Established by Ministry of Education

The Learning Disabilities Working Group established in 2011 provides expertise and shares knowledge with the Ministry of Education in the areas of learning disabilities.

The key objectives of the group include:

- support preparation of guidelines for school boards on learning disabilities,
- identify resources that have proved to be effective in supporting the achievement of students with learning disabilities, and
- review and assess relevance and currency of PPM 8 (Policy/Program Memorandum) on learning disabilities and provide recommendations to the Ministry.

To learn more about PPM 8, visit

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/8.html>

To support school boards, schools and parents in the area of learning disabilities, the Guidelines for Programs and Services for Students with LD along with a repository of resources will be developed for release in 2012.

http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/SpecialEd_Update2011.pdf

YOUTH AND STUDENTS

Principles for Success

Self-advocacy is understanding your strengths and needs, identifying your personal goals, knowing your legal rights and responsibilities, and communicating these to others.

Kevin O'Leary from the Dragon's Den shares five very important principles of life which can easily be applied to self-advocacy:

- Stick it out through difficulties. You don't have to be perfect; you just have to finish.
- Stand up for yourself.
- Explain what you need, clearly.
- Ask questions.

If you don't understand the answer, ask for a better, clearer explanation.

Self-Advocacy is speaking up for oneself. Until recently it was a concept used more for adults with disabilities, but increasingly it is recognized as a skill that teens with disabilities need to develop.

<http://www.texasprojectfirst.org/SelfAdvocacy.html>

David is a 16 year old young man identified with a learning disability. David participates in all school meetings. He assists in determining his course selection and tells the committee what kinds of supports he feels he needs or can benefit from. He is included in the discussion of IEP goals and is held accountable for his role in trying to meet those goals. David is an example of a self-advocate who embodies Kevin O'Leary's principles.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Mark Your Calendar!

Coaching Program Graduation Ceremony

March 22, 2012

7:00 p.m.

Laurentian University,
Alphonse Raymond Building, Room 134



Earn It! – Cambrian Learning Account

Did you know you can earn up to \$5000.00 in Cambrian Bucks to put towards your education at the College.

To learn more about this exciting program visit:

www.cambriancollege.ca/FutureStudents/Pages/MyLearningAccount.aspx

AT = Access to Learning

Assistive technology is the key to breaking down barriers for many students with learning disabilities. It is with ongoing training that students find success in the classroom and beyond.

The Learning Disabilities Association of Sudbury is pleased to announce we will be hosting an Assistive Technology Camp again this year for students identified with a learning disability in grades 6 to 8.

To register please contact our office at (705) 522- 0100 or resource@ldasudbury.ca.

Please note space is limited



iPhone and iPod touch Apps for (Special) Education

By Eric Sailers

Click here:

<http://www.nads.org/docs/iPhone-Apps.pdf>

Homework Help

Homework Help is a free online math help for students in Grades 7-10. Homework Help is funded by the Ministry of Education and administered by the Independent Learning Centre.

<https://homeworkhelp.ilc.org/index.php>

YOUTH AND STUDENTS

Reading with Assistive Technology

By Marlene McIntosh, BSc, MBA, MEd, Cambrian College

There are many assistive technology (AT) products available on today's market. Many schools have this technology available for student use, but it may not be used to its true potential. How can AT help students with learning disabilities (LD) to read better? Let's look at a specific type of software, text to speech.

Reading with Text to Speech Assistive Technology

“Although assistive technologies make it possible for students with disabilities to profit from good instruction, technology is not magic; it is simply a tool of education. As with any tool, when used skilfully, it can help achieve spectacular results” (Hasselbring & Bausch, 2005, p. 75).

Ongoing research demonstrates that there are many benefits of assistive technology for students with learning disabilities. It is most effective when it is used as a compensatory tool to build on students' strengths and to compensate for processing deficits. It can be used as a motivational tool that allows students with LD to learn and achieve more and to complete academic tasks independently.

Text to speech software is one of the assistive technology tools. It allows students with LD to read and listen at the same time. Students can use this software to read books, articles, magazines, web pages, emails, and so on. Since eight out of ten students with LD have difficulty with reading, they may require support in order to access reading materials at an age or grade appropriate level. Thus, these students may not be able to read at this level without intervention. Students who use text to speech software to read

become better readers. Contrary to what some believe, the technology *strengthens* their reading capabilities.

