

LDAWC Family Conference Program

Saturday, October 17, 2020



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Association of Wellington County

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Guelph, Virtually with ZOOM

9:15 – 9:20 **Welcoming Remarks**, Susan Newcombe & Christine MacDonald, LDAWC Board members

9:20-9:50 **Reading Rocks Program**, Dr. John McNamara, Professor, Brock University

9:50 – 11:45 **Keynote –Parenting in an Age of Anxiety: A Stress and Anxiety Toolkit for Parents**

Ann Douglas, Bestselling Parenting Author, Columnist and Workshop Leader

11:45– 12:45 **Lunch Break**

12:45 – 2:00 **Concurrent Workshop Streams**

Breakout #1	Breakout #2	Breakout #3	Breakout #4
Addressing Reading Difficulties at School UGDSB & WCDSB	Mental Health & LD Rose Freigang, C. Psych. Assoc., Insight Psychology on Norfolk	Productivity & Time Management Strategies Alina Kislenko, RP, Founder of The ADHD and Asperger's/ASD Centre	EdTech for Parents Bootcamp Leanne Husk, Assistive Technology Instruction Specialist, Bridges Canada

2:00 – 2:15 **Nutrition Break**

2:15 – 3:30 **Concurrent Workshop Streams**

Breakout #5	Breakout #6	Breakout #7	Breakout #8
Wellness & LD - Sleep, Diet & Exercise with LD & ADHD Dr. Alexandre Tavares, Psychiatrist	How to Support Kids at Home – Focus on Number Sense Cathy Chaput, WCDSB Educator	IEPs 101 Susan Newcombe, LDAWC	Executive Function – Air Traffic Control Diane Geerlinks, NILD Canada





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Family Conference 2020 Session Summaries

OPENING - Reading Rocks Program

Dr. John McNamara

Reading Rocks is an 8-week one-on-one literacy program for children and youth 6- 12 years old who require support with their literacy skills. Through this effective instructional program, children are matched with a trained tutor who will adapt a poster board workstation and literacy program according to the child's specific needs. The program focuses on the essential literacy concepts of phonics, sight words, and fluency. Tutors will develop and implement engaging, hands-on literacy activities to address these areas and build children's motivation. Each week, children will set goals and graph their success in these areas on their poster board, contributing to self-regulated learning. One of the aims of Reading Rocks is to make reading fun!

Dr. John McNamara is an educational psychologist interested in studying young children with learning and reading disabilities. Currently his research involves working with various agencies across the province to develop and implement literacy intervention programs for vulnerable readers. Dr. McNamara also leads his LD Research Team at Brock University in a number of applied research projects aimed at better understanding reading and reading disabilities. Dr. McNamara is currently the principal investigator on a SSHRC Insight Grant funded initiative to study Reading Rocks – A literacy approach to support and motivate vulnerable readers. John, along with Hilary Scruton, is the co-founder of the Research Institute for Learning Differences



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KEYNOTE SPEAKER – Parenting in an Age of Anxiety: A Stress and Anxiety Toolkit for Parents

Ann Douglas

Focus: Stress management and coping skills for parents and kids.

All kids experience stress and anxiety. These emotions are part of being human, after all. But one in eight children experiences such a high level of anxiety that the child finds it difficult to manage at home or at school. In this thought-provoking presentation by Ann Douglas (a bestselling parent author who also struggles with anxiety), you'll learn how to tell the difference between stress and anxiety (and why this matters); stress management skills for kids and adults; and anxiety management skills for kids and adults (what makes anxiety better, not worse).

BIO FOR ANN DOUGLAS

Ann Douglas sparks conversations that matter about parenting and mental health. She is the weekend parenting columnist for CBC Radio and a bestselling parenting author. Her most recent books are *Happy Parents, Happy Kids* and *Parenting Through the Storm*. A passionate and inspiring speaker, Ann delivers keynote addresses and leads small-group workshops at health, parenting, and education conferences across the country.



Website: anndouglas.net

Twitter: [@anndouglas](https://twitter.com/anndouglas)

Facebook: [The Mother of All Books](https://www.facebook.com/TheMotherofAllBooks)

Instagram: [@anmdouglas](https://www.instagram.com/anmdouglas)

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LinkedIn: <https://ca.linkedin.com/in/anndouglas>



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BREAKOUT SESSION – 12:30 pm – 1:45 pm, choose 1 of 4 sessions

Breakout #1

Addressing Reading Difficulties at School

Educators from both Local School Boards

Reading difficulties can be such a challenge for kids in school. This session will be lead by Educators from local school boards that will provide strategies and tools on how to support a student.+ BIOS

Breakout #2

Mental Health & LD

Rose Freigang, C. Psych. Assoc., Insight Psychology on Norfolk

Mental health challenges can contribute to a student's experience of learning and school performance in many ways. This is especially true for children and teens with a learning disability. This talk will describe how worry and anxiety can affect a student's attention, memory and other cognitive abilities. In addition, we will touch upon how anxiety can emerge as a secondary problem related to a youngster's self-confidence and beliefs about themselves. Most important, we will discuss ways in which you, educators and your child can work together to "talk back" to anxiety and reduce its negative impact.

Rose Freigang is a Registered Psychological Associate with the College of Psychologists of Ontario in the areas of Clinical and School Psychology and is an Associate at Insight Psychology on Norfolk here in Guelph. She has provided assessment and treatment services to individuals across the lifespan in hospital, community agency and private settings for more than 25 years. Rose has a particular interest in and experience with ASD and other Neurodevelopmental Disorders, SLD, and ADHD. Rose has a strong commitment to early intervention, optimizing strengths, and fostering independence.

