



Ontario Association for Families of Children with Communication Disorders

O.A.F.C.C.D. NEWSLETTER

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OAFCCD NEEDS YOU!

"A small group of thoughtful people could change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead

This quote by Margaret Mead makes me think of OAFCCD and the work that this small but dedicated group of people has been able to accomplish over the last 15 years. The organization is now at the point, however, where more people are needed to make sure that this important work continues on behalf of children with communication disorders as well as for their families.

OAFCCD began as an organization in 1994 when cuts were being made to speech and language services in various parts of the province. OAFCCD successfully advocated for these services and has continued to advocate and provide support on behalf of children and families in many ways. Some of the highlights of the organization's accomplishments are listed in the sidebar text box.

OAFCCD is at a critical point and needs your support. There are many things that individual parents and professionals can do to make sure that OAFCCD continues to be a vibrant and effective organization. Please consider some of the following possibilities:

Renew your membership: the price of membership is \$25. Your memberships will make sure that OAFCCD can continue to operate and continue to work on your behalf.

Consider a charitable donation: When considering donations, please include OAFCCD. A tax receipt can be issued and you will know that the donation will be dedicated to children with communication disorders.

Purchase OAFCCD Resources: A new parent guide has been developed. The resource has a great deal of practical and useful information. Ordering information is included in this newsletter.

Volunteering with OAFCCD: Can you help out with OAFCCD in some way, whether by writing a newsletter article or distributing brochures? Please let us know if you have time to volunteer. A little bit of your time can make a big difference. You will also get to know a great group of people.

Promote OAFCCD: Please spread the word about OAFCCD to your family, friends and colleagues. Get the word out about communication disorders and the need for a greater understanding and support.

Finally, please let OAFCCD know what else you think can be done to support children and families. All suggestions and feedback would be most appreciated.

by Susan Menary, S.L.P., OAFCCD Founding Member

OAFCCD HIGHLIGHTS

Parents as Partners - workshop materials, parent information resources, Website www.parents-as-partners.ca

OAFCCD Website - www.oafccd.com with Parent Articles, Newsletters, Calendars, and links

Communicating for Fun Calendars - Parent and child activity calendars to promote better speech, language and hearing. Available on OAFCCD Website and on the www.connectABILITY.ca Website

Parent Guide to Supporting Success at School - parents tips on how to help children from preschool to graduation, and information about special education

SEAC Program - volunteers who sit on school board committees and provide advice on special education

Partnerships at the local and provincial level - OAFCCD has a history of positive and collaborative partnerships at community and provincial level

Advocacy - an effective advocacy organization for improving preschool and school services

Parent Leadership: with strong parent leadership in partnership with professionals

President's Appeal

By Susan Strachan, Co-President

OAFCCD has been a lifeline to me at a time when I needed information. I had searched frantically for help, in the community and on the internet. I was so relieved when I found OAFCCD and was able to obtain quality information about speech and language services.

During the years since I found help for my family, I decided to give back to the organization by becoming a SEAC representative on the Halton District School Board and, more recently, by joining the OAFCCD Board.

I am thrilled that in recent years OAFCCD has been very successful in getting grants to develop great new resources, including the Parents as Partners workshops and website, and the new Parent Guide to Supporting Success at School.

However, OAFCCD is at a critical point. As we look to 2010 we see we no longer have the resources, volunteers and money, to continue the support that I had desperately needed and received. We see that the lifeline I received may not be there for other families. We need OAFCCD to help families for many more years. We need your support.

*I know that you believe in the OAFCCD Vision "**All children will have access to a continuum of speech and language services to support their successful participation at home, in school and in the community**". I believe that OAFCCD is critical to that vision becoming the practice in Ontario. You can support this vision by volunteering and providing your financial support – please pay your membership fees and make a donation.*

I support OAFCCD because it is a parent driven organization that understands the needs of children with speech and language disorders. OAFCCD understands the challenges faced by families. OAFCCD can effectively navigate families through the system. OAFCCD is recognized by the government as a voice for children. OAFCCD is actively involved in consultations with the provincial government to make sure our children get the services and supports they need.