Assistive technology can help students with LD who cannot read very well in two ways. One way is that the technology can be used to help with decoding and comprehension. For example, when students use text to speech software, the words are read aloud while students read along. This can increase reading speed because the software decodes the words. Students can also get immediate access to electronic dictionaries to improve comprehension. Sometimes just hearing the text helps students to understand it. The second way that technology can be helpful for students with reading problems is that it can strengthen their overall reading skills because students will read more than they would without the software. Therefore, the technology allows students with LD to read and gain knowledge; they can then scaffold upon this knowledge afterwards. In fact, many adults with LD stop reading at a young age. Many have never read **any** books. When students with LD use technology to read, they are exposed to a wider variety of materials than those who don't use technology. The more materials that students with LD read, the broader their knowledge base becomes. Thus, reading with AT can alleviate a common problem that non-reading students face, a lack of background knowledge (Hasselbring & Bausch, 2005; Silver-Pacuilla, 2006).

Having access to appropriate technology, explicit instruction of its use, and continual feedback from educators are key to the successful implementation of text to speech technology for students with LD.

For more information, please contact Marlene McIntosh at marlene.mcintosh@cambriancollege.ca.

Volunteer!

Calling all Students Grade 9 to 12

Do you need to fulfill your Community Service Hours? Want to share your computer skills with others? Why not become a Volunteer?

A volunteer offers support to library patrons with the use of digital gadgets, popular online websites, social media and other online or computer based services.

Contact the Greater Sudbury Public Library and ask about their Volunteer Program today.

EDUCATORS

Encouraging Self-Advocacy: A Teacher's Perspective

By Ronda Lenti

With a class of 25 to 30 students (or more), how does a teacher find the extra time for those individuals with learning disabilities? Well, there probably is never enough time, but one solution is to teach and support student self-advocacy.

The first step is establishing honest dialogue with the student one-on-one. Listening with compassion and openness will build trust – a trust that is needed before the child will share how he/she learns differently. Because I don't have a learning disability, I had to tell students that I really didn't know what it felt like to struggle with reading or writing or math. However, I also let them know that I wanted to help and to learn from them. That admission seemed to make all the difference.

Second, if you already haven't done so, check the child's OSR, particularly the assessment of the learning disability as well as the IEP recommendations. However, I had better success eliciting this information from the student rather than imposing it. Students will share as they are ready, but I'm also ready to help them explore how they learn differently – learning styles, intelligences, strengths and challenges. What strategies have proven successful for them in the past?

Start small to guarantee success and strengthen the trust. Give them possible strategies from which to choose rather than forcing a particular way of learning on them.

Quotations

Students don't
care how much
you know until
they know how
much you care.

Anonymous

If we teach
today's students
as we taught
yesterday's, we
rob them of
tomorrow.

John Dewey

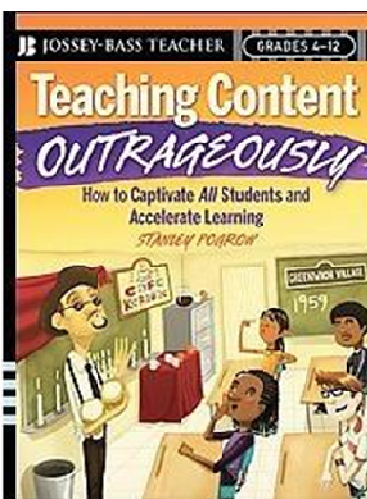
It is important that they begin to take ownership of their learning, a necessary step in developing self-advocacy and independence. More and more they will recognize what they need and how to make it happen.

One final tactic that I used was modelling advocacy. I became an advocate for these students with their other teachers. Such support convinced the students that I not only believed in their ability to succeed, but also cared about them as individuals.

Yes, it takes time initially to establish the dialogue, and to try out different learning strategies. However, in the end, a student who self-advocates is successful and independent. Time then is no issue.

Ronda is a retired secondary school English teacher who learned much about learning disabilities towards the end of her career, and now continues to learn through her work with LDAS.

Book Review



Stanley Pogrow, Ed.D.,

believes that when teachers apply their imagination to teaching, students will apply their imagination to learning.

A powerful instructional method for "hooking" students on academic learning is described in his book *Teaching Content Outrageously*. Drawing from a teaching model designed to banish

boredom and student apathy, this book explains how dramatic practices can serve as powerful tools for enlivening lessons and captivating students, even the most resistant learners. Pogrow believes that a great way to engage learners is to employ dramatic techniques as an instruction tool. Pogrow shows how any teacher can make use of dramatic techniques, such as surprise, humour, fantasy, role plays, games, and simulations to create standards-based content lessons that are riveting, effective, and meaningful.

NORTH BAY SERVICES

855 522 0100

Beating The Odds

The Learning Disabilities Association of Sudbury along with support from Nipissing University, Ministry of Education and United Way North Bay welcome to the **Nipissing University Theatre Stage**, International Motivation Speaker **Leslie Andrew**, on **Monday March 26, 2012, 7:00 p.m.**

Educators/Parents/Students/Professionals across Canada have been captivated by "Leslie's mixture of stories, poignant memories, humour and lessons learned.

