

The BEAR Bulletin

Vol. 7 December 2021



Tutor Trainer, Meredith Hutchings

It has been a delight to see the Centre up and running for safe in-person tutoring. How wonderful to come together again as a community sharing the love of teaching and learning.

Our three new tutors, Mary Ellen Starodub, Donna McManamy, and Elspeth Daley, received training in Module 3 early this fall. This first fifteen hours of training is required before tutors can begin tutoring. Donna and Elspeth began tutoring their children soon after we opened the Centre in October. Mary Ellen has been patiently waiting for a child who is double vaccinated against COVID to be approved to begin tutoring. New tutors begin by watching the Trainer/Supervisor deliver the first lesson to the child. Then the pairs begin their work together. Observations follow quickly, and these two tutors have been observed twice already this fall. It has been wonderful to see how quickly these two tutors and their children have settled into the Orton-Gillingham lesson routines! Already, growth and progress can be seen all around with lesson development and delivery and with children's skills and confidence. Thank you, Donna, Elspeth, children, and families, for diving into the tutoring process with such enthusiasm! We hope to have some new applications for tutoring fully vaccinated children soon so that we can start Mary Ellen as soon as possible.

Other good news is that we have some more terrific people interested in becoming OG tutors with us. The

Centre will continue to grow in the new year.

While these new tutors have started, Sarah McKee and Michael and Barbara Baxter have continued with their children. Parents report about the positive impact the tutoring process has had on the children at school and at home. Thanks to everyone for supporting this transformative learning process!

In fact, by the time of the December holiday, our first group of children will have completed their tutoring time. To the children completing the program and their families, we know that you will always be part of our Learning Centre family and we are so proud of your accomplishments and progress thanks to your wonderful tutors, Barbara, Nikki, and Michael.

With the Baxters becoming Certified OG Practitioners, and children completing their tutoring, our Centre will achieve an important milestone moving from a new Centre to a mature one. Formal recognition of these achievements will happen when we can safely gather, hopefully in 2022. Stay tuned!

Have a safe and merry holiday! We look forward to seeing our Centre fill up again in the new year and continue to make a difference in the lives of our deserving children!



Welcome to our New Tutors



DONNA MCMANAMY has been in the fitness industry for 35 years. She is a certified Fitness Instructor and Trainer and has spent countless hours, educating, motivating and encouraging her clients to help them achieve their fitness goals.

She is very excited and happy to be a part of the Learning Centre family. Her goal is to help her students expand their knowledge, while building self-esteem and confidence.

Her greatest joy in life is being a mother to four grown children and eight grandchildren.



ELSPETH DALEY graduated in April 2021 from the University of Toronto Ontario Institute for Studies in Education Master of Teaching (Junior/Intermediate). She has a Bachelor of Fine Arts and is presently continuing additional courses in Special Education and Teaching English Language. Also, Elspeth has an extensive background working with youth in alternate education, student government, and Girl Guides Canada.

This summer Elspeth worked near the Learning Centre. We were fortunate to find her, meet with her, and tell her about the Orton-Gillingham Program. Without hesitation, Elspeth expressed interest in becoming a tutor to help children with dyslexia. Her great knowledge, interest, care, and compassion is shared weekly in Orton-Gillingham lessons with a child and all other team members at the Centre.

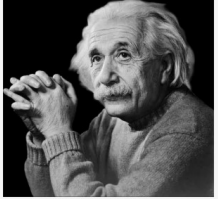
Welcome to our New Tutors



MARY ELLEN STARODUB is a professional risk assessor and toxicologist, with more than 15 years of work experience and related expertise in the environmental risk assessment and regulatory science. Mary Ellen has taught at universities in Ontario and had developed curricula and courses in the environment and health sectors. In addition to establishing a great science-based career Mary Ellen raised three sons who also have interest in education.

Mary Ellen is an active volunteer in the areas of photography, bird watching, and helping children with learning disabilities. She believes in education, and teaching children with well-planned, research-based lessons which makes Mary Ellen an excellent volunteer willing to learn the Orton-Gillingham method to deliver one-on-one lessons to children with dyslexia at the Learning Centre for Hamilton.

Successful People with Dyslexia



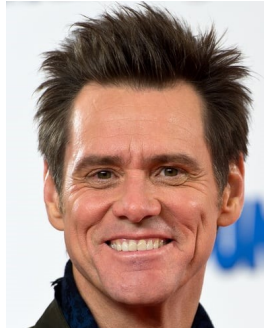
Albert Einstein

Einstein was a Nobel Prize-winning theoretical physicist who developed the theory of relativity and the famous $E=mc^2$ equation. Einstein was well known for his brilliance in math and physics but he also struggled with language difficulties, leading some people to suggest he may have had dyslexia. He had extremely delayed speech and didn't speak fluently until he was 6 years old. Einstein also had problems getting his thoughts down, retrieving language and reading out loud, all characteristic signs of dyslexia. His contributions to his field demonstrated a unique and novel approach to problem solving which is one of the strengths associated with dyslexia.

More Successful People with Dyslexia



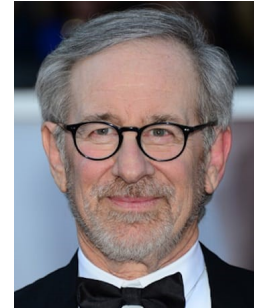
WALT DISNEY



JIM CARREY



JAMIE OLIVER



STEVEN SPIELBERG



WHOOPI GOLDBERG



JOHN LENNON



CHER



ANDERSON COOPER





The Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation Learning Centres of Canada and the Orton-Gillingham Program

- Following the lead of the Scottish Rite Learning Centres for Dyslexia in the United States, the Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation of Canada opened their first Learning Centre in London, Ontario in 2003
- Presently, there are nine centres in Canada, with the Learning Centre for Hamilton being the newest opening in April 2018
- Every Learning Centre in Canada offers the Orton-Gillingham program to children with dyslexia through trained tutors that use the Orton-Gillingham approach

What is Orton-Gillingham?

