



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
⠠	⠡	⠢	⠣	⠤	⠥				
u	v	w	x	y	z				

The Braille Cell

1	●	●	4
2	●	●	5
3	●	●	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.