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Providing support to people with learning disabilities so that they can develop to their full potential.

## The LDAA Moves Ahead Toward Exciting Changes

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The provincial newsletter is published three times a year as an Alberta supplement to the **National** newsletter of the Learning Disabilities Association of Canada. It is distributed to all members of the LDAA and its chapters.

Contributions are welcome. Deadline for the next issue is July 30, 2006. For writer's guidelines, visit [www.ldaa.ca/newsletters](http://www.ldaa.ca/newsletters).

The Annual General Meeting resulted in some exciting changes. We would like to welcome **Elayne Harris Lorenz** as President, **Michele Pentyliuk** as Vice President, and three new directors: **Bonnie Blankert**, **Sandy Bray** and **Kathryn Burke**,

At the same time we would like to say "good-bye" and "good luck" to **Janet Cox**, who served on the Board for two years and was the provincial representative to the Learning Disabilities Association of Canada (LDAC). Janet also served on the Awards & Scholarships and Communications Project Committees. She will be missed. We wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

**Lorrie Goegan** ended her term as President, and though we will miss her active leadership, we are pleased to have her on the Board in a new position as Past President and as the provincial representative to the LDAC. Lorrie provided vision and commitment to the LDAA and we look to her wise counsel in the coming year.

There have been changes within the chapters as well. We would like to say "good-bye" and "good luck" to **Sue Cartensen** who served as the Executive Director to the Red Deer Chapter for several years, and welcome **Kathy Parsons** as the new Executive Director. Kathy is a graduate of Grant MacEwan College and has considerable training and experience in non-profit and volunteer management. In addition, Kathy has almost 20 years business experience running two of her own successful businesses.

Kathy's background and experience make a perfect fit as the Red Deer Chapter endeavors to create a more business like model of management and funding. In addition, the Red Deer Chapter is very busy creating a number of new programs and building its reputation as a valuable resource for the community and those with learning disabilities. "I am very excited about being part of the new momentum we are creating in Central Alberta and the opportunities we are able to create to help children with learning challenges, their parents, families and educators," says Parsons.

And, we would like to welcome **Helen Parfitt** the new Program Manager of the Edmonton Chapter. Helen is a Special Education teacher who moved to Edmonton from Cold Lake a year and a half ago. She has experience teaching special education in Ontario, Quebec, Alberta and Nunavut.

## Biographies of the New Board Members of the LDAA

**Bonnie Blankert** graduated from the University of Calgary with a Master's Degree in Education in 1994, specializing in learning and instruction with an interest in learning disabilities. Bonnie has worked as a Disabilities Consultant at Mount Royal College in Calgary for the past five and a half years. In this position she works with students with disabilities and their instructors to secure academic accommodation services, and educates faculty and staff about disabilities and their duty to accommodate. She also counsels students on disability management. On a National level, Bonnie serves as the Prairie Regional Representative for the Canadian Association of Disability Providers in Post Secondary Education. In addition to this, Bonnie has been involved in various committees and has been active in the creation of several disability-related documents.

**Kathryn Burke** graduated from the University of Calgary with a Master's Degree in Arts (Sociology) in 1983. Currently, Kathryn is the owner and President of Burke & Associates Inc., a western-based Canadian management consulting firm specializing in health care. In the role of President and principal consultant, Kathryn serves as a lead consultant on a diverse range of projects involving new program development, project management, task group facilitation, evaluation, data collection, needs analysis, and operational reviews. Burke and Associates Inc. also established PatientSurvey.ca in 2004 to help health providers obtain feedback from patients about health outcomes and satisfaction with various aspects of receiving care. Kathryn is a prolific writer and presenter with her most recent presentation on the Survey of Children with Learning Challenges (April 5, 2006), on behalf of the Parent Advisory Council, Academy at King Edward.

**Sandy Bray** is a self-motivated and enthusiastic professional with over 20 years experience in both corporate and not for profit organizations. Working in the field of health, and mental health specifically, Sandy has experience in developing, implementing, and evaluating programs for individuals with disabilities and other health issues, as well as special education events and conferences. She has a creative and collaborative approach to developing new and innovative ways to meeting challenges and enhancing service to customers and clients.