Breakout #3

Productivity & Time Management Strategies

Alina Kislenko, Registered Psychotherapist, Founder of The ADHD and Asperger's Centre

Executive functioning skills are so important to our daily lives. Providing students with skills in this area is valuable and necessary for success. Learn how to implement time management and productivity strategies that will allow your children to be able to manage school expectations.



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Alina Kislenko is a Neuroscience & Psychiatry Professor at McMaster School of Medicine and a Psychotherapist who is Autistic and ADHD. She also founded and runs the award-winning ADHD & Asperger's/ASD Centre in Guelph (and now Ottawa). She does interactive presentations all over the world and has been on many international tv and radio shows.

Breakout #4

EdTech for Parents Bootcamp

Leanne Husk, Assistive Technology Instruction Specialist, Bridges Canada

With technology infused in so much of student learning today, it may be overwhelming and a bit mystifying about how you can help. Come and learn about the tech tools students are using in classrooms today across the curriculum, and the features they can use to support them to be independent, successful learners! While the focus will be on the popular Google applications, we will make connections to the Microsoft environment as well. A particular focus will be on the features and tools students have available to support reading and writing, primarily the Read&Write Tools by TextHelp.

With a firm belief that technology in our classrooms is the “game changer” for so many of our students today, it has become Leanne Husk’s passion to see it implemented and used to its potential. Combined with strategic teaching, education technology opens up curriculum to struggling learners, truly making it accessible to all. Specializing in learning disabilities, Leanne has spent her career introducing, training and mentoring students, their families and educators to the limitless potential of education technology. She is an energetic, dynamic, dedicated individual who, over the years, has gathered a wealth of knowledge and experience, devoting herself to creating positive, successful, enjoyable, interactive and inclusive learning environments for the students and teams she supports.



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BREAKOUT SESSION – 2:00 pm – 3:15 pm, choose 1 of 4 sessions

Breakout #5

Wellness & LD - Sleep, Diet & Exercise with LD & ADHD

Dr. Alexandre Tavares, Psychiatrist

In this presentation you will learn powerful techniques to immediately help children improve their attention span. We will talk about physical activity and learning techniques that maximize the learning potential of children who have limited attention span. We will also talk about how to help your child have healthier diet and sleep habits to maximize their well-being and their learning potential.

Dr. Alexandre Tavares is a child and adolescent psychiatrist practicing in Waterloo. He grew up knowing that he did not have the best attention span, was not a good speller, and was not a fast reader, but had a thirst for knowledge. He was supported by his parents and grandparents since his childhood. They believed in him and never questioned the validity of learning with less formal educational methods used at that time: TV programs, magazines and supported listening. Dr. Tavares uses his personal experiences to better empathize with the experiences of children and teenagers with ADHD and/or learning disorders.

Breakout #6

How to Support Kids at Home – Focus on Number Sense

Cathy Chaput, WCDSB Educator

Math! Many students love it; many don't. The province, with their renewed math strategy, is using math leads - in school boards across the province - to deepen teachers' knowledge of math - and for good reason. Our technology-driven world is changing rapidly, and students must have a wide range of skills and knowledge to succeed. Mathematics knowledge and proficiency is becoming more critical to success in school and work. Join Cathy Chaput, one such math lead and math lover – as she presents current trends in math, and how you, as a parent, can support your child in a way that enhances their understanding but is fun and engaging. Focusing on number sense will provide a stable base for further math learning.

Cathy Chaput is a Program Coordinator with the Wellington Catholic District School Board, with responsibilities in mathematics. Mathematics is a passion of hers, and she's had the opportunity to engage in this through teaching math in the primary, junior and intermediate panels, working and learning with teachers using a variety of supportive resources, and leading afterschool book studies, workshops and summer programs. She teaches the Primary/Junior Math courses for teachers, has worked on numeracy projects with the Ministry of Education, presented at OAME, OECTA and WFMP conferences.



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Breakout #7

IEPs - 101

Susan Newcombe, LDAWC

Individual Education Plans (IEPs) can be complicated, whether you are new to the special education world or a "frequent flyer". This breakout session will focus on the details of an IEP. There are many tips and strategies that can help. Parents need info to collaborate effectively with teachers and administrators and minimize intimidating situations. Learn what information should be in your child's IEP, and some ideas to be able to craft an effective document to support your child education goals.

Susan Newcombe is the president of LDAWC and a past member of the Special Education Advisory Committee for a local school board

Breakout #8

Executive Function – Air Traffic Control

*Diane Geerlinks; NILD Educational Therapist, National Institute for Learning Development Canada;
Director, GeerLINKS Educational Therapy & Consulting*

Executive function strategies are an important foundation for helping students grow and develop their academic skills as well as building their confidence levels. Students who recognize how to use these strategies in working with their weaknesses and strengths also see improved grades. Learn how to implement and build executive function skills and how to foster strategies that will create confident and resilient students to create open gateways for success.

Diane Geerlinks - Director of Marketing, NILD Canada. - Diane is passionate about helping kids learn, developing their strengths and improving their weaknesses. She has worked in the field of education for the past 35 years, teaching children of all ages and abilities in group settings and one-on-one. In 2009, Diane trained as an NILD Educational Therapist and has since continued to pursue her passion for learning with particular focus on the neuroplasticity of the brain and how we can improve our capacity for learning at any age. She operates GeerLINKS Educational Therapy and is Marketing Director for NILD Canada. Diane is a lively and passionate speaker and presents at educators' conferences across Canada.