



The BEAR Bulletin

❖❖❖ *“helping children with dyslexia to read”*



Learning Centre for Hamilton In the Media

On November 22 co-director Michael Baxter (pictured above) was a guest on the Cable 14 program The Hamilton Network. This was Michael's second appearance on the show. During his interview he explained the need for more tutors (with a special plea for men!), the process to apply and be trained. He also spoke about the struggles children with dyslexia face and the progress they make and self-confidence they gain through the program.

You can watch the interview through the link on our Facebook page.

Message from the President

Well here we are approaching the Christmas Break, while it seems like only yesterday we were preparing for this tutoring year. Over the past few months some minor repairs have been done to the Centre and new blinds added to the new windows in the main-floor tutoring rooms. We are experiencing some internet accessibility issues but upgrades are in the works and should be completed by the start of tutoring in January.

Our new volunteers, children and families have settled in very nicely. We even have a four-pawed volunteer in the reception area to greet visitors and friends of the Learning Centre. Read more about Lelo below.

Happy Holidays to everyone: may next year be as positive and rewarding as this one has been.

Michael Kirk—President

Meet Lelo



Lelo, in the middle, is coming to the Learning Centre for Hamilton with volunteer Linda Murray. Linda is fostering and doing the initial training and socialization of Lelo.

Lelo is a new dog with the Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides. This organization, established in 1985, empowers Canadians living with disabilities to navigate their world with confidence and independence by providing Dog Guides at no cost. The foundation relies on donations and does not receive any government funding. Based in Oakville, they train Dog Guides in seven programs: Canine Vision, Hearing, Service, Seizure Response, Autism Assistance, Diabetes Alert and Facility Support. Learn more about the Foundation at dogguides.com.

Lelo is pictured in the reception area of the Learning Centre for Hamilton with Lilly and Volunteer Linda.

From our Co-directors

The Learning Centre for Hamilton fall tutoring session is nearing an end and it has been another time of growth with an increased number of children, tutors, and volunteers. All involved at the Centre have settled into the daily and weekly routines. Children are making good progress with the Orton-Gillingham process and new and returning families are pleased with the reading and spelling growth seen by their children.

This came from parent Lexi after Ari's first lesson in October 2023:

"In the car on the way home today Ari said, "I'm lucky to be matched with Iris. Reading is awful, but she smiles and laughs a lot and that makes her good company to help me."

"Thank you for making him feel comfortable and for all your support."

This explains why one and all at the Learning Centre for Hamilton is dedicated to the services of the Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation and what it does for children. Thank you to everyone for your involvement and donations to the Learning Centre for Hamilton.

We wish everyone a festive and joyous time with family and friends during the holiday season. Merry Christmas 2023 and Happy New Year 2024

Barbara & Michael Baxter

From our Tutor-Trainer

The fall seems to have slipped past so quickly and winter weather has already started! It is hard to believe! This fall has been a busy one at the Learning Centre. Our five new tutors and children have settled in brilliantly. To accommodate all these sessions, the Centre is now open four days a week. Thank you to all the volunteers who help make this happen!

During the fall the new tutors continued to progress with more training. They are now ready to deliver Level Two of the five level Orton-Gillingham (OG) intervention. The levels and sequence of delivery came from our IMSLEC (International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council) trainers who came up from the Eastern United States before we had trainers here in Canada. These levels begin children with the most common elements of the structure of English and build to more complex ones. Despite their age, all of our children who have been diagnosed with dyslexia start at the beginning level. These important foundational phonograms, syllables, and spelling patterns are new to all of our children and open up so many reading and spelling skills for them right from their first lesson. We often see a marked difference in a child's literacy skills and self esteem after only a dozen or so lessons. Parents often comment about how pleased and relieved they are to see this progress so quickly.

This success has been true for our new children and tutors this fall. A few children have already completed the first level and have received an early Christmas present of starting the second OG Level. This fall, all new tutors have had three observations while they tutored. These observations are followed up with written feedback and a debrief session. The OG approach is a real apprenticeship and develops tremendous skills in all of our tutors. Our new tutors have shown some natural abilities to pick up on how to craft and deliver excellent tutoring lessons! Thank you to all our new tutors and families!

