



Centre for Inclusive Education Newsletter



Volume 1, Issue 2

Fall, 2008

Message from the Director: Dr. Jacqueline Specht

- **Our mission:**
to enhance educational opportunities for all students with exceptionalities.
- **The Centre is**
committed to sharing research findings and resources with academics, educators and families.

It is hard to believe that we are already into a new school year. The Centre has been busy since the last newsletter. Our 2008 conference was well received. See this newsletter as well as our website for further information. Many people were involved with the conference and I thank them all for helping to make the day a great success. Partnering with school boards in this endeavour really helped to make it a great day.

In addition to our ongoing relationship with the London District Catholic and Thames Valley School Boards, we are currently partnering with Huron Perth Catholic and Upper Canada District School Boards through the Integration Action for Inclusion in

Education and Community on a project on effective high school inclusion. Project leader Marilyn Dolmage has been working hard on this Ministry of Education funded project to look at the process of including students with disabilities in all aspects of their secondary school education. We are very excited to be a part of this project. It will be a presentation at the Ontario Council for Exceptional Children conference being held in London. More information on this and other presentations is also available in the newsletter.

We always welcome any comments on the newsletter or ideas for information that you would like to see presented here, on the website, or at our annual conference. Please do not hesitate to contact with ideas and suggestions.

Jessica Jean Campbell Coulson Research Award Winner

This award, established through Foundation Western by Mr. David Campbell (BA '38) is presented in memory of his daughter, Jessica who was known for her care and compassion in assisting students with learning disabilities.

It is presented annually to one graduate student who is conducting research in the area of special education, and is granted through a competitive process that examines both the merit of the project, and the academic achievement of the student. The value of the award is \$1,125.

The winner of the award for 2007-2008 is **Kathe Davidson**. Her research project is "**The research to practice gap in the identification and instruction of students at risk for reading disabilities: Teachers' perspectives**".

Kathe attended the Awards Luncheon in June and spoke to Mr. Campbell who also attended. She received her Award from Jessica's husband Ward. Kathy was also one of three recipients of the Centre for Inclusive Education Research Award, which was announced in the last issue of the Newsletter. Kathe is continuing her doctoral studies at Western.

Congratulations Kathe!

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Introducing Our Team

A brief snapshot of our research associates

Gillian King has a Ph.D. in Social Psychology from the University of Western Ontario. She is currently a Research Scientist at the Child and Parent Resource Institute in London, Ontario, and a Senior Scientist with Bloorview Research Institute in Toronto, Ontario. Gillian is an Associate Clinical Professor in the School of Rehabilitation Science at McMaster University, an Adjunct Professor in the Faculty of Education, a Lecturer in the Department of Family Medicine, and an Associate Professor in the School of Nursing at the University of Western Ontario.

Dr. King's areas of research include the psychosocial aspects of disability and the development of models of service delivery. She has authored or co-authored over 95 articles in professional journals, has been an investigator on more than 30 grants, and has been an author on over 180 peer-reviewed presentations. Gillian has 20 years of management experience in research and clinical positions, along with experience in teaching and consulting, and extensive experience in working in collaborative partnerships.

Robert Macmillan spent 10 years in the school system of Quebec where he was a secondary teacher and a principal at both elementary and secondary levels. In 1993 after completing his doctorate, Bob became a professor at St. Francis Xavier University where he coordinated the B.Ed. program until 2003, when he was appointed to the Faculty of Education at Western. This change allowed Bob to expand his research on the principalship. In 2005, Bob was appointed as Associate Dean and is currently teaching in the B.Ed. and graduate programs.

Three of Dr. Macmillan's recent publications are "Principal turnover and its effect on teacher morale", (Accepted), *International Journal of Leadership in Education*; "Guilt and inclusion: The emotional fallout for secondary teachers" in *Exceptionality Education Canada*, 16(1); and "Litigation in special education: From placement to programming" (2005) in *Education & Law Journal*, 15(1). He and his co-researchers are planning a series of papers and articles on the following topics: trust and morale in schools; the vice-principal and succession; and teachers' experience as a mediator of perspective on administration.

Terry Spencer has an M. Ed. degree, with an area of concentration in curriculum and instruction. He is the Research and Evaluation Officer with the London District Catholic School Board. Prior to joining the Board, Terry was the Research Associate with the Acquired Brain Injury Program, Hamilton Health Sciences. Previously he was a Psychometrist in the Neuro-Psychology and Developmental Services Department, Regional Children's Centre of Windsor Western Hospital. He has experience in neuro-behavioural rehabilitation, program evaluation and applied behavioural research.

His research interests include staff development/training, school and system improvement planning, education quality indicators, as well as the evaluation of educational interventions and programs.



2008 Conference on Inclusive Education: "Taking Care"

The **Centre for Inclusive Education** hosted another important conference for educators on April 25 2008. Participants heard speakers and panels of teachers, and contributed to the discussion concerning classroom-based strategies in meeting the needs of children with mental health issues.