The focus of Leslie's presentation is facing fears and attaining goals, overcoming learning obstacles and taking responsibility for personal change and growth.

Join us for this free evening presentation.

Passport to Learning

The Learning Disabilities Association of Sudbury took part in the second annual Literacy Awareness Day held at the West Nipissing Recreation Centre. Hundreds of students along with their teachers attended the all day event themed Passport to Learning put on by the Literacy Alliance of West Nipissing.

<http://www.westnipissing.com/Tribune/>

Testimonials for Leslie Andrew – 'Beating the Odds'

"A truly inspirational story demonstrating how anyone can triumph in the face of adversity."

"A great reminder that everything we say and do can have a lasting impact on our students."

"Inspiring for the audience of all ages, captivating!"

"Great teaching suggestions."

www.dreaminprogress.com



Build Your Learning Profile



The Learning Disabilities Association of Sudbury hosted a free workshop for Parents and Students at Northern Secondary School.

"When you understand how you learn, you increase your ability to become more engaged in the learning process" states Angie DeMarco, Community Outreach and Education Coordinator, for the Learning Disabilities Association of Sudbury.

Contact our office to learn more about this and other workshops available to parents and educator.

communityoutreach@ldasudbury.ca

SAULT STE. MARIE SERVICES

855 522 0100

Community Champion Network & Looking Ahead to 2012

Building upon the strengths of our fall visits in 2011, LDAS is now planning our next trips for this spring. In addition to offering workshops and presentations available in schools and in the community, we will be hosting meetings with 'community champions' with the objective of establishing a community champion network. This community champion network we hope will be comprised of students, parents of students with learning disabilities, educators (current and retired), and community members wishing to contribute to this project of *'working together for rising stars'*.

This network team will develop a consensus on the outcomes and expectations from the Ontario Trillium Grant project. They will also provide input into Year 2 of the project from September 2012 to July 2012. This will include development of partnership initiatives and opportunities to establish a sustainable presence in Sault Ste. Marie in support of students with learning disabilities across the Algoma District.



PO Box 21038
1935 Paris Street,
Plaza 69
Sudbury, ON P3E 6G6

Phone: 705-522-0100
Fax: 705-522-2289
info@ldasudbury.ca
www.ldasudbury.ca



**United Way
Centraide**
Sudbury and/or District

LDAS Services we provide:

- **One-on-one resource/advocacy support** to families as they “navigate the school system”
- **Development and delivery** of workshops and presentations designed to raise awareness through our Community Outreach Program
- **Extensive resource library** offered through our partnership with the Greater Sudbury Public Library
- **Gr. 7 & 8 Coaching Program** in partnership with Laurentian University
- **School Age Presentations:**

Happy Feet	Gr. 2 - 4
LD 101	Gr. 5 - 8
Self-Advocacy	Gr. 7 - 8
- **Edu-Kinethetics** an interactive workshop to address anxiety and negative emotions
- **Newsletters** “Working Together for Rising Stars”
- **Representation** on School Board SEAC Committees, RDSB & SCDSB
- **Web Site:** www.ldasudbury.ca

Parent Comment

“The services offered by the LDAS are a must for all individuals that struggle with learning differences. It is a place of abundance in resources and supports. This agency is a key player in bringing the awareness to the general public. This agency is assisting parents in becoming stronger advocates for their children by providing guidance to ensure that acceptance and school accommodations are in place. I am most appreciative to have this service.”

Joanne, Parent

Thanks to our Donors

As it states on their website, Gougeon developed a Community Action Plan which places money aside each year for local non-profit organizations. The Learning Disabilities Association of Sudbury received a donation and are honoured to be a part of that plan.

“At Gougeon Insurance Brokers we encourage and support our staff to break down boundaries and step beyond the local community to provide others with a different kind of ‘life insurance.’

The Learning Disabilities Association of Sudbury is grateful to Gougeon Insurance Brokers for their support in working together for our rising stars!



A Voice at the SEAC Table

The Special Education Advisory Committee plays an important role in the education system. It is the voice at the table that:

- makes recommendations to the board with respect to any matter affecting the establishment, development, and delivery of special education programs and services for exceptional pupils of the board;
- participates in the board's annual review of its special education plan;
- participates in the board's annual budget process as it relates to special education;
- reviews the financial statements of the board as they relate to special education;
- provides information to parents, as requested.

Each school board must establish a SEAC which is legislated under the Education Act and Regulation 464/97. SEAC meets once a month during the school year. Meetings are open to the public.

The Learning Disabilities Association of Sudbury has SEAC representation at both English school boards. To learn more about joining SEAC contact your local school board or visit www.seaclearning.ca