**Michele Pentyliuk** is a Psychologist in private practice. A former special education teacher and consultant, she specializes in the diagnosis of and intervention with individuals with learning disabilities and ADHD. Michele works with both children and adults in her private practice, and in over the past four years has contracted with the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology to provide learning strategies and consultation for students with disabilities. She has traveled throughout western Canada providing in-service instruction to teachers and other professionals in the educational field regarding strategy instruction across the curriculum. Michele is on the planning committee for the 2006 LDAA Conference. She served on the LDAA Board for several months before her appointment to the Board of Directors at the Annual General Meeting. Michele is also the mother of three school-aged children.

" I attribute my success to self awareness of my needs, how I learn, the strategies I need to use, etc. This has taken me a long time to develop.

Finding mentors I admire and learning how to accept both positive and negative feedback has also helped"

~Stories from Canada—wide focus groups in 2005~



## The LDAA Adopts the LDAC Policy Statement on Educational Inclusion for Students with Learning Disabilities

The winter issue of *The National*, the Learning Disabilities Association of Canada's (LDAC) newsletter, discussed their policy on educational inclusion for students with learning disabilities (LD). This policy, ratified by the LDAC Board of Directors on November 26, 2005, stated that **the LDAC recognizes the unique needs of individuals with LD and that full educational inclusion of these students may not be appropriate for everyone**. The policy goes on to list "Components for Success" for students with LD, which includes:

1. Early identification and multidisciplinary assessment;
2. Criteria for effective individualized program planning;
3. Environmental considerations such as class size, adequate resources, and a supportive educational atmosphere;
4. The continuation of appropriate supports for the students through their educational career, with a transition plan in accordance with their changing needs and/or setting; and
5. The recognition that both parents and teachers have a role ensuring success.

The Board of the LDAA, at its February 28, 2006 meeting, adopted this as the provincial policy on Inclusion.

## Broadening Services to Include People With ADHD

The Board of the LDAA has adopted a policy on providing services to people with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). ADHD is defined as:

...a persistent pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity-impulsivity that is more frequently displayed and more severe than is typically observed in individuals at a comparable level of development; is evident before age seven; is displayed in the home and in the school setting; and is where there is clear evidence of interference with developmentally appropriate social, academic, or occupational functioning.

(Diagnostic & Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition, Text Revision)

The Board's policy decision recognizes that ADHD is not a LD, that they often exist together, and that the chapters are already providing programs and services to people with ADHD. With these facts in mind, the Board concluded that providing support to people with ADHD adds value to the support being provided to people with LD, and therefore fits, within its mandate.

"With the amount of money I've spent, I probably could have bought a house."

~Stories from Canada—wide focus groups in 2005~

## Mandated Teacher Training in Special Education: a proposal from the Calgary Stakeholder's Group

The Calgary Stakeholder's Group is a group of organizations with a common interest in learning disabilities and the educational system.

In February 2006, the Calgary Stakeholder's group submitted to the Honourable Gene Zwozdesky, Minister of Alberta Education, Dave Hancock, Minister of Advanced Education, Frank Bruseker, President of the Alberta Teachers' Association, and David Anderson, Executive Director of the Alberta School Boards Association a proposal concerning *Mandated Teacher Training in Special Education for Teachers in Alberta*. The proposal's major recommendation is that:

*Alberta Education establish a Commission on Special Education in order to review the training needs of teachers for children and youth with special needs in Alberta's schools and make recommendations with respect to the nature and scope of mandated teacher training in special education in Alberta.*

Over the last decade, educational professionals have been looking for ways to enhance student's learning, but at the same time, more students have been identified as having special needs. Additionally, there has been a shift in how these students' needs have been addressed with the expectation that teachers are to provide for those needs even though they may not have been adequately trained to do so. The proposal argues that there needs to be mandated standards and qualifications for teacher training and development with respect to special education.

