



A Message from the Chair

We are working through the many ideas generated from the Roundtable in Montreal. A big “Thank you!” to our gracious hosts – we look forward to working together again next year. We have also garnered some additional volunteers for our various committees and projects. Let’s keep our momentum so we can benefit from more talent with diversity in skill sets, networks and fresh energies (yes, this could be YOU!). Summer is coming and many of us will take a break from our usual activities. Let’s use this time to think and act upon our ideas to grow and revitalize the entire LDA network. Reach out to each other and lend a hand!

Thealzel Lee
Chair, Learning Disabilities Association of Canada

A Message from the Executive Director

Spring has been a busy time at the National office with a lot of activities and movement on several fronts, which indicates a very busy summer ahead. Below are some of activities that LDAC is currently involved in, and I am especially pleased to tell you about a very recent funding announcement.

Have a safe and relaxing summer everyone!

Additional Funding from the Government of Canada for LDAC

On May 19, the new Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities, the Honourable Carla Qualtrough, sent a letter to LDAC to inform us that the Government of Canada is providing LDAC with increased funding support this year and next year, in the amount of \$115,000. This is in addition to the \$35,000 already provided for this year.

The funding will help to support LDAC until SDPP-D develops a performance and accountability framework for the Social Development Partnerships Program with the collaboration of the disability community. This framework will set expectations for the health, development, and maturity of the disability sector with respect to areas such as governance, partnerships, sustainability, and outcomes. It will also help to ensure that stable funding is provided in a fair and transparent manner to both national and regional disability organizations in the coming years.

Partnership and Stakeholder

The *Teacher Help* Program, led by Dr. Penny Corkum from Dalhousie University in Halifax, has partnered with three national associations for NDDs: Canadian ADHD Resource Alliance (CADDRA), Learning Disability Association of Canada (LDAC) and Autism Canada to provide input on the



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content of the *Teacher Help* program and in-kind contributions to this research.

Teacher Help is a Nova Scotia-based online education program geared toward providing grades 1-12 teachers with information about evidence-based interventions that teachers can use directly in the classroom that support students with neurodevelopmental disorders (NDDs). In addition, the program provides guidance through a coach on how to implement these interventions. This program will eventually be available throughout Canada with the hope of it being available in French. For the press release on this initiative please visit [this website](#).

Specific Psycho-educational assessments: Post-secondary Education Training and Labour (PETL)

With the diligent leadership of LDA New Brunswick and with representation from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD), LDAC has been working with select experienced NB licensed psychologists and PETL specialists to establish common standards for the psycho-educational assessment of PETL case-managed clients at-risk for Learning Disabilities. Clear, consistent and uniform diagnostic criteria, diagnostic measures and a reporting format will be adopted by all NB psychologists contracted by PETL to perform psycho educational assessments. When completed, these common standards will be shared across Canada.

Claudette Larocque
Executive Director, Learning Disabilities Association of Canada
Email: claudette@ldac-acta.ca

Committee Reports and Rally Projects

Strategic Planning Team

High priorities for the Strategic Planning Team are recruitment and leadership development for our LDAC staff, committees and Rally Projects. Work continues on the development of the Business and Operating Plans and the Rally Project Teams that will create a responsive and financially sustainable LDA network.

Thealzel Lee – Chair, Strategic Planning Team
Members: Bob Cram (SK), Colette Charest (QC), Claudette Larocque (staff)

Research Committee and Research Portal Rally Project

The Research Portal Rally Project is collecting research data from BC, AB and SK; and hopes to add another province before the end of the year. The BC and AB teams are focusing more of their efforts on the goal of having research information easily accessible from the LDAC website; and good progress has



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been made with identifying potential technology partners for this Rally Project. Additional volunteers with research experience, familiarity with databases or knowledge relevant to this project are encouraged to contact Lorrie Goegan: lgoegan@shaw.ca

Thealzel Lee – Interim Chair, Research Portal Rally Project
Members: Gabriela Grabic (BC Project Team Leader), Judy Craig (AB Project Team Leader), Lorrie Goegan, Lauren Goegan, and Lynne Wawryk-Epp (SK Project Team Leader).

Communications Committee and Rally Project

In addition to its regular duties, the Communications Committee has taken on responsibility for the Communications Rally Project. Although this report attempts to separate committee and Rally Project work, we are finding that it is a bit of an artificial separation and the two activities tend to overlap.

We are happy to report that we have recently recruited an additional volunteer for the committee. Welcome Doug Symington, and thanks for helping out. We are still trying to recruit an experienced social media person as a volunteer to help out a few hours each week.