I hope that you will demonstrate your support and help OAFCCD today.

A Parent Guide to Supporting Success at School Helping Students with Speech and Language Impairment

Thanks to the Ministry of Education Parent Engagement Office and a Parents Reaching Out Grant, OAFCCD has been able to create a guide to help parents navigate the school system.

The guide brings together information and tips that have previously been scattered amongst a number of parent articles. The guide covers the total school experience from leaving preschool services to starting post secondary school or employment.

The Parents Reaching Out Grant funded a review of all of OAFCCD past articles, as well as the writing of this comprehensive document. A team of Speech-Language Pathologists from the Dufferin-Peel Catholic and Upper Grand District School Boards, as well as parent volunteers were involved in reviewing each draft of the guide. A big THANK YOU to all of them for helping!

The guide includes OAFCCD Parent Tips that provide suggestions of what parents can do or where to get help or more information. Each Section has a list of Additional Information Sources that provides information on Ministry of Education documents and other resources that will help families.

This great resource is available to OAFCCD members for just \$10. To encourage Speech-Language Pathologists to order copies for their waiting rooms, school libraries and resource rooms, members will get a discount on larger orders. An Order Form has been included with this newsletter. Please support OAFCCD and order a copy today!

Annual Membership Renewals

A membership in OAFCCD only costs \$25 per calendar year and will help OAFCCD to continue providing information to families through Newsletters and the Website.

Memberships for 2010 are due by January 31st, 2010 and can be mailed in today. The Membership Renewal Form has been enclosed with this newsletter.

School Health Support Services

A formal review of School Health Support Services has been announced and is to be completed by Deloitte & Touche LLP (Deloitte) by July 31, 2010. The review is a joint initiative of the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, Ministry of Children and Youth Services and Ministry of Education.

School Health Support Services (SHSS) is managed by the Community Care Access Centres (CCAC) and includes physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, nursing and dietician services to children who attend publicly funded and private schools or are home schooled

The program is important to OAFCCD members as it provides speech therapy services to some children with speech impairments, including articulation, fluency (stuttering) and voice problems.

The School Health Support Services program was established in the early 1980's after Bill 82 was passed and all children with special needs were able to attend school. The responsibility for the delivery of health services at school was determined by **Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum 81, Provision of Health Support Services in School Settings, 1984**. A further description of how speech and language services should be delivered was outlined in the **1988 Inter-Ministerial Guidelines for the Provision of Speech and Language Services and A Model for the Provision of Speech and Language Services**.

A lot has changed since the 1980's including:

- Research on link between oral language and literacy
- Research on effective intervention strategies for students with speech and/or language impairments
- Improved understanding of the importance of speech and language skills in education
- Development of school teams and interdisciplinary approaches to student support
- Expansion of Speech-Language Pathology Services in school boards
- Changes in health care service delivery models, including the development of Community Care Access Centres and contracted services.

OAFCCD is a recognized stakeholder that will have an opportunity to provide input into the review. Over the

years OAFCCD has developed a number of position papers and made submissions on speech and language services for children. In the next few months OAFCCD will be reviewing the past submissions and connecting with members and other partners as a submission for the review is developed. Your comments, stories and insight into the School Health Support Services will be invaluable.

The SHSS review goals are to:

- Assess whether SHSS clients are able to access and are receiving high quality SHSS;
- Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the program's delivery and any areas in which it could be improved;
- Identify whether the strengths are aligned with the program's mandate;
- Investigate whether current client care models utilized by service provider agencies are consistent with research evidence and best practice; and
- Consider how SHSS can best serve students and their families and whether proposed changes will benefit the students who use the services.