The Stakeholders group also recommends that teachers receive mandatory instruction on assessment, individual program planning, adaptive instruction, differentiated learning, multicultural education, and holistic curriculum development, and practical skills in consultative and collaborative practices in schools.

This proposal has its roots in the report from Alberta's Commission on Learning "Every Child Learns: Every Child Succeeds" (2003), and a review of special education in Alberta in a report entitled "Shaping the Future for Students with Special Needs" (2000).

The Board of the LDAA has provided strong written support for this initiative.

"Show me someone who has not made a mistake in the last one year, and I'll show you someone who has not learned anything in the last one year"

~Winston Churchill~



## Casino Volunteers Needed

The LDAA will be having its first casino on Wednesday, November 29 & Thursday, November 30, 2006 at Casino Edmonton and are looking for volunteers to fill all positions.

This is a significant fund raising opportunity for the LDAA. The funds will support the provision of programs and services to people with LD and ADHD throughout the province.

If you are interested in assisting with the casino, please contact the LDAA at 448-0360 for more information.

## LD and ADHD: A Brief Overview

A learning disability is a disorder that affects a person's ability to either interpret what they see and hear or to link information from different parts of the brain. Although the individual with a learning disability has an average or above-average IQ, the disability becomes evident in both academic and social situations. The individual can have marked difficulties on certain types of tasks while excelling at others.

ADHD is considered to be a neurobiological disability that interferes with a person's ability to sustain attention or focus on a task and to control impulsive behaviour. We may all have difficulty sitting still, paying attention or controlling impulses, but for some people it gets in the way of daily life—at home, at school, at work and in social settings.

ADHD is not a learning disability. Each is a distinctive neurologically based disorder. Each is recognized and diagnosed differently and each is treated in a different way. The treatment for AD/HD will not correct LD. The treatment for LD will not help AD/HD. About 30% to 40% of people with LD will also have ADHD, so if one disorder is found it is important to look for the other.

~Adapted from the Learning Disabilities Association of Canada's Resources  
<http://www.ldac-taac.ca/InDepth/inDepth-e.asp#ldingeneral>~

"One in 10 Canadians,  
or 10 million people, has  
a learning disability."

~The 1970 Commission on  
Emotional and Learning Disorders in  
Children~

## What's Happening at the Office

The provincial office has been working with the Edmonton Chapter to design, plan and deliver additional programs and services. We would like to extend our thanks to the Calgary Chapter and, in particular **Eryn Neilson**, Program Director, for her time and invaluable information and advice during the planning session. Having chapters supporting chapters is a very positive step forward towards strengthening the LD network in Alberta. **Thanks Calgary.**

The LDAA is also working on standardizing and “freshening up” its public materials for use in sponsorship and public awareness initiatives. We are fortunate to have the donated expertise of **Marty Straub** of the **Straub Design Group** to assist us with this project. A special thank you to **Elda Ward** for her editing proficiency and to **Susan Barclay** for her help with conference letterhead design.

### First Annual Chocolate Festival, Wine Tasting, and Silent Auction

The Chocolate Festival, Wine Tasting & Silent Auction Fundraising Event, a collaborative effort between the provincial office and the Edmonton chapter, was a huge success. The event was held at the Sutton Place Hotel on February 11, 2006 from 6:30 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

The Valentine-themed event was a great success with 128 people attending, including Senator Tommy Banks. Our emcees for the evening were 104.9 EZ Rock morning show **DJs Shane Michaels, Cheryl Brooks, and Robin Allen**. The Event was widely publicized through the 104.9 EZ Rock, 790 CFCW, on CTV through spots during the Oprah show and the news, and through free advertising in The Journal and Sun newspapers. We would like to extend our thanks to our wine tasting professional **William Bincoletto** and **Sibeal McCourt** for their work and dedication in sponsoring the event. A special thanks goes out to the wine vendors **Christina Masciangelo – Empson Canada Inc., Tony “Spike” Maynard – Harvest Vintage Imports, and Deb Pirker – Whitehall Agencies Inc.** for support and partial sponsorship to the event. A special thank you goes out to **Laurie Wilson-Larson** as co-organizer of the event with the provincial office.

