



Special Education Family Newsletter

February 2021

This is a monthly Newsletter intended to support parents/caregivers & families across our system, to be published and posted here at the beginning of each month.

Important Dates

- February – Black History Month
- February 1 – P.A. Day
- February 2 – Secondary classes begin
- February 12 – Secondary Report Cards sent home
- February 18 – Elementary Report Cards sent home
- February 24 – Pink Shirt Day (anti-bullying awareness)
- 3rd Saturday of each month – 10:30-12:00 – Rural FASD Network meetings, Calvary Bible Church, Smiths Falls - livestreamed on Facebook; <https://www.ruralfasd.ca/meetings>

Learning Disabilities

Did you know that students with LDs make up the largest group within special education, at approximately 40% of students identified through an IPRC? With the right supports, these children/youth CAN learn, and can achieve great success at school and beyond.

LEARNING AT HOME PARENT/CAREGIVER INFORMATION:



You can learn more about these topics at the [LD@Home website](#) under LD@School Parent Resources tab to support your child/children with a Learning Disability or Learning Differences:

- Bringing Mindfulness to Learning at Home;
- Reading for Science at Home;
- Project-Based Learning at Home;
- Strategies that Parents can Use to Support Children/Youth with LDs in Math;
- Using Differentiation to Support Learning at Home;
- Shortcuts for Math Problem Solving;
- 5 Strategies for Helping students with LDs Avoid Procrastination;
- Using Manipulatives to Support Math Learning at Home;
- Keeping School work on Track: Staying Organized with Graphic Organizers

Alternative Learning Menus are updated weekly and can be accessed on the [board website](#).



When you are out in public, does your child ever wonder about the braille on elevators, washroom signs, or other signage in buildings?

Did you know?

- Braille is presented in two formats:
- Contracted (short forms)
 - Uncontracted (letter-by-letter alphabet)

The Braille Alphabet

⠁	⠃	⠉	⠇	⠑	⠋	⠛	⠏	⠗	⠎
a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j
⠅	⠆	⠍	⠊	⠏	⠙	⠜	⠞	⠟	⠠
k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t
⠡	⠢	⠤	⠦	⠨	⠪	The Braille Cell			
u	v	w	x	y	z	1	2	3	4
						5	6		

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Each braille cell consists of 6-dots. Try making a game of deciphering words, using the braille code here!

From Our Speech Language Pathologists



Encouraging Communication

Some children experience delays in beginning to talk for a variety of reasons. If a child is not yet speaking in short sentences by the time they start school, see below for some things to try.

HEARING TEST

1

It is always a good idea to get your child's hearing tested if they are struggling to communicate to rule out any hearing difficulties. Contact your family doctor for a

UNDERLYING ISSUES

2

Contact your family doctor to discuss whether there may be underlying issues behind your child's difficulty communicating.

SLP

3

Refer your child to a Speech-Language Pathologist for support. Contact the special education teacher at your school for help with this.

If your child is nonverbal or minimally verbal:

- Encourage play and social interaction
- Imitate your child
- Focus on nonverbal communication
- Leave space for your child to talk
- Simplify your language
- Follow your child's interests
- Encourage your child to use signs, gestures or pictures

[Full article](#)

Activities to foster communication:

- Practice sharing
- Make animal sounds
- Use playdough
- Do pretend play
- Blow bubbles
- Experience books together
- Mystery box
- Play turn taking games
- Do matching & sorting games

[Full Article](#)

Communication
Temptations

COMMUNICATION TEMPTATIONS

(Adapted from Wetherby and Prutting, 1984)

- ◆ Eat a desired food item in front of your child without offering him or her any.
- ◆ Activate a wind-up toy, let it deactivate and hand it to your child.
- ◆ Give your child four blocks to drop in a box, one at a time (or use some other action that the child will repeat, such as stacking the blocks or dropping the blocks on the floor), then immediately give your child a small animal figure to drop in the box.
- ◆ Look quickly through a few books with your child. Wait for him or her to ask to see a specific book before responding. This technique can be done with other items of interest as well.
- ◆ Initiate a familiar and an unfamiliar social game with your child until he or she expresses pleasure, then stop the game and wait.
- ◆ Open a jar of bubbles, blow bubbles then close the jar tightly. Hand the closed jar to your child.
- ◆ Blow up a balloon and slowly deflate it. Hand the deflated balloon to your child or hold the deflated balloon up to your mouth and wait for a response.
- ◆ Hold a food item or toy that your child dislikes and offer it to him or her.
- ◆ Place a desired food item or toy in a clear container that your child cannot open while he or she is watching. Put the container in front of your child and wait for him or her to initiate a request.
- ◆ Place his or her hands in a cold, wet or sticky substance, such as jell-o, pudding or paste.
- ◆ Roll a ball to your child. After your child returns the ball three times, immediately roll a rattle or a toy on wheels to your child.
- ◆ Wave and say “bye bye” to a toy upon removing it from the play area. Repeat this for a second and third toy, and do nothing when removing a fourth toy. These four trials should be interspersed throughout the other temptations, rather than be presented in a series.
- ◆ Hide a stuffed animal under the table. Knock, and then bring out the animal. Have the animal greet your child the first time. Repeat this for a second and third time, and do nothing when bringing out the animal for the fourth time. These four trials should also be interspersed with presented items.
- ◆ Put an object that makes noise in an opaque bag and shake the bag. Hold up the bag and wait.
- ◆ Engage your child in an activity of interest that necessitates the use of an instrument for completion (e.g. crayon for drawing, spoon for eating, or wand for blowing bubbles). Have a third person come over and take the instrument, go sit on the distant side of the room, and play with it.