The Memorandum about the review does not provide any details about the review process or format, proposed changes, or timelines. OAFCCD will be working on a submission and looking for your input over the next few months. In particular, OAFCCD is interested in hearing about your experiences and your perspective regarding:

- Strengths of SHSS – What was helpful to you and your child?
- Weaknesses of SHSS – What were the challenges you faced in obtaining and receiving services?
- Improvements to SHSS – What do you suggest could be done to improve the program?
- Connections with school services – How were the SHSS linked with the other supports that your child received at school?

Please send your comments to Alison Morse by calling 519-842-9506 or e-mail to abmorse@kwic.com

For more information on the School Health Support Services, you can find PPM 81 and the Inter-Ministerial Guidelines for the Provision of Speech and Language Services on the Ministry of Education Website at www.edu.gov.on.ca Information on the SHSS program and eligibility criteria is available on the individual Community Care Access Centres websites, that are linked to the provincial website: www.ccac-ont.ca

Individual Education Plan (IEP) Internet Resources for Parents

A number of resources to help parents understand the Individual Education Plan (IEP) and process have recently been developed and made available on the internet. Check the following sites for some very useful resources:

- Ministry of Education document **Individual Education Plan (I.E.P.) A Resource Guide (2004)** and information on the IEP Process are available from the Ministry of Education Website: www.edu.gov.on.ca

To find the documents:

1. Select **Elementary** or **Popular Topics** on the left side bar
2. Scroll down page and Select **Special Education**
3. Select **Individual Education Plan (I.E.P.) Process**

- Ministry of Education Individual Education Plan (I.E.P.) Template. Available on the website at: <https://iep.edu.gov.on.ca/IEPWeb>

Instructions to access the site:

1. Type **IEPDemo** for User Name
2. Type **demo** for Password
3. Click **Submit** (Ignore the IEP File Name)

Note: To see menus for the Special Education Program you need to list a modified or alternative course on the Subject and courses page. Similarly you need to check off Transition to see the Transition Page.

- Ministry of Education Sample Individual Education Plans for each Exceptionality are available on the Council of Directors of Education (CODE) website at www.ontariodirectors.ca/

To access samples:

1. Scroll down **Home** page to IEP Samples
2. Select For More Information **Click here**
3. Scroll down **Individual Education Plan (I.E.P.) Samples** page to bottom section. Samples are listed by exceptionality for Elementary and Secondary
4. Select Sample, i.e. **Language Impairment - Elem** – with **left click** on mouse
5. Complete sample IEP will be shown for the selected exceptionality

- Ministry of Education has funded the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) to develop a learning workshop called the **IEP 101 Workshop for Parents and Students**. The website is as: <http://ldalearning.ca>

To enter the website:

1. Select **Login as a Guest**
2. Select Available Courses - **IEP 101 Workshop for Parents and Students**
3. View sections of course that are of interest to you, including **The IEP Development Process, IEP Student Profile, Accommodations for Learning and Special Education Program**
4. **Glossary of Terms** provides an explanation of many terms used in the IEP

- Every school board is required to provide parents with a **Parent Guide** that describes the Identification, Placement Review Committee (I.P.R.C.). Many of these guides provide further information on the IEP and some school boards also have parent information brochures on the Individual Education Plan. Check the school board website, or ask the school Principal for a copy of parent resources.

OAFCCD Parents as Partners



The OAFCCD Parents as Partners project funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation ended in June 2009. OAFCCD continues to provide support to families through the www.parents-as-partners.ca website.

OAFCCD is also able to offer the Parents as Partners workshops on a fee for service basis. If you have a parent group that may be interested in having one of the workshops, please call Alison Morse at 519-842-950 or by e-mail to abmorse@kwic.com

Make a Donation

In the season of giving, please consider a donation to OAFCCD. You can get a tax receipt for your donation. Mail a cheque, include with your membership fees, or make a donation on-line through www.CanadaHelps.org There is a link on the OAFCCD Website.