Planning has already begun for the 2007 Chocolate Festival, Wine Tasting, & Silent Auction. We look forward to seeing you there!

“Cherish your visions  
and your dreams as  
they are the children of  
your soul; the  
blueprints of our  
ultimate  
achievements.”

~Napoleon Hill~



## 2006 Provincial Conference on Learning Disabilities Registration Now Available

The 2006 Conference on Learning Disabilities will be held at the Coast Terrace Inn in Edmonton. The theme is "Extending our Visions". The Conference has been planned to:

- Celebrate the work of Alberta educators and professionals who work everyday assisting people with LD and ADHD to succeed;
- Challenge the LD and ADHD communities to think divergently and to develop strategies that fit the unique needs of people with special needs; and
- Provide information to professionals on research and practice in the treatment of people with LD and ADHD.

On Thursday November 16 the conference open a reception and a keynote address by **Brenda Robinson**, Educator and Writer from Sherwood Park, Alberta.

On Friday, **Linda Siegel**, Professor of Educational Counselling Psychology and Special Education from the University of British Columbia, begins the day with a keynote. The rest of the day includes concurrent sessions, the President's Luncheon, a reception, and an LD Artists' exhibit.

On Saturday, **Dr. Edward Hallowell**, from Arlington, Massachusetts and author of "Delivered from Distraction—Getting the Most Out of Life with Attention Deficit Disorder" will present a half day workshop.

Registration for the conference is now available through our website at [http://www.ldaa.ca/conference\\_registration.htm](http://www.ldaa.ca/conference_registration.htm). Early registrants will receive first opportunity to attend their preferred session. Once the speaker line-up is confirmed, we will e-mail early registrants with the information so that they may select their sessions.

**Register now. Its going to be an excellent Conference.**

### Outreach Activities Across the Province

The LDAA, in conjunction with its chapters, is initiating information sessions around the province. To find out what is happening in your region, please contact:

- For the south region - Calgary Chapter at (403) 283-6066 or at 1-866-408-5322;
- For the central region - Red Deer Chapter at (403) 340-3885; and
- For the north region - Edmonton Chapter at (780) 466-1011.

"35% of students identified with learning disabilities drop out of high school. This is twice the rate of non-disabled peers and does not include students who are not identified and drop out."

~Washington Summit on Learning Disabilities, 1994~

## Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta Provincial Office and Chapters' 3 Month Calendar

Contact your local chapter for these and other available programs and services:

<b>June</b>	<b>July</b>	<b>August</b>
<p><b>TBA</b> LDAA-Red Deer Chapter AGM</p>	<p><b>TBA</b> LDAA-Calgary Chapter Camp Amicus Residential Camp</p> <p><b>4-6</b> LDAA-Edmonton Chapter Beyond Words Social Skills Camp</p> <p><b>11-13</b> LDAA-Edmonton Chapter Beyond Words Social Skills Camp</p> <p><b>17-28</b> LDAA-Calgary Chapter Camp Amicus Central Day Camp</p> <p><b>31</b> LDAA-Calgary Chapter Camp Amicus South Day Camp</p>	<p><b>1-11</b> LDAA Calgary Chapter Camp Amicus South Day Camp</p> <p><b>25-28</b> LDAA Calgary Chapter Geared for the Year Educational Day Camp</p>

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The Kahanof Centre  
340, 1202 Centre Street SE  
Calgary, Alberta T2G 5A5

Phone: (403) 283-6606  
E-mail: [info@ldaa.net](mailto:info@ldaa.net)

LDAA Red Deer Chapter  
2nd Floor, 5017-50 Street  
Red Deer Alberta T4N 1Y2

Phone: (403) 340-3885  
E-mail: [Kathy.Idard@shawbiz.ca](mailto:Kathy.Idard@shawbiz.ca)  
Website: [www.ldaa-reddeer.ca](http://www.ldaa-reddeer.ca)

