



Learning Centre
for Hamilton



A Logo Explained

The logo of the Scottish Rite Foundation combines two elements: the Masonic triangle and a maze containing a stylized human form. The triangle is a symbol of the Deity used around the world. The maze symbolizes the complex road to unravelling the puzzles of cognitive impairment. The stylized human at the end of the maze suggests the perfectibility of humankind. We are told that the holy-of-holies within King Solomon's temple, was bedecked largely in purple; and it is surely of some significance that in the Supreme Council 33° of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry the colour is prevalent in their assemblies.

The BEAR Bulletin

Summer 2024

❖❖❖ *"helping children with dyslexia to read"*

Message from the President

As this newsletter lands in your inbox we will have the 2023-2024 tutoring year in our rear-view mirror and will be complaining about eating too much at the end of year BBQ. The summer break will be a welcome time to recharge for everyone and I do hope it proves to be both relaxing and rewarding for all. Planning and preparation for the next year is already underway and over the summer the Learning Centre will be training new tutors and providing updates for our returning ones. We hope to be able to open in September with a full year's schedule in place so all to be able to plan for the year. This long-range plan is now a necessity as the Learning Centre operation has become much more complex with increasing numbers and pressures on time, space and resources and we are finding fewer opportunities to respond to last-minute changes. We encourage everyone, tutors, volunteers, and children and their families to let us know their individual plans and schedules as early in the new tutoring year as possible so we can accommodate everyone and keep things running smoothly for all. Have a wonderful summer and see you all in September.

Michael Kirk—President

Help Wanted!

Volunteer Tutors Needed
help children with dyslexia to read

Children are tutored 2 nights each week (Monday & Wednesday or Tuesday & Thursday).

All lessons are held at the Learning Centre for Hamilton on George Street.

Free training in the Orton-Gillingham method is provided.

**Reception Room
Volunteers Needed**

To greet children and their parents, and monitor activity within the building.

All lessons are after school—hours from 3 pm to 8 pm.

Volunteer for a whole shift or half a shift, one evening or more—whatever works best for you.

Vulnerable Sector checks are required.

Application forms are available on our website: [Dyslexiacentrehamilton.com](https://www.dyslexiacentrehamilton.com)

Ontario Volunteer Service Awards



This year 6650 community leaders were recognized at 45 local ceremonies through the 2024 Ontario Volunteer Service Awards. Four volunteers from the Learning Centre for Hamilton were among them. President Michael Kirk submitted the names of Treasurer Ian Anderson, Co-directors and tutors Barbara and Michael Baxter and Vice-President Mario Kovacevic.

A ceremony to honour approximately 300 people was held on May 8 at Liuna Station. Recipients ranged in age from young students to seniors with times of service from 5 to 63 years. After the ceremony there was a stand up reception with delicious food and drinks. Unfortunately Mario was unable to attend the ceremony, but has received his certificate and pin.



Members of the Edgemount Chapter No. 127 of the Eastern Star have made a donation of \$500 to the Learning Centre for Hamilton. Pictured with the huge cheque are: Bev Marshall, Noirah Katernuk, Debra Waldron, Kelley Mackey, Gail and Lou Marcuzzi and Bev McCraw. Tutor and Eastern Star member Jennifer Marshall has provided the SCRF with a cashable cheque!



Watch our Facebook page for the latest news from the Learning Centre for Hamilton.

Have a wonderful and safe summer! See you in September!

From our Co-directors

The end of the 2023-2024 tutoring year is upon us. This year has been another year of growth for the Learning Centre for Hamilton. Thirteen tutors provided tutoring to sixteen children who all experienced exceptional growth in their reading and spelling skills over the course of the tutoring year. Special congratulations to the four children, Maggie, Eli, Emily, and Connor who are graduating from the Centre this year. After the many hours of dedication put in by tutors, volunteers, children and families, it is time for everyone to have a well-deserved summer break.

The success of the Learning Centre for Hamilton is a direct result of all of those who are committed to it on a weekly basis, but there are many who are not directly involved who play an important role in the Centre's continued success. As a not-for-profit entity, the Learning Centre for Hamilton relies on donations in order to provide Orton-Gillingham tutoring to the children it serves. Those who contribute to the financial stability of the Learning Centre must be recognized. The Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation, numerous Masonic lodges, Eastern Star chapters, the Hamilton Valley Golf Tournament, and individual donors, and other groups all contribute financially to ensure that the Learning Centre can continue to operate. To all of these regular donors, we say thank you. Your generosity does not go unnoticed and your ongoing support is greatly appreciated.