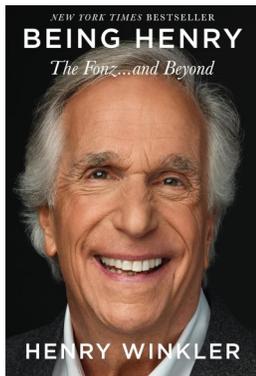
In addition to the new tutors, our tutors at the middle and end of their certification process also continue to be observed and provided with feedback. It takes a great deal of expertise to juggle all that has been taught into a one-hour lesson and continue to watch for challenges that require more practice and support for their child. Thank you to all our outstanding tutors and diligent children! As they progress up the levels, we often hear how these children are now working at grade level at school. Catching up those years they were below grade level in just a few years is a remarkable accomplishment. We are so proud of all our children and their supportive families.

The IMSLEC accreditation certificate is now proudly hanging on our reception room wall. Please come and take a peek!

Wishing all of you a lovely and safe holiday!

Meredith Hutchings

Book Suggestions from our Co-directors

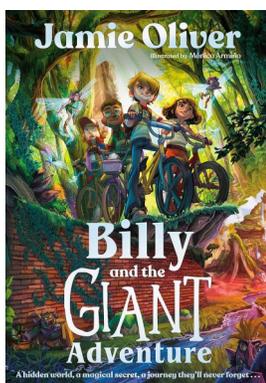


Books you may consider for yourself or someone else to become more aware of successful people who have dyslexia.

Being Henry: The Fonz...and Beyond

An autobiography by Henry Winkler (October 2023)

Emmy Award winning actor, author, comedian, producer, and director Henry Winkler writes a deeply thoughtful memoir of the lifelong effects of stardom and the struggle to become whole. Henry discusses living with dyslexia and moving past Fonzie in his new memoir.



Billy and the Giant Adventure

A children's book by Jamie Oliver (November 2023)

Internationally renowned chef, TV producer, author of many cookbooks, and father of 5, Jamie Oliver is now the author of his first children's book. Jamie has lived with dyslexia his whole life, so understands how difficult it can be to read books. He has ensured that the book is friendly for children with dyslexia, choosing the font to make sure the text is clear and the illustrations are eye-catching. When his children became better readers than him, at around age 11, he made up oral bedtime stories and recorded them. These stories became the inspiration for the book, which is aimed at children aged 7 to 11.

Our Clowns Have Found a New Home



The clowns and framed pictures that formerly inhabited the basement of the Learning Centre for Hamilton have been relocated: they are now happily residing at the Shriners Club of Hamilton. The pictures are adorning the walls of the bar area while the clowns are in a display case in the main hall. Sliding glass panels have been installed on the display case to protect the clowns. The Hamilton Shriners, and especially their Klowne unit, are happy as are the children, and some adults, who feared venturing into the basement of the Learning Centre and encountering the clowns.

Are you wondering why the clowns are at the Shrine Club? There is a very real connection between the two. The pictures and clowns are modeled after famous comedian Red Skelton, who was a Shriner.

Ill Bro. Richard Bernard "Red" Skelton 33°, Geourgas Medalist, was raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason in Vincennes Lodge No. 1 on September 20, 1939. He joined the Scottish and York Rites as well as the Shrine and was awarded the Rite's highest honour, the Gourgas Medal in 1995, as a recognition of his activities as a Freemason, philanthropist and patriot.

As a young boy Red was selling newspapers when a gentleman paid for his with a \$5 bill. When asked why he was so generous the man explained that he was a Mason and Masons believed in giving. Red decided then that when he was old enough he too would join Masonry.

He began his career as a circus clown, continuing onto vaudeville and Broadway, then films, radio and TV. Red also became an accomplished painter, known for his paintings of clowns.

Red Skelton was inducted into the International Clown Hall of Fame in 1989.



The Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation
Learning Centre for Hamilton
"helping children with dyslexia to read"

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Donations (one time or monthly) may also be made through **CanadaHelps**.
Visit CanadaHelps.org and search for Learning Centre for Hamilton.
Official receipts for income tax purposes will be issued by CanadaHelps.

Donations of \$20 or more will be acknowledged with an official receipt for income tax purposes.

Those donating \$500 or more will receive a certificate of appreciation and a pin.

If donating by cheque please fill out this form and mail it with your cheque to:

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