LDAA Edmonton Chapter  
5540-106 Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta T6A 1G3

Phone: (780) 466-1011  
E-mail: [ldaec@nucleus.com](mailto:ldaec@nucleus.com)  
Website: [www.ldaa-ec.ca](http://www.ldaa-ec.ca)

## What's New with the Learning Disabilities Association of Canada (LDAC)

### The Moore Case

Yude Hentleff, Cathie Camley (LDABC), Dr. Christina Fiedorowicz and LDAC staff began working on an analysis of the 300 page Moore case ruling in January, and it is now complete. The working group has just circulated its paper to all provincial/territorial LDAs. Meanwhile, the tribunal's ruling has been appealed by the BC Department of Education which means that the next step is the BC Supreme court. It appears that the LDAC will need to re-apply for intervener status. Cathie Camley is helping Yude to find a locally based lawyer who may be able to help LDAC with the appeal process.

### Results of the PACFOLD Project

On April 4 & 5, 2006, LDAC held a PACFOLD (Putting A Canadian Face On Learning Disabilities) dissemination meeting in Ottawa with Executive Directors/CEOs from all provincial/territorial (P/T) Learning Disabilities Associations (LDAs). While all participants arrived eager to focus on dissemination of project findings, the sheer volume and scope of the findings were too overwhelming to grasp on the spot. Therefore, participants agreed to establish three working groups with each one focusing on one priority area: a) public policy, b) early assessment, c) screening recognition & intervention. The working groups will meet via conference call over the next several weeks to identify data "nuggets" and to put them into context and then distribute widely throughout Canada.

"I felt that I could not shake off the blues even with help from family or friends... I had trouble keeping my mind on what I was doing...I felt that everything that I did was an effort."

~Stories taken from a Canada-wide set of focus groups, 2005~

### LDAC Involvement on the CNIB Library Board Access Committee

Joanne McCabe from PEI has agreed to be a member of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind Library Board Access Committee on behalf of the LDAC. The Committee was struck to help establish equitable public library services for all Canadians with print disabilities. Joanne's extensive experience in LD at the local, provincial and national levels, complemented by her current occupation at the post-secondary level will go a long way in ensuring that the needs of Canadians with LD are well represented.

## Youth with Disabilities Needed for Focus Groups on Employment

The Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work (CCRW) is pleased to introduce the Youth-Ability in Skilled Trades (YAST) program funded by Service Canada. This is a national program involving Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island. The purpose of the program is to explore how careers in the skilled trades can be accessed by persons with disabilities. YAST researchers will collect data, facilitate workshops, and create online resources that will introduce youth with disabilities to career opportunities in today's skilled trades. Furthermore, the material developed by this team will enable stakeholders to learn how and where to obtain the necessary training to further careers in the skilled trades industry.

**The YAST program is currently seeking youth with disabilities (ages 15-30) to participate in one of three focus groups taking place 6pm – 8pm May 24, June 7, and June 28 at the EmployAbilities Office in Edmonton.** All participants receive a free information package on “Working Virtual, Employment Opportunities on the Web.” Those who are unable to travel to the office may participate in a telephone interview. The purpose of the focus groups and interviews is to facilitate discussion and identify a variety of issues related to persons with disabilities pursuing careers in the skilled trades.

This is an excellent opportunity to discuss success stories, barriers, and opportunities for youths with disabilities who are interested in careers in the skilled trades. Your involvement will contribute to a dynamic shift in the accessible employment of youth with disabilities in an emerging job market. In addition to this, focus group participation can be added to a resume and gives participants the opportunity to network. Focus group participation is also an opportunity to gain a broader understanding of diversity in the workplace and share your experiences with people of similar ages and interests.