- The Orton-Gillingham approach is named after 2 influential individuals in the field of dyslexia, Dr. Samuel Orton, and Anna Gillingham, along with Bessie Stillman
- Dr. Orton, a neuropsychiatrist spent much time researching children with language processing disorders. He was the first to move away from mere “remedial reading” to treat all aspects of language as related, based on the understanding of neurology and neural connections in the building of memory
- Anna Gillingham, ahead of her time in the 1930s showed her foresight in education and psychology
- As a psychologist she wanted answers for children who were intelligent, but had problems with reading and spelling
- She sought the help of Dr. Orton and with Bessie Stillman developed remedial techniques for teaching reading and spelling that were based on Orton’s theories and her own deep knowledge of language
- Together they created the Orton-Gillingham Program an intense, individualized, structured, phonetic, and multi-sensory approach for reading and spelling
- A multisensory approach (auditory, visual, and kinesthetic) to learning is used
- Orton-Gillingham focuses on decoding and sounding out words by learning: letter sounds, how to take apart sounds in a word and blend them together, how grouping of letters can work together, and rules and patterns in reading
- Orton-Gillingham incorporates structured literacy: identifying sounds in spoken words, connecting sounds to letters, dividing words into syllables, studying meaningful parts of words (prefixes, suffixes, Latin roots), understanding the meaning of words, and understanding sentence structure and the order of words
- Orton-Gillingham skills are taught in a direct way in a particular order that is specific to each child’s strengths and challenges
- Children master skills through teaching and re-teaching as needed
- The main goal of Orton-Gillingham is for children to use skills they’ve learned to decode words independently, become competent, confident, and successful life-long readers and spellers
- Children with dyslexia can be helped in an Orton-Gillingham program
- Thanks to the Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation of Canada trained volunteer tutors are providing a much-needed service

CO-DIRECTORS' MESSAGE DECEMBER 2021

After the difficult times since the beginning of the pandemic, it is so good to have the Learning Centre for Hamilton open again for in-person tutoring. We are pleased to have our returning children back and welcome the new tutors, volunteers and children who have joined us this fall. As we look toward 2022 we anticipate continued growth with the training of new tutors, and new children beginning their Orton-Gillingham tutoring.

We express our appreciation to all tutors, volunteers, parents, and children for fully cooperating with the policy that all people entering the Learning Centre be double vaccinated. This policy has allowed the Learning Centre to provide a safe environment for all entering the building. In addition, everyone is cooperating with all of the additional safety and cleaning protocols which have been implemented. Despite the additional protocols, everyone is grateful to be part of the positive environment which the Learning Centre provides for all involved.

Thank all who have continued to play an important role in the continued growth and development of the Learning Centre for Hamilton. Thank you to our President Mike Kirk and Board for their continued support and dedication to the Centre. Thank you to volunteers Leslie Drake (Centre financial books) and Lee Kools (Centre newsletter editor). Thank you to our tutor trainer Meredith Hutchings and tutors who spend so many hours ensuring high quality Orton-Gillingham programming is delivered. Thank you to our Volunteer Coordinators Dale Chapman and Lee Gowers, and dedicated volunteers who monitor the lessons and work the reception area of the Learning Centre. Thank you to our children who work so hard in their lessons and to their families who support them.

Lessons for the fall session concluded on Thursday, December 16th. We will resume tutoring sessions on Tuesday, January 11th, 2022. We look forward to the second half of the tutoring year which will culminate with our first Learning Centre Graduation Ceremony on Sunday, June 5th, 2022.

We wish all of you a very happy and joyous holiday season. May you enjoy the company of those you are able to spend time with. It is our hope that the new year brings you many good things.

Michael and Barbara Baxter
Co-directors, Learning Centre for Hamilton



PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE DECEMBER 2021



The Holiday season is upon us and we give thanks for all those blessings accrued to each and every one of us. The challenges of the last two years have worked to make us all stronger.

Our Learning Centre approaches the mid-point of the 2021-2022 school year with a successful in-person reopening and a very productive schedule of tutoring. New tutors have been trained and additional tutors will begin their training in the new year. This has been a great assistance in starting to reduce the Learning Centre's waiting list. Advances in the provision of vaccines to children five to 11 will also mean we can begin to accommodate younger students.

I want to particularly recognize and thank one of our longest serving and supportive volunteers, Lee Kools. Lee has worked tirelessly in support of the Learning Centre from the earliest days of its development. Her skills in organizing, editing and wordsmithing have been a huge part of the success of our newsletters as well as other printed information. Her work with the two fundraising Galas not to mention her organizing and directing of our very successful plays was an essential ingredient in their success.

While the work of the Learning Centre continues, we all need to be reminded that our only source of funding is through fundraising events and continuing supportive donations. Those fundraising events traditionally counted on for support have been absent for the last two years and while there has been some increase in individual donations it has not filled the shortfall. As the year draws to a close, please consider a donation to the Learning Centre now or make one of your New Year's resolutions to consider regular donations in support of the work of the Learning Centre.

Michael Kirk
President of the Board
Learning Centre for Hamilton

