



The BEAR Bulletin

Summer 2026

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



Roll the video!

The Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation, under whose auspices the Learning Centre Programs run, has released a new video. Filmed at various locations, including the Scottish Rite Building and the Learning Centre for Hamilton, the video explains the origins and purpose of the Foundation. Contributors such as Richard Jones, President of the SRCF, Bill Cave, Executive Director of the Learning Centre Programs, and Mike Kirk, past-president of the LC for Hamilton speak about masonry, puzzles of the mind, dyslexia and the Learning Centre program. Also featured are two tutors from the Hamilton Center, and our Co-directors. The video is available at srcf.ca or through a link on our website.

Message from the President

Well, that's a wrap for this tutoring year! Our Celebration of Success that was held on June 14, 2026 was great. Eight children successfully completed the Orton-Gillingham program after several years of commitment and hard work. Congratulations to them and their tutors on this accomplishment. We will miss seeing your smiling faces at the Learning Centre and wish the all the best as you take on your next set of challenges. Four tutors received their OG certification this year. Congratulations to Colleen Reinhart, Donna McManamy, Iris Duemm and Stephanie Shewfelt on this achievement.

It has taken a team to help the children to read. We are grateful for the commitment of the 19 tutors and 2 co-directors at our Centre, as well as our tutor-trainer, the reception room volunteers and the Board of Directors. Thank you very much: you have all made a big difference in the lives of the children at our Learning Centre.

Elsbeth Daley, David Gordon, Lee Gowers, and Donna MacManny were each recognized for their years of volunteer service by the Ontario Honours and Awards Secretariat of the Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism. The awards were handed out a ceremony at Liuna Station in April.

Over the summer we will be onboarding the new volunteers who have offered to become OG tutors with Elspeth Daley as their tutor-trainer.

The Learning Centre for Niagara will be operational in September with Kim Foccia as the tutor-trainer and centre director. Kim has volunteers ready to be trained as tutors and Stephanie Shewfelt will be joining the Niagara Team.

A few weeks ago Alan Doyle, founder and frontman of Great Big Sea, was granted an honorary degree by Memorial University of Newfoundland. In his remarks to the graduating class he offered some advice that I would like to share with you. His father advised him **'Sing loud in case you gets it right'**. It has a meaning beyond music: make bold choices, take chances, be seen, be heard, embrace the uncertainty of the moment, let your caution and nervousness propel you, not slow you down, be as big as you care to be. Sure, if you sing a wrong note and someone hears, well that's a shame. But the bigger shame is if you whisper the whole song and no one hears a singular, beautiful voice that is yours and yours alone. So sing loud in case you get it right.

Thank you all, have a safe summer and we will see many of you again in September.

Dale Chapman—President

Celebration of Success 2026



Dale Chapman, Gareth Taylor, our graduating children and their tutors.



Board President Dale Chapman led the parade of graduates and tutors into the Cathedral.



Jaxon delivered an inspiring speech about his super power: dyslexia.



Dale Chapman, Meredith Hutchings, our newly OG certified tutors and Gareth Taylor.



Graduate Ari with his grateful parents: they were funny and sentimental and brought tears to the eyes of many in attendance.

From our Co-directors

What is a celebration? "A special event to mark a happy occasion." On Sunday June 14th, 2026 the Learning Centre for Hamilton held its end of year Celebration of Success at the Hamilton Masonic Centre.

We came together to celebrate our largest year to date. We had 26 children and 19 tutors participate in the Orton-Gillingham Program at our Learning Centre.

This year was our largest year of recognition with eight children graduating and four tutors achieving their tutor certification.

Congratulations to graduating children: Ari, Chase, Deklan, Hudson, Lilly, Penelope, Remy, and Sam. Congratulations to newly certified tutors: Iris Duemm, Donna McManamy, Colleen Reinhart, and Stephanie Shewfelt.

The success experienced by all the children who attended the Learning Centre this year is because of the commitment, dedication, and involvement of many: tutor trainer, tutors, parents and families, reception desk volunteers, bookkeeper, social media co-ordinator, President, and the Board of Directors.

The success experienced by all the children is the result of the support of the Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation and many donors, to whom we are deeply grateful.

Together, and thanks to many, we truly have much to celebrate. Wishing everyone a good summer.

Barbara & Michael Baxter

From our Tutor-Trainer

The Hamilton Learning Centre is growing!

This June four of our wonderful volunteer tutors will become certified Orton-Gillingham practitioners. This well deserved certification comes after years of volunteer tutoring with children at our Learning Centre every week. Colleen, Donna, Iris, and Stephanie have successfully completed 45 hours of training, over 100 hours of tutoring with each lesson having to be vetted by the trainer in advance of teaching, written tests and a final exam, and even submitted book reports!

All of this work has resulted in their ability to deliver excellent lessons following the Orton-Gillingham technique to teach the structure of English. Increasingly, scientific studies are proving that techniques such as OG actually rewire the dyslexic brain so that reading and spelling can become automatic and accurate.

What a delight it has been to see these four wonderful people embrace the challenging task of mastering an OG lesson. They are also delighted to see their children progress and hear the children and their parents report about their positive achievements with their academic work at school.

We look forward to having these four join our growing number of certified tutors. Each experienced tutor compounds the knowledge and expertise of our Learning Centre and elevates the quality of the OG tutoring the Hamilton Learning Centre provides.

Welcome Colleen, Donna, Iris, and Stephanie to the community of Certified OG practitioners! Thank you all so much for everything you have accomplished and everything you give to the children you tutor!

Meredith Hutchings

Spider-Man is Dyslexic



Star of the upcoming *Spider-Man: Brand New Day*, Tom Holland, explained the reason he turned down an opportunity to host *Saturday Night Live*. He's dyslexic. The show uses cue cards to guide their guests through the opening monologue and skits: Holland feared the "concept of trying to read something and they (the words) change". He also mentioned that he dreads a read-through for his roles and tries his best to prepare for it. He told Amy Poehler on her podcast *Good Hang* that "When I have to read out loud, it just becomes like a kind of mental block, and I can freeze. At the read through I will try and highlight everything and learn my lines ahead of time". Holland is being praised by The Dyslexia Association, Scope, as well as others with dyslexia.

With Gratitude

The Learning Centre for Hamilton and the Satellite Centre in Niagara are financed completely by donations. The funds are used to train the dedicated, volunteer tutors, physically maintain and secure the buildings and cover the costs of administering the program. We are indebted to the Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation, the Masonic Lodges and concordant bodies, businesses, organizations and individuals who support the Learning Centres. We are deeply touched by and appreciative of donations made in honour or memory of individuals. Our heartfelt thanks go to the following who donated during the 2025-2026 fiscal year:

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Learning Centre
for Hamilton

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

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