If you are interested in participating in a focus group or to book a telephone interview, please contact:

Christine Davidson, Alberta Research Coordinator  
EmployAbilities Office: 402, 10909 Jasper Avenue.  
Phone:(780)-423-4106 x 4545 or  
Email: [yast\\_ab@ccrw.org](mailto:yast_ab@ccrw.org)

If you are interested in employment opportunities with YAST, or would like more information about the program, please contact:

Lucas Melbye, Project Manager, at 1 800-664-0925 x 237 or  
email: [yast\\_mgr@ccrw.org](mailto:yast_mgr@ccrw.org)

“Be who you are and say  
what you feel, because  
those who mind don't  
matter, and those who  
matter don't mind.”

~Unknown~



# You Outta Be in Pictures!



The Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta (LDAA) is proud to present a photo contest for children, teens, and adults with learning disabilities (LD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

We invite individuals with learning disabilities and ADHD to submit their very best childhood, teen, adult pictures, or pictures of their children with learning disabilities and ADHD. The winning pictures will be used in publicity and other public documents of the LDAA, such as, various public relations documents and annual general meeting reports.

Pictures should be of one or more children, teens, or adults shown prominently participating in a favorite activity or smiling in a "stand alone" type of photo. Several winners will be selected by the Board and those selected will receive a cash prize of \$50.00 and one year free membership to the LDAA or chapter nearest them. **Deadline for the contest is close of business July 30, 2006.**

The image should fill at least 3/4 of the photograph to be useful. Digital files are preferred; however, photographs will also be accepted. All images will become the property of the LDAA and will not be returned. Entries must be accompanied by a waiver (see the next page) to be complete.

Please direct all inquiries to info@ldaa.ca or (780) 448-0360. Please submit all entries to:

You Outta Be In Pictures Photo Contest, c/o P.O. Box 29011, Lendrum P.O., Edmonton, Alberta T6H 5Z6

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

### Declaration of Eligibility

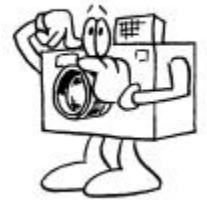
I hereby declare that \_\_\_\_\_ has been formally diagnosed as having a learning disability(ies)/ADHD and is eligible for this contest. If required, I am willing to provide verification of) diagnosis. I understand that if such information is required that it will be kept strictly confidential.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant (if 18 and over)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian (if participant is under 18)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



EXCLUSION OF LIABILITY  
ASSUMPTION OF RISK

LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA

We hereby release and forever discharge, and do agree to indemnify and save harmless, the Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta and their employees, volunteers, or board members from all claims, demands, damages, actions, or causes of actions arising from or relating to participation in any aspect of the **You Outta Be In Pictures** photo contest, and of any from claims or demands whatsoever in law or equity, or heirs, executors or administrators may have in relation to the Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta, except in cases of proven negligence on behalf of the Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta's staff.

I, the undersigned, hereby consent to the use, reproduction and publication of contest photograph(s) and entry(ies), both moving and still pictures, of the participants signed below, taken on behalf of the Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta as such may be deemed desirable in the interests of the general public for an unlimited period of time on a non-exclusive basis. I also understand that I will not receive compensation for the use of the photograph(s) in any and all Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta's publication materials.

Collection of these entries and still photographs, is authorized under the FOIP Act, Section 32 (c), and is required for the purpose of operating the Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta's photo contest.

These entries and photographs will be used for promoting, and preserving the history of the Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta **You Outta Be In Pictures** photo contest, and are subject to the disclosure rules set forth in the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

We have been given an opportunity to ask any questions that we may have. We have fully informed ourselves of the out comes of this release form by reading it before we signed it.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Resources

The Internet has become the tool of choice for finding information quickly. It is important, though, to assess the credibility of the information source and apply your own judgment. Anyone can publish a website. Happily, universities, governments, professional organizations, journals, magazines, and individual experts are increasingly publishing information for the public to access freely.

Below are some websites that you might find interesting. Please remember that the LDAA has no control over the information published on other websites and does not endorse any products or services on these sites.

