

April HIGHLIGHTS

PAGE 1

- What's New
- Important Dates
- Upcoming Virtual Webinar: Preparing for High School
- Hand-Eye Coordination
- Parent/Caregiver Guides

PAGE 2

- TDSB Occupational Therapy/Physiotherapy Services

PAGE 3

- TDSB Speech Language Pathology Services

PAGE 4

- TDSB Psychological Services: *How to Foster Comprehension*
- TDSB Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services

PAGE 5

- TDSB Blind and Low Vision Services

PAGE 6

- TDSB Special Education & Inclusion Summer School
- TDSB Specialized Summer Learning for Students with ASD

PAGE 7

- World Autism Day: April 2, 2026
- TDSB Virtual Connects

Special Education and Inclusion Parent Guides

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) provides many [Special Education Guides for Parents](#) which contain information about the supports, programs and services available for students with disabilities and special education needs in the TDSB.

If, after reading the guides, you require additional information, please reach out to the principal of your child's school/your neighbourhood school. Videos and translated versions are included within some of the guides.

Upcoming TDSB Parent/Caregiver Sessions

The TDSB Special Education and Inclusion Department offers a number of Parent/Caregiver sessions each month. Please check for upcoming sessions: [HERE](#).

Important Dates

Elementary PA Days:

June 5, 2026
June 26, 2026

Secondary PA Days:

June 25, 2026
June 26, 2026

School Year Holidays:

Good Friday: April 3, 2026
Easter Monday: April 6, 2026
Victoria Day: May 18, 2026

Hand-Eye Coordination



Think of hand-eye coordination as the **bridge** between what a child sees and how they move. It is the secret ingredient for two major types of development **Gross Motor** (e.g., **catching a ball**) and **Fine Motor** (e.g., **handwriting**). Check out [this video on Hand-Eye Coordination from TDSB Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy Services](#) for some ideas on how to build hand-eye coordination skills at home!

Preparing for High School and Beyond

This session will focus on how daily and major transitions affect teens as they move through high school and prepare for life after graduation. Parents and guardians will learn how transition planning supports learning, independence, and future goals, and how they can support their child through important school and life changes.

Date: April, 28, 2026

Time: 6:30 pm

Format: Webinar for Parents/Guardians

Register: [HERE](#)

Sleep and Regulation

Sleep is important as it helps your child stay physically and mentally healthy. Sleep affects brain function and mental health, physical health, cognitive and emotional resilience. It's like charging your body and brain's battery.

How much sleep do children need on average?

- 6-12 years: 9-12 hours
- 13-18 years: 8-10 hours

[Click here to access our handout on promoting healthy sleep at home.](#)

What happens without enough sleep?



- Reduced attention and focus
- Impaired memory
- Slower problem solving
- Irritability and mood swings
- Hyperactivity/Impulsivity
- Difficulty waking up
- Poor school performance
- Decreased emotional resilience

[Check out our video for additional sleep strategies to use at home.](#)

Sleep Hygiene

Provide opportunities for movement during the day and start winding down for the evening. Refer to our [Sleep Hygiene handout](#) for some tips.

Structure/Routines

Be consistent with timing – Make bedtime and wake-up time the same for both weekdays and weekends. The amount of sleep a child needs varies depending on age.

Establish a before-bedtime routine – Have the same routine every night. To ease the transition, let your child know 7-10 minutes before the bedtime routine is to start.

Pace the bedtime routine- Allow enough time to complete the routine *without* rushing. Use a visual schedule so your child can see the sequence of tasks and to help keep the pace and flow of the routine steady.

Sample Bedtime Checklist

- Put on pajamas
- Use the bathroom
- Wash hands
- Brush teeth
- Get a drink
- Read a book
- Get in bed
- Go to sleep

Sample Visual Bedtime Routine



April 7th is World Health Day

World Health Day reminds us that everyone has the right to be healthy, including getting enough sleep! Sleep is one of the best things you can do for your body.



Resources







[Speech Language Pathology \(SLP\) Services](#)

Oops! Don't Forget the Bunny: April's Story Spotlight

This April, our featured story is *Knuffle Bunny* by Mo Willems — a funny and relatable tale about Trixie, her dad, and an unforgettable trip to the laundromat. When something important goes missing, Trixie tries her best to communicate her message! Through this lesson, students are building early literacy skills by playing a **fun letter-matching game**, talking about familiar routines like **doing laundry**, and practicing their storytelling skills.

You can support your child at home by asking:

-  *How do you think Trixie felt when she couldn't find her bunny?*
-  *Have you ever lost something special? What did you do?*
-  *What is something important you would never want to forget?*
-  *How can we help others understand us when something is wrong?*



Try This 1-Minute Communication Activity at Home

Laundry Helper Game:

As you fold laundry together, pick up an item and say:

- “This is a ____.”
- “It belongs to ____.”