In addition to having restarted the quarterly newsletter, a next goal of the Communications Rally Project is to improve communications among the provincial, territorial and national executive directors in the LD network. Our national ED, Claudette, and the Saskatchewan ED, Dale Rempel, have kindly volunteered to spearhead this effort. Claudette will be connecting with each of the EDs over the summer to find out what sort of communications framework and processes they would like to see.

The Communications Committee is now beginning steps to improve LDAC's social media presence. We will soon be phasing out the Facebook Group and having everyone move over to the Facebook Page. We believe that having both a Group and a Page has led to some confusion, and the Group is not as open to everyone as the Page can be.

The Committee has also started assessing some older marketing and communications planning documents prepared by LDAC several years ago. Although these are somewhat out-of-date now, they are still full of lots of useful ideas and approaches. We are hoping that we can update them and start using them in the fall, perhaps as part of the Communications Rally Project.

Bob Cram – Chair

Members: Lorrie Goegan, Brendan O'Neill, Claudette Larocque, Doug Symington



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Clearinghouse Rally project

The Clearinghouse Rally Project is the development of an online clearinghouse to share current activities, resources, programs, etc., among provincial and territorial associations, chapters, and others working on LD issues. This work will also be closely aligned with the work of the Communications Committee.

Need Volunteers to Conduct Survey

LDAC is in need of four or five volunteers from across the country, for a short two-month research project with the Clearinghouse Rally Project. As a volunteer, you would be involved in sending out emails and possible calls (costs will be reimbursed) to Provincial/Territorial LDAs and chapters across the country to conduct a short survey interview on resources, programs, etc. for individuals with learning disabilities. A script will be provided and a survey template developed to help you through the interview. If interested please contact claudette@ldac-acta.ca

LDAC Legal Committee

The first meeting of the Legal Committee took place in May, with interim chair, Millie Leblanc from New Brunswick. The group is discussing the possibility of developing a toolkit for the implementation of the Moore decision that would be aimed at parents, school officials and lawyers. The group also explored the development of a public education plan to disseminate information about the Moore decision across the country and its implications and impact on public education.

Currently, member lawyers are from NB, AB, and BC with a search for additional lawyers to be part of the committee from the provinces of Ontario, Saskatchewan, Newfoundland and Nova Scotia. If anyone with legal expertise is interested in being a member of the LDAC Legal Committee please email claudette@ldac-acta.ca

LDAC Health and Environment News

LDAC is a partner organization of the Canadian Partnership for Children's Health and the Environment (CPCHE). CPCHE is preparing a fact sheet for the website about what to do if mercury-containing Compact Fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) break in the home. CPCHE sent a letter to the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment advocating for a CCME Canada-Wide Standard (CWS) for Extended Producer Responsibility for safe collection and use as well as safe and comprehensive disposal. We will also submit comments on Environment Canada's proposed Code of Practice for collection and disposal of CFLs. There is a good overview on this topic at the [following website](#).



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If you have not seen it yet, Dr Bruce Lanphear's video '[Little Things Matter: the impact of toxins on the developing brain](#)' is worth watching and shows that 89% of children have toxic mercury, among other neurotoxicants, in their bodies.

In response to the Attawapiskat tragedies, we sent a referenced letter to the Federal Minister of Health and Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs regarding the lack of biomonitoring data for children in aboriginal communities, noting that studies show that early exposure to toxins can affect mental health – including depression, anxiety, impulsivity and self-regulation.

LDAC replied to the Canadian Health Measures Survey regarding CHMS data for chemicals in the body burden/biomonitoring studies.

LDAC signed on to a statement, along with a number of other healthcare and public health organizations and advocates that was submitted to a Federal/Provincial Climate Working Group on Specific Mitigating Opportunities in the Electricity Sector. This statement focused on the dangers of coal-fired plants and their production of toxins, especially mercury. In addition, LDAC signed on to a CPCHE letter to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development, and Labour regarding reinstating the definition of "DANGER" in the Canadian Labour Code on occupational health and safety, especially for pregnant women.

Barbara McElgunn and Lynn Green

Provincial/Territorial Updates

Prince Edward Island

Summer Tutoring registration is under way. Using recently graduated and existing B.Ed tutors to deliver the Barton Reader Program, JUMP Math, One to One tutoring and, a new addition, the Catch Up Camp for the last two weeks of Summer Vacation. Students will be given the chance to re-visit math from the previous semester allowing them to start at an even position with their peers.

Recently we were asked to present to the **Business Executive Association** of Charlottetown. This group invites speakers to explain about various areas of social and business interest in the Charlottetown area. LDATEI is grateful for these opportunities to explain what are (and are not) Learning Disabilities and the impact of not offering supports at the most effective time.