### **Essential Components of Educational Programming**

<http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k%5F12/specialneeds/essentialcomponents.asp>

Created for educators, resource personnel, administrators and parents of children/students with special needs, the Essential Components Series is intended to support appropriate educational programming, as outlined in the Standards for Special Education, amended June 2004.

### **LD Self Advocacy Manual**

<http://www.ldpride.net/selfadvocacy.htm>

This self-advocacy manual is perfect for teens who have just learned that they have a learning disability and want to learn more about it. Written in “layman’s terms” this informative document provides detailed descriptions of the unique characteristics and learning styles of individuals with learning disabilities, and what accommodations they might need to succeed in school. It also addresses other issues related to having a learning disability, such as self-esteem, attention, and communication concerns. Additionally, learning weaknesses are also addressed. In both cases this document touches on various strategies that can be used to strengthen these weaknesses. The only “downside” of this document is that it was written in the U.S.; therefore, much of chapter 9, “LD & the Law” is incorrect for those students with LD living in Canada.

### **LD Basics**

<http://www.ldonline.org/ldbasics>

This is a fantastic tool for parents of children with learning disabilities. Whether the children have been newly diagnosed or diagnosed a long time ago, this article offers tips on how parents can help their children with schoolwork and reading.

### **Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) Basics**

<http://www.ldonline.org/adhdbasics>

This is a tool for parents of children with ADHD. Whether the children have been newly diagnosed or diagnosed a long time ago, this article offers information on various therapies for children and adults, as well as parenting tips for dealing with the ADHD teen.

“Challenges in life come in three broad categories: easy, difficult, and impossible. Those who take on only the easy have a safe and boring life. Those who take on the difficult have a tough but satisfying life. Those who take on the impossible are remembered.”

~Author Unknown~

## What are Learning Disabilities?

“Learning Disabilities” (LD) refer to a number of disorders which affect the acquisition, organization, retention, understanding or use of verbal or nonverbal information. Learning disabilities are NOT about limited intelligence; they are disorders that affect learning in individuals who otherwise demonstrate average or better than average intelligence. LD affects approximately 10% of the population. Anyone can have LD and LD exists across all socioeconomic, cultural and ethnic groups.

Some common signs of learning disabilities include:

- difficulty learning to read, write, spell, or do math
- Significant discrepancy between achievement and intellectual ability
- Unevenness in school performance, e.g. a good reader but poor in arithmetic; bright in conversation but can't read
- Poor auditory and/or visual memory
- Difficulty following instructions
- Distractible and impulsive behavior, with a short attention span
- Difficulty organizing and keeping track of time, activities, responsibilities and/or belongings
- Poor coordination and spatial orientation
- Poor social skills and difficulty maintaining friendships

Parents are usually first to notice delays in their child reaching early milestones. The pediatrician or family doctor may also observe certain delays. But the classroom teacher may be the first to notice the child's difficulties in reading, writing, arithmetic, motor coordination and social development.

A formal diagnosis of learning disabilities is made using standardized tests administered by a professional, usually a registered psychologist, in consultation with the parents. Information from the child's school is also extremely helpful in making an accurate diagnosis.

Not all learning problems are learning disabilities. Sometimes children have developmental lags and simply need more time to become efficient learners.

A child with learning disabilities becomes an adult with learning disabilities. However, with early and adequate identification, together with remediation, a child can learn to cope and succeed. Such a child can grow up to be a fully independent adult, enjoying social, academic, and career success.

For adults with learning disabilities who were not identified and/or did not receive appropriate help, there is still hope. Given the right types of educational experiences, people have a remarkable ability to learn. Adults have a wealth of life experiences to build on as they learn, and often determination that many children don't have.

~Adapted from the Information and Advocacy Manual, 3rd Edition, LDA Nova Scotia~

“It is now recognized that AD/HD can carry on into adulthood—as many as 30% to 70% of children with AD/HD may continue to experience symptoms of AD/HD as an adult.”

~LDAC ADHD Fact Sheet~