We wish everyone a great summer and look forward to the fall when we welcome back our returning children and tutors and welcome new tutors and children to the Learning Centre for Hamilton family.

Barbara & Michael Baxter

From our Tutor-Trainer

It is hard to believe that another year is coming to a close! The time has passed quickly with all of our wonderful tutors working diligently to provide exceptional Orton-Gillingham (OG) lessons to their students. As I consistently note, our tutors write superb, individualized lessons to teach the structure of the English language, which is something that takes a great deal of skill and precision.

As a result, the annual year end tests are proving that their efforts, and the efforts of their children are succeeding in greatly improved reading and spelling skills. It gives me such pleasure to see these terrific people take on such a complex task, with such care, kindness, and effectiveness.

This year, we have started to share tutoring ideas using Zoom sessions. The creativity of our tutors is incredible, and these sessions will increase in number next year so that tutors can learn more from each other. A special thank you to Margaret Cowan, a retired psychometrist and London Learning Centre Director, who shared and delivered an evening of information about attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Colleen Reinhart, a tutor who works as a Speech Language Therapist, has also shared her expertise about language development with all the tutors. We are so lucky to have these high caliber tutors at the Centre!

My last trip to Hamilton this spring involved teaching our new cohort of tutors how to administer the Gallistel-Ellis (GE) informal assessment. This is administered before tutoring starts and is used as a baseline of what the child knows before starting tutoring. Then, after each of the three years of tutoring, tutors administer this same assessment so that we can see the child's progress. This GE test is particularly effective for us to use as it is structured aligning with our OG approach. It is such a delight to hear how proud the tutors are of the progress being made by their child. They can also truly see how the progress is a direct result of their OG efforts, as the child shows mastery of what has been taught but may still struggle with concepts to be taught in future lessons! OG can feel like magic!

There are other standardized assessments included in the baseline and annual testing, which are delivered by the Trainer and Co-Directors. The directors collect the data, add to the children's files, and present the results to the parents. Thank you, Baxters! Over the three years a child receives OG tutoring, this data provides us all with a great snapshot about how this OG intervention is helping each child.

We have a lovely group of eager new tutors set to start their training in August. It will be wonderful to be able to take on some more deserving children and families into our growing community!

I wish everyone a wonderful, healthy summer!

Meredith Hutchings

Thank you to our Donors

With the support of the Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation and generous donors we are giving children the gifts and lifelong skills of reading and spelling.

We extend our sincere gratitude to the following who donated during the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

Burford Lodge No. 106	Amy Collard	Paul Mizzi
Hugh Murray Lodge No. 602	Lorraine Cooper	Blair Moffat
Landmarks/Doric Lodge No. 654	Audrey Gaye Culpe	Malcolm Murray
Moore Sovereign Consistory	Joyce and Stephen DeKruyf	Debbie Nazir
Spring Assembly Reception Committee	Scott Drummond	David Ottman
Elgin Lodge of Perfection	Peter Ewen	Maureen M. Peddle
Murton Lodge of Perfection	George Fairburn	Tariq Quarashi
Edgemount Lodge of Perfection	Gregory Faraday	Peter Rhodes
Niagara Chapter of the Rose Croix	Paul Douglas Fenton	George Stapleton
Valley of Guelph A&ASR	Thomas Forbes	Charles Bruce Stewart
Valley of Peterborough A&ASR	Brian Gilkinson	Larry Stewart
Brantford Scottish Rite Association	Jack Hanna	Ron Stinson
Edgemount Chapter No. 127 OES	Dennis A. Hawman	Anca Sudac
Primrose Assembly No. 8 IORG	Alana Henderson	Matt Taggart
Shriners' Club of Hamilton	McAllister Horne	Alexis Van Harten
The 94 th Scottish Rite Golf Classic	Tammy and Hank Huitema	Danielle and Wilco Vaarkamp
	R. Paul Johnson	Robert Whitmore
	D. Brent Julian	Thomas A. Wills
David Amis	David A. Kemp	Sara Yonson
Ian Anderson	Renate Kuhlman	
Barbara Baxter	Gerald I. Levy	Benjamin Moore
Michael Baxter	Thomas Lewis	Dodsworth & Brown Funeral Home
Randy Beckley	William A. Lofts	Enbridge Gas
David Bennett	Kelly Mackey	Form & Build Supply
Sandra Bentley	Jennifer Marshall	PayPal Giving Fund Canada
George Benton	Tom Marshall	The Walden Family Foundation
Janet and William Brimer	Vincent McCurdy	
Scott Clarke		

