



*Learning Disabilities Association of  
Kingston*  
417 Bagot St., Kingston ON K7K 3C1  
(613)545-0373 (phone) (613)549-7855 (fax)



Website: [www.ldakingston.com](http://www.ldakingston.com)  
E-mail - [ldak@ldakingston.com](mailto:ldak@ldakingston.com)

## LEARNING DISABILITIES

### *Fall 2008 Newsletter*

#### **Yakity-Yak, Don't Talk Back!**

LDAK will be hosting a fall conference with speaker:

**Dr. Kevin Nugent**  
**Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist**  
**Saturday October 25, 2008**  
**St. Lawrence College 9 am - 12 pm.**

#### ***Topic: Oppositional Defiant Disorder and AD/HD***

In this presentation, **Dr. Kevin Nugent**, an experienced consultant in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, will present an approach to understanding and dealing with children who are severely oppositional and defiant. Issues addressed will include: Why do some children become so oppositional and defiant? How should one make and how important is a formal Oppositional Defiant Disorder diagnosis? What is the significance of over-lapping conditions such as ADHD, LD's and anxiety? Is there a role for medication for some of these children? What strategies for parents and teachers will be most helpful? This will be a light-hearted look at these challenging kids, with lots of time for audience discussion.

Members: \$15.00 Non-Member: \$20.00  
Students **free** with ID



**Pre-registration is recommended. For information and registration call LDAK 613-545-0373.**



#### **Tommfest 2008 Music Festival**

The Learning Disabilities Association of Kingston and the Osborne Family would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all of those who participated and supported Tommfest 2008 held at Lake Ontario Park June 13th - 15th, 2008.

Please visit LDAK website at [www.ldakingston.com](http://www.ldakingston.com) for Tommfest 2009 details as they become available.

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# GROUPS AND MEETINGS

## LDAK GENERAL MEETINGS

*LDAK will be running a two week workshop for parents who want to help their elementary child who is struggling with reading.*

### **Come & Help Your Child Learn Strategies With Reading at Home**

#### **Speaker: Paul Deir**

Paul retired in 2001 after over thirty years of teaching grades 1 to 9 students in Kingston area in a number of schools. He is now an Adjunct Assistant Professor of Language and Literacy at Queen's University Faculty of Education, and is also the Co-ordinator of the Queen's Education Outreach Program.

#### **Session 1: Wednesday October 29, 2008**

##### **For Parents of Kindergarten to Grade 1 Students**

Children in Kindergarten and Early Grade 1 are often referred to as “emergent readers” by their teachers, and by the reading experts who do the research about what’s best for readers at this stage. What are the critical elements that emergent readers need in order to thrive as readers just embarking on their journey to eventual fluent reading? What can parents and caregivers do to help with the journey? Attend this hands-on, minds-on workshop to learn about the straightforward but critical home strategies that you can use to provide our youngest readers with the support they need to succeed.

#### **Session 2: Wednesday November 5, 2008**

##### **For Parents of Grade 2 and Older Students**

Most young readers are out of the “emergent reader” stage by late grade 1, and are referred to as “early readers.” The focus of instruction changes slightly for these readers. How can you provide support for these readers at home? Attend this hands-on, minds-on workshop to learn about some critical and effective support strategies that you can use at home.

**Time: 7 pm—9 pm**

**Place: McArthur Hall**

**Pre-registration is recommended. Fee: \$5.00 per person per session or \$8.00 per couple per session. Call 613-545-0373 to register.**

### **Switch to Our Email List!**

If you prefer to receive your newsletter by email, please email us at [ldak@ldakingston.com](mailto:ldak@ldakingston.com) to get on our list. The money saved on postage and paper can be better spent on programming for our clients.

## DID YOU KNOW.....

### ***“Amazing Race” Former Contestant Inspires Children with Learning Disability***

Kelly McCorkle Parkinson, a former Miss South Carolina beauty queen and contestant on *The Amazing Race season 7*, graced the homecoming festivities of the West End Baptist Church last month and served as an inspiration to many children.