In the morning session, **Alan Leschied** from the Faculty of Education at the University of Western Ontario presented some startling findings from the Ontario Child Health Study, and from the

National Longitudinal Study of Children and Youth in Canada. The most common form of child and adolescent mental health concern is **depression**. Conference participants received information and resources about recognizing this syndrome, some treatment options that are available, and strategies for teachers and parents.

Katie Cole, Head of the English Department at Medway Secondary School in the Thames Valley District School Board used examples and

resources from the popular media to illustrate the need for young people to develop **media literacy skills**. The handout was packed with information and resources about the extent of media violence, facts and terminology, as well as strategies and websites to consider.

Director **Jacqueline Specht** expressed her appreciation to the speakers, and to the panellists for their valuable contributions. Plans for the 2009 conference are underway. Visit the website regularly for more information .

Our Research: New Grant Awarded

Team members **Gillian King and Jacqueline Specht** along with Doreen Bartlett, Shannon Stewart, Michelle Servais, Michelle Gilpin and Patty Petersen were funded by the SSHRC-CURA Letter of Intent program 2008 (\$18,066) to submit a full research proposal in October.

The general aim of the Community University Research Alliance (CURA) is to foster research linkages between communities and universities in order to promote multidisciplinary endeavours focusing on important real-world issues and problems. The term “community” encompasses the lay public, practitioners, and other stakeholders—the intended users or beneficiary

groups (Eakin & Maclean, 1992).

The title of the research study is *Facilitating the development of professional expertise in children's mental health, rehabilitation and education services*. This CURA proposal constitutes a concerted research, training, and dissemination effort in an area of common, priority concern to children's services around the world, namely the enhancement of the knowledge and skills of the main professional groups providing social, health, and education services to children and families.

The topic of expertise development is consistent with current emphases on inter-professional education and evidence-based practice, and has clear

implications for enhancing the quality of the professional development and university training experiences of therapists and teachers/educators.

We are very excited about this research and hope to be able to share some news of success in a future newsletter.



Team Members to Present Papers at the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Conference November 6-8, 2008, Hilton Hotel, London, Ontario

On Friday November 7th from 10:30 until 11:45 a.m. **Alan Edmunds** with Shelley Martsch-Litt will present *ADHD: misdiagnoses across Canada* at the CEC conference. Canadian teachers encounter more students with ADHD-like behaviors and make more referrals for a formal diagnosis. The ADHD diagnosis appears highly inconsistent, which may account for poor interventions, medical or otherwise. Dr. Edmunds' research outlines significant problems with ADHD diagnoses across Canada: who diagnoses it? Using what guidelines? Based on what framework?

On Saturday November 8th from 9:00 until 11:45 a.m. **Alan Edmunds** will also present a lecture entitled *Dynamic classroom management: Preventing behavior problems before they even start*. The

behavior of many students with exceptionalities is poorly understood. This results in behavioral interventions that do not work. Based on his recent book, From Chaos to Control: Understanding and responding to the Behaviors of Students with Exceptionalities, Dr. Edmunds will outline a proven-effective approach that will help teachers and parents.

On Thursday November 6th from 10:30—11:45, **Dr. Jacqueline Specht** will be one of the presenters of *Evidence-based practice: Research and resources that inform effective inclusive education in secondary schools*. Integration Action for Inclusion is working collaboratively with the Ministry of Education and selected secondary schools to examine successful practices for the inclusion of students with

significant disabilities. This session will describe this project, and discuss indicators that help schools evaluate their inclusion practices, and the research that supports them.

Also on Thursday from 2:45—4:00, **Jacqueline Specht, Gabrielle Young, Michelle Pompeo**, and others on the School Roles Participation Project will present *School participation: How educators can help*. As part of this presentation, participants will discuss how to help families learn about opportunities that are available in school, and how to decrease the limiters and increase the enhancers to school participation.

Please see Page 4 for more details about this upcoming conference.

Upcoming Events:

Coaching to Inclusion Annual Conference

Date: Friday, October 17, 2008 8:30—3:30

**UWO Faculty of Education
1137 Western Road, London, Ontario**

Guest speakers include Carol Tashie, inclusion facilitator from New Hampshire, and Sheila Bennett, professor at the Faculty of Education, Brock University.

Registration is \$75 for professionals, \$30 for students. Lunch and parking are provided. For more information and to download a registration form, visit the Centre's website at www.edu.uwo.ca/inclusive_education.

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Ontario Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) 52nd Annual Provincial Conference

Date: November 6 - 8, 2008

**Hilton Hotel, London, Ontario
www.cecontario.ca**

The Ontario CEC Conference provides an outstanding professional learning opportunity for general educators, special education teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, parents, and self-advocates.

This year's conference is being co-hosted by CEC Chapters 775 (Huron-Perth) and 81 (London/Middlesex) - Denise Drinkwalter and Hubert Van Niekerk are co-chairing the Local Arrangements Committee. For further information on the conference program and special events, contact Denise Drinkwalter, Conference Co-ordinator at denised@execulink.com

Join our Mailing List!

We'll keep you up to date on the Centre's activities, research findings, and coming professional development events.

Contact us at:

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Website:

www.edu.uwo.ca/inclusive_education