

**Lanark, Leeds & Grenville Chapter
Ontario Association for Families of Children with
Communication Disorders
O.A.F.C.C.D.**

INTRODUCTION

Welcome

To the 9th OAFCCD newsletter.
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POEM BOOK II

In the spring of 1999 we began selling our first poem book Inspirational Poems and Stories about Children & Families.

To date we have sold over 250 copies of that book.

I have been asked many times when was I going have a second book ready.

Well, I was finally able to sit down and put all the poems I have saved in a second book – Inspirational Poems and Stories about Children & Families II

This book includes over 50 different poems and stories.

To purchase copies of either Book I or II contact Susan at 284-1977 or use the enclosed order form.

Make great Teacher gifts at Christmas!



INTERNET WEBSITE SITE

Be sure to visit our Web Site at <http://www.cyberus.ca/oafccd/lanark>

2001 MEMBERSHIP FEES DUE!

Membership Fees, grants and donations are currently our only source of operating funds. Your Membership is very important to us and we need you to send your fees in as soon as possible. If you have not yet joined, please do so.

Please complete the Membership Form that you find included with this newsletter as soon as possible and return to the address shown on it.

The Annual Membership Fee is only \$20.00 (\$5 of which stays here at the local Chapter and \$15 that is sent to the Provincial Group) so please pay today!!!

This is the first increase in fees since OAFCCD was formed in 1994

NOTE: Fees will be waived upon request.

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

Saturday November 24, 2001

**Educational Consultation Workshops
9:00 am – 5:00 pm**

**Guest Speaker
Lindsay Moir
Comhnadh Consulting**

**at
Leeds, Grenville & District
Health Unit
52 Abbott St. N.,
Smiths Falls, ON**

Agenda

**8:30 – 9:00 am
Coffee & Registration**

**9:00 – 12:00 noon
Educational Advocacy
Training**

**12:00 – 1:00 pm
Light lunch Provided**

**1:00 – 3:00 pm
Current Issues in Special
Education**

**3:00 – 3:15 pm
Break**

**3:15 – 5:00 pm
Transition to School**

\$10.00 registration fee (this includes attendance to all 3 workshops and lunch)

Registration deadline November 21, 2001. Flyer will be mailed in October with registration form.

For more information contact
Judy Nagle at 1-888-503-8885 or
(613) 283-2742

As September approaches, parents are switching their focus from summer programming to thoughts of the coming school year---- “The Happ- Happiest Time of the Year” according to the Business Depot commercial!!!!!! But for parents of exceptional students, this school year often raises doubts and anxiety about programming and services; about suspensions and expulsions; about funding and cutbacks; about attitudes and frustrations.....

Here are some reflections to help you get “back to school” in a positive, constructive and pro-active manner:

Programs & services: It is the statutory obligation of school boards in Ontario to meet the needs of your child..... as a parent you have the most information and insight into what your child needs.....**TRUST YOURSELF**..... develop a clear WRITTEN statement of your child’s needs and share it with the board and school. Unless we all agree on WHAT needs to happen... we cannot develop effective Individual Education Plans(IEP). Without effective plans teachers and Educational Assistants won’t effectively educate your child..... The Needs Statements recorded on your son or daughter’s IEP often have little or nothing to do with what your child actually needs... if they don’t ... get them changed. All of the “IEP Generator” software is editable— your input **CAN BE INCLUDED!!!!!!**(Regulation 181). Until we know where we are going, getting there is unlikely... respect your expertise, and act upon it!!!

Suspensions & Expulsions: The Ontario Code of Conduct appears to give schools strong authority to automatically suspend and expel students, regardless of their exceptionality. Much has been made of this “tough love” approach to discipline----- raising concerns that many exceptional students will be systematically excluded from school through serial suspension! Parents should be aware that the Code of Conduct is a political framework and that significant parts of it have not been enacted into law!!!! For example, the Mandatory Consequences section is NOT law..... principals “don’t have to suspend...” They do have a choice!!!! The Minister of Education is on record as “consulting with her special education partners (including parents’ groups)as to how this legislation will apply to exceptional pupils”.... the results of this consultation have not yet been released. Be sure to be familiar with the legislation— there are a lot of mis-conceptions out there!!!!!!!!!!!!!! It is my belief that IEPs and Behaviour Management Plans over-ride the Code of Conduct in its present form.

Funding & Cutbacks: Despite a mantra of “cutbacks made me do it...” most boards (if not all) have the same or more dollars for special education as last year... overall board budgets may have been reduced, but special education funding is “protected”. I do believe that many boards are still trying to fundamentally do business in an old way that the Funding Formula will not support!! Remember that October is an Intensive Support Amount submission date-- to provide boards with substantial extra dollars to support high needs students— find out if your son or daughter is being submitted. The new process means that the Ministry funds the board submission, and “spot checks” files later— there is no longer a need to wait for Ministry approval before putting the services in place!!!

Attitudes & Frustrations: Today’s education system seems “tired”--- overwhelmed by rapid change, some educational administrators don’t always look for new creative ways to meet student’s needs. Parents often lock on to only “one way” to meet needs (“my child needs a full-time educational assistant...”) Today’s reality requires new and creative ways to meet student’s needs from everyone involved. Think “outside the box”. Just because it has never been done before, doesn’t mean it can’t work here!!!!

Lindsay Moir is a Consultant with Comhnadh Consulting in London, Ontario. Comhnadh Comments” may be reproduced in not-for-profit newsletters, as long as proper attribution is given. As a courtesy please send a copy of the newsletter to 92 Cumberland Crescent, London, Ontario, N5X 1B6