Growing up in Greenville, South Carolina, she was diagnosed with a learning disability and was told by doctors that it would likely prevent her from accomplishing goals she had set herself. However, she proved doubters wrong as she fulfilled her dreams, which included winning beauty pageants and joining the renowned reality show, *The Amazing Race*.

“A few months ago, I heard Parkinson speak and she was outstanding. Several of the other girls at our church also heard her and thought she made an impact on their lives and could do the same to even more.” West End Baptist Rodney Cook said.

Parkinson encourages children diagnosed with a learning condition to pursue major strides in life by uplifting others with her experiences with the *Miss American Pageant* and *The Amazing Race*.

*Reprinted with permission “LDAO Communique” Source: www.buddytv.com*

### ***“Overcoming Dyslexia: Timing Of ‘Connections’ In Brain Is Key”***

Using new software developed to investigate how the brains of dyslexic children are organized, University of Washington researcher have found that key areas for language and working memory involved in reading are connected differently in dyslexics than in children who are good readers and spellers.

However, once the children with dyslexia received a three-week instructional program, their patterns of functional brain connectivity normalized and were similar to those of good readers, when deciding if sounds went with groups of letters in words.

“Some brain regions are too strongly connected functionally in children with dyslexia when they are deciding which sounds go with which letters,” said Todd Richards, a UW neuroimaging scientist and lead author of a study published in the current issue of the *Journal of Neurolinguistics*.

“We had hints in previous studies that the ability to decode novel words improves when a specific brain region in the right hemisphere decreases in activation. This study suggests that the deactivation may result in a disconnection in time from the comparable region in the left hemisphere, which in turn leads to improved reading. Reading requires sequential as well as simultaneous processes.”

*Reprinted with permission “LDAO Communique” Source: Science Daily*

### ***Food Additives May Cause Hyperactivity: Study***

Certain artificial food colouring and other additives can worsen hyperactive behaviours in children aged 3 to 9, British researchers reported on Wednesday.

Tests on more than 300 children showed significant differences in their behaviour when they drank fruit drinks spiked with a mixture of food colouring and preservatives, Jim Stevenson and colleagues at the University of Southampton said.

“These findings show that adverse effects are not just seen in children with extreme hyperactivity (such as ADHD) but can also be seen in the general population and across the range of severities of hyperactivity,” the researchers wrote in their study, published in *The Lancet* medical journal.

*Reprinted with permission “LDAO Communique” Source: Maggie Fox, www.reuters.com (September 5, 2007)*

## Henry Winkler's Dyslexic Hero Gives Kids with Learning Difficulties the Last Laugh

To his great surprise, veteran actor Henry Winkler has carved out a new career for himself as a children's author. Having struggled—and suffered—throughout his school years with unidentified dyslexia, it's still hard for him to imagine his name even appearing in the same sentence with the words “author” or “book.” But, Winkler and his co-author, Lin Oliver, have completed nine novels in their series, *Hank Zipzer: The World's greatest Underachiever*, which recounts the hilarious adventures of a resourceful, wisecracking fourth-grader—who also happens to have dyslexia.

Winkler, who recently turned 60, graduated from the Yale University School of Drama and has achieved a successful 30-year career as an actor, director and producer. Although he's received many honors for his work, he's probably still best known and loved for his role as the definitively cool Arthur “The Fonz” Fonzarelli in the 1974-84 television comedy series *Happy Days*, co-starring well-known director Ron Howard.

Winkler felt anything but cool during his own childhood on the Upper West Side of Manhattan during the 1950's and 60's. “When I was growing up,” he recalls, “no one knew what learning challenges were. So, I was called ‘stupid, lazy and not living up to my potential—because I was very verbal, and I guess I had a sense of humor.’” as a result, Winkler often felt that the person he was inside was invisible to others. “Inside you feel one way, and people are telling you that you are another way,” he says, “and I couldn't reconcile that.”

He does remember one successful moment as a student: Winning a dance contest at a private school for boys he attended in New York. “That did give me a sense of belonging,” he recalls. “But I wanted to be an actor, and I wasn't even able to do some of the school plays because my grades were so low I wasn't allowed to participate in extracurricular activities.”