We presented to the **Holland College Human Services Course** participants explaining what LD's are and discussing with the students differences between intellectual disability and learning disabilities. This will be an annual presentation and LDATEI accepted an invitation to join the Human Services Course Advisory Committee.



Holland College Event Management Program kindly offered to work with LDATEI for a fundraising event (for March/April/May 2017). This is a major benefit to us given limited resources to organize such events.

Many parents have asked LDATEI to offer a face-to-face support group, which we cannot offer at this time. Parents can learn much from other parents having faced a range of situations and that newer parents may benefit from the experiences of other parents. A **moderated Facebook Group** has been created and, apart from general discussion points, parents will be able to use this to connect using the private message facility.

New Brunswick

As productive as the past 4 years have been for LDANB, once again the current year beat them all. Every year, LDANB has grown the size and complexity of the contracts it has secured, the number of training sessions it has delivered and the scope of its collaboration with government on policies and practices. Following is a brief overview of our three main projects.

- 1) Creating a New Brunswick Standard for the Psycho-educational Assessment of Adults At-Risk for Learning Disabilities (Pilot Project – Phase 1).

With much diligence and still on-going correspondence with select leaders in the field of psychology, LDANB successfully produced new guidelines and the standard going forward for the psycho-educational assessment of adults at-risk for Learning Disabilities. As part of this work, LDANB actively managed over 200 psycho-educational assessments over the past year which provided the hard data required to help produce these new guidelines. Based on the success of this pilot, the Government of New Brunswick (GNB) retained the services of LDANB as a new pilot project (Phase 2) to manage psycho-educational assessments and help integrate the new contract guidelines and standards into the practice of contracted psychologists.

- 2) Screening for Success Certification Sessions.

Over the past year, LDANB delivered sixteen of 2 to 2.5 Day training sessions for GNB practitioners and external service providers wishing to be certified to administer the updated Screening for Success (SFS) Instrument. This work resulted in over 200 specialists being certified or re-certified to administer the new SFS instrument. This work was very well received by GNB as well as session participants and is leading LDANB to new training objectives in the year ahead.

- 3) 2016 LDANB Biennial Symposium on Learning Disabilities: “Literacy, Learning Disabilities and Cognitive Strategies: Facilitating the Learning Process for All”.



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The theme of our symposium this year fell in line with the GNB Comprehensive Literacy Strategy and was fully supported by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. The symposium was a huge success with the Wu Conference Centre at full capacity and LDANB staff having to refuse new registrations. LDANB is very pleased with the success of its 2016 biennial symposium and is already looking forward to hosting its next symposium in 2018.

To this list I should add the Barton Literacy Initiative, plans for our Short Form SFS update, new initiatives with GNB and others. However, the big three I believe provides a good overview of how LDANB is having a more significant impact on issues of significance for people with Learning Disabilities, those at risk for learning disabilities and their families. Have a great summer!

André Deschene, Executive Director
Learning Disabilities Association of New Brunswick

Yukon

Yukon Summers: the days are long, but the season is short. LDAY will be reducing our office hours slightly during the summer months (closed Fridays), but we will be offering many learning opportunities:

- Camp Raven: four two-week day camps for children age 7 – 14 (Whitehorse)
- Pack Leaders: a two-week leadership camp for youth age 14 – 18 (Whitehorse)
- Literacy Camp: a two-week literacy and outdoor adventure camp (Dawson City)
- LDAY academic tutoring: one-on-one tutoring throughout the summer, based on client need (Whitehorse & Dawson City)
- Seeing My Time: an executive skills course for adults and students in grades 5 and above (Whitehorse & Dawson City)

We will be working with one of our local supporters, Air North, the Yukon's Airline (www.flyairnorth.com) to host the annual Air North Family Fun Run and Pancake Breakfast in early June. Participants run or walk around the airport (~9km), then are treated to a full breakfast by the Air North chefs.



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Quebec

Learning Disabilities Institute (Quebec) –



The Learning Disabilities Institute of Quebec is proud to announce the selection of Lucille Doiron as delegate administrator. She steps into this new position at a critical juncture for the Institute. Welcome to this big family of Learning Disabilities, Lucille!

Our 41st Annual Conference April 6-8, 2016, was another success! Under the theme *Understand and support the learner*, more than 1300 people were present during the 3-day conference.

The symposium on Response-to-Intervention was much appreciated by those in attendance.

50th Anniversary of the Learning Disabilities Association of Quebec now
Learning Disabilities Institute – October 26, 2016
Many activities to come! Please check our website.

4th Seminar for parents – November 5, 2016 in Montreal
Workshops, lectures, exhibitors. More information to come.

Please include in your Agenda:

The next Annual Conference in Montreal, March 22-25, 2017, under the theme
Learning Disabilities and Challenges in Today's World

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