If you would like to become an donor (one-time or monthly) to the Learning Centre for Hamilton please visit our website

Dyslexiacentrehamilton.com

*Or donate through **CanadaHelps.***

The Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation Learning Centre for Hamilton is a registered charity.

Donations will be acknowledged with an official receipt for income tax purposes.

Your donations allow us to continue "helping children with dyslexia to read".

Dyslexia in the Workplace

Though learning disabilities are often characterized as a childhood issue, they are lifelong conditions that follow people into the workplace. People with dyslexia find it harder to find jobs and they often experience challenges once they are hired because of their learning disability.

Dyslexia can result in challenges which can be compounded if companies don't have accommodations in place for people with disabilities. But people with dyslexia often bring unique strengths to the workplace as well.

Under the Canadian Human Rights Act, individuals are protected from discrimination based on disabilities, including learning disabilities such as dyslexia. However, misconceptions and stigma can often make it difficult for people to disclose that they have dyslexia. Some of this can be attributed to the stigma surrounding dyslexia. Even though dyslexia is the most common type of learning disability, it is widely misunderstood. One of the most common misconceptions about learning disabilities is that having one makes you less intelligent. But this isn't true; many people with learning disabilities have average or above-average intelligence.

This harmful stigma can lead to lower self-esteem, stress, shame or isolation. It can also result in people with dyslexia being seen as liabilities at work. Because of this, many people with dyslexia choose not to disclose their condition.

Those that don't self-disclose must instead find ways to manage their learning disability without the company's help. For most people with dyslexia, knowing their learning style can help them adapt and compensate for their learning disability.

It's crucial for people without dyslexia to learn more about it so they can better understand and support individuals who have it. This knowledge can empower people to advocate for those with dyslexia, reduce the stigma associated with it and create better, more inclusive workplaces.

Because people with dyslexia process information and think differently than others, they can bring distinctive advantages to the workplace. People with dyslexia tend to be visual thinkers and can often see the big picture. This can help them visualize complicated scenarios and come up with new, original solutions to problems.

People with dyslexia also have above-average problem-solving skills, and are skilled at thinking creatively and coming up with abstract and unique ideas — all of which results in a more innovative work environment.

In addition, people with dyslexia are often resilient and persevering because of their experience overcoming challenges and barriers. This can lead to a strong work ethic, determination and motivation towards accomplishing their goals.

Canadian employers have a duty to provide reasonable accommodations for employees with learning disabilities to ensure they have the supports needed to perform their jobs well. Workplaces can be more accommodating by providing employees with assistive technologies like spellchecking tools, allowing flexible work schedules, modifying job tasks and training methods, and providing instructional materials in a variety of formats.

Support is an ongoing commitment, not a one-time effort. Employers should be ready to provide continuous assistance to their employees and be understanding and supportive towards their needs and preferences.

People with dyslexia can bring a great deal to the workplace. Establishing an inclusive and accommodating work environment for people with learning disabilities like dyslexia can foster a diverse workforce and improve productivity, innovation and performance. Doing this ultimately creates a more supportive and productive work environment for all.

EMPLOY DYSLEXIA

5 adjustments to support Dyslexic Thinkers at work

- 1 Provide notes and documents ahead of meetings.
- 2 Use bullets and summaries instead of long documents.
- 3 Use calls and meetings to share info and updates, not long emails.
- 4 Set longer, realistic deadlines to help us do our best work.
- 5 Use less text, more videos, picture and diagrams to present info.

MADE BY DYSLEXIA

Article by Sarah Rahimi, Concordia University. Originally printed in the September 2023 edition of *The Conversation*



905.522.5003



office@dyslexiacentrehamilton.com



Charitable No. 75398 4129 RR001