Winkler has clear memories of one adult in his life who saw and encouraged the intelligent, creative boy who occupied the same body as the floundering student: “Mr. Rock, who was my music teacher, believed that I would achieve something; but everyone else told me I wouldn't achieve anything,” Winkler remembers. Asked what qualities made Mr. Rock different from other grownups in his life, Winkler replies: “He was an adult who was quiet enough to see the actual human being in front of him, and not who he expected the person to be. Children have multiple layers; they are what they show you on the outside, and the depth of their greatness is on the inside.”

Unlike the young Winkler, Hank Zipzer has several adults in his life who believe he'll succeed somehow, in spite of school. For example, in contrast to Winkler's strict and demanding real-life parents, Hank Zipzer's mom and dad, though often baffled by his behaviour, do appreciate and try to connect with him. The scene below from *Day of the Iguana*, shows Hank's dad at is most sympathetic. Father and son are playing Scrabble, and his dad really gets that Hank cannot see the spelling error he's made on the game board. Hank is the narrator.

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That's what I'd been telling them even since the subject of spelling first came up. I can't do it. I try and try, but my brain just won't picture the words. I know my letters but they won't go into words. Or at least words that anyone would recognize.

"I'm sorry, Dad," I said. "I guess I'm a real loser in Scrabble."

My father was quiet for a long time. I didn't know if he was mad or sad or surprised or all of those things...

"I could try again, Dad," I said. "I'll concentrate really hard this time."

My dad smiled at me.

"How about chess, Hank?" he said. "I really feel like a game of chess."

"Wow, so do I!" I said.

I am a whiz at chess.

Winkler and his wife Stacey, who is a child welfare advocate, are parents to three adult children. All of them have learning difficulties; and they're all college graduates pursuing careers that interest them. In fact, it was when his stepson was identified with learning disabilities that Winkler, at age 31, finally understood what he's been grappling with all his life. "We had him tested in third grade, and everything they said about him, I said, 'Oh my God, that's me!'" he recalls.

Based on his experiences as a child, as a parent and as a supporter of various initiatives to benefit children, Winkler has developed a strong sense of what kids need to be successful. One of the essentials is friends. Hank Zipzer has two loyal friends who take his learning problems matter-of-factly, and often rely on his strengths. This was not the case for Winkler, who remembers being very socially awkward. "I was not able in any way to be successful socially," he says. "I mean, I had a nice personality, I had a girlfriend. But I didn't know quite how to be with that girl in a social situation where I was not roaming around talking to every other human being in the place, leaving her standing by herself."

"Also, something Hank has that doesn't come from his friends is resilience," Winkler adds. "He figures out, 'Okay, I've gotten myself into hot water, but there's more than one way to solve a problem.' He uses his imagination and his spirit." When Winkler talks to kids of all ages during book signings and other public appearances, he urges them to build their resilience. "I always say you have to think of yourself as one of those toys (Weighted) with sands in the bottom," he says. "You punch it and it goes over, but it comes right back up again."

## Henry Winkler's Dyslexic Hero Gives Kids with Learning Difficulties the Last Laugh

“Because it’s so easy just not to come back up again,” he adds, remembering how discouraged he sometimes became. But Winkler was fortunate enough to have an internal source of direction and drive. “What’s amazing is that I was really lucky,” he says. “I had a vision from the age of seven of what I wanted to do. I have no idea where it came from; all I know is that I wanted to be an actor. I had no idea how I was going to achieve it, but I knew I needed to do it.”

Asked what advice he’d give parents about helping kids with learning difficulties pursue their dreams, Winkler says: “Adults’ job on the earth—apart from curing cancer or figuring out the next new bicycle—is to give children a sense of self. Otherwise, that child will never be able to meet their potential.” His second piece of advice flows naturally from the first: “It’s really, really important,” he says, “not to define yourself by the way your child succeeds—or doesn’t. If you look closely at them and listen carefully, (you’ll find) there’s lots to celebrate about them besides (their) geometry (grades).”

His message to kids? “When I sign autographs for children I write: ‘You have greatness within you.’ When I speak to them I say: ‘It’s your job to figure out what your gift is—to dig down deep inside yourself, get it, and give it to the world.’”

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### *Tristin Osborne Memorial Scholarship Fund Recipient*

Zachary Morrison, a graduate of K.C.V.I. is the recipient of the 2008 Tristin Osborne Memorial Scholarship fund. His teachers describe him as an exceptionally bright, reliable young man with a good work ethic and positive attitude, who has overcome adversity by developing excellent compensatory and self-advocacy skills. In addition, to his school work, Zachary has been studying the Korean language for over two years.



Zachary will be attending the University of Toronto in the Fall where his ultimate goal is to go to Korea and teach English.

***The Learning Disabilities Association of Kingston wish Zachary every success for the future!***

# RESOURCES IN OUR LIBRARY

## **Beyond F.A.T. City - A Look Back, A Look Ahead - DVD**

*Richard Lavoie*

This DVD offers practical strategies as well as inspirational messages for those who teach children with learning disabilities who struggle with Frustration, Anxiety and Tension (F.A.T)

## **It's So Much Work To Be Your Friend - DVD**

*Richard Lavoie- DVD and Book*

This resource explores the causes and consequences of "social incompetence." Richard Lavoie provides strategies for teaching friendship skills in the classroom, on the homefront, and in the community.



## **Behaviour Management & Skills - DVD**

The DVD is designed for parents, educators and caregivers supporting individuals diagnosed with Tourette Syndrome, Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Anxiety and Mood Disorders, Learning Disabilities, Autism and other comorbidly diagnosed neurological disorders. This workshop is also an excellent resource for caregivers of all children.

## **The Oasis Guide to Asperger Syndrome**

*Patricia Romanowski Bashe and Barbara L. Kirby*

This updated book includes new information on diagnosis, evaluation, medication, therapies and social skills development.

## **Benchmarking**

*Carter Hammett, Jayne Greene-Black, Dr. J. Douglas Salmon Jr., Glenda Mascarenhas*  
A Guide to Hiring and Managing Persons with Learning Disabilities.

## **1-2-3 Magic - Managing Difficult Behaviour in Children 2-12 years - DVD**

*Thomas W. Phelan, Ph.D.*

In this DVD, Dr. Phelan designed the 1-2-3 Magic program to bring practical, easy-to-use discipline techniques to families and educators.



## **Bully Dance - Video**

This short video deals with conflict resolution and anger. For children in grades 1 to 6.

## **Source for Non-Verbal Learning Disabilities**

*Sue Thompson*

This book is filled with checklists, anecdotes, methods and resources for the identification and treatment of these children and youths.

**L. D. A. K. EXECUTIVE  
2008 - 2009**

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**RESOURCE CENTRE HOURS**

417 Bagot St  
Kingston, ON K7K 3C1

**Monday to Friday 11:30 a.m. — 4:30 p.m.  
Saturday & Sunday Closed**

**Resource Centre Co-ordinator**

Lana Greenwood

**Resource Facilitator**

Janice Barling

***Disclaimer***

*THE LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION does not endorse or recommend any of the facilities listed or any of the methods, programmes, products or treatments offered by such facilities.*

*Our aim is to keep the community informed about services and facilities that are available to people with learning disabilities.*

*We urge consumers and service providers to review carefully any programmes and services listed in order to select those which will meet most appropriately the identified needs of the person with learning disabilities.*

**Membership Application Form**

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

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**ANNUAL DUES:(Effective April 2/04)**

Family/Individual - 1 Year Fee -\$50

Student (1 Year Fee Only) - \$20

Institutional (1Year Only) - \$125

Professional (Private Practices)  
1 Year Fee - \$75

I would like to volunteer to help with:

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**Membership Advantages:**

- ⇒ subscription to Communiqué & National
- ⇒ affiliation with local, provincial and national levels of LDA
- ⇒ free information on learning disabilities
- ⇒ free access to Kingston's resource centre and the lending library of LDA Ontario
- ⇒ discount on LDA conferences

**Your membership is important in providing  
a stronger voice within all levels of the  
Association.**

Please tear off and mail this form and cheque (made out to **LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION OF KINGSTON**) to Learning Disabilities Association of Kingston 417 Bagot St., Kingston ON K7K 3C1.

**THANK YOU**