Then let your child take a turn telling you! This simple game helps children practice **vocabulary, sentence building, and confidence expressing their ideas**.

View the [lesson here](#).

Resources

Text only version [here](#).

How to Foster Reading Comprehension

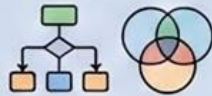
by TDSB Psychological Services

Reading Comprehension goes beyond decoding. It is the essence of what we want young readers to achieve- making meaning out of what they are reading! Here are some strategies educators can use to foster deeper reading comprehension:



Build Background Knowledge

Activate prior knowledge before reading by discussing related topics or previewing key vocabulary. Use KWL charts (Know, Want to know, Learned) to frame the reading experience.



Use Graphic Organizers

Visual tools like story maps, Venn diagrams, and cause-effect charts help students organize information and see relationships between ideas.



Teach Metacognitive Strategies

Encourage students to think about their thinking: ask themselves questions, monitor understanding, and apply "fix-up" strategies when confused. Model this through think-aloud while reading.



Encourage Questioning

Teach students to ask and answer questions using prompts like "who," "what," "why," and "how." Use sticky notes or journals to track questions and revisit them during discussion.

Set a Purpose for Reading



Help students identify why they're reading—whether it's to learn, enjoy, or analyze.

Promote Visualization



Ask students to draw scenes or describe mental images based on the text. Visualization strengthens memory and engagement.

Foster Discussion & Retelling



Use peer discussions, book talks, and retelling exercises to reinforce understanding. Try the "five-finger retell" method for fiction: character, setting, events, resolution, and personal reaction.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services

The "Sounding Board" Winter Edition is Live!

The Winter Edition of Sounding Board is out now! In this latest D/HH publication, students have showcased their writing, reflections, and artwork, highlighting creativity, voice, and the many ways D/HH learners communicate and express themselves. A big thank you and congratulations to every student who submitted their incredible work, and to the staff who supported and compiled this edition.

Read it here: [Sounding Board First Edition 2025-2026](#)

Resources

Blind and Low Vision Services

UNDERSTANDING CORTICAL VISION IMPAIRMENT (CVI)

Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI) is a brain-based visual impairment. Unlike eye conditions that affect how clearly someone sees, CVI affects how the brain understands and makes sense of what the eyes are seeing. A child's eyes may be healthy, but their visual experiences can still be inconsistent. CVI is now one of the most common causes of visual impairment in children in North America. Every child with CVI is unique, and it can look different from one child to another.

What CVI Might Look Like at School

A child with CVI may:

- Have trouble finding items on a busy page or in a cluttered space
- Look away while listening or thinking
- Need extra time to respond to something they are looking at
- Show a preference for certain colours
- Notice moving objects more easily than still ones
- Seem to see something one day but not the next
- Find busy environments like hallways, assemblies, or recess more challenging

These behaviours are related to how the brain processes visual information, not to effort or ability.

Why Reducing Visual Clutter Helps

Too much visual information at once can make it hard for a child with CVI to focus. Simplifying what they are looking at can make a big difference.

Helpful supports may include:

- Using plain, solid-coloured backgrounds
- Showing fewer items at one time
- Reducing background noise or other sensory distractions when visual attention is needed
- Choosing seating that limits visual distractions

The Importance of “Wait Time”

Children with CVI often need a little extra time to process what they see. Pausing for a few seconds after showing something can help them engage. If a child does not respond right away, it may simply mean they are still processing the information. Adding a simple verbal cue, such as naming what they are looking at, can also help make connections.

Supporting Your Child's Visual Access

Some strategies that may support children with CVI include:

- Giving verbal previews (“We’re looking for the red circle.”)
- Pairing spoken information with simple visuals
- Keeping materials in consistent places
- Using gentle movement to draw attention
- Starting with materials close up before moving them farther away

Resources

Summer Skills Development Program for Students with Autism (Grades 4-10)

Program Details
Dates: July 6, 2026 – July 30, 2026
Format: Half-days
Delivery: Online & Limited in-person classes.

Registration Information
 Please see [parent letter](#).
 Interested parents must fill out [this form](#) with details by Friday, April 17, 2026.

Important Note: Spaces in the program are limited, and enrolment is on a first-come first-served basis.




SPECIAL EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SUMMER SCHOOL 2026

Toronto District School Board (TDSB) Program | July 6th – 30th

FOR STUDENTS CURRENTLY ENROLLED IN:

-  Developmental Disability
-  Deaf and Hard of Hearing
-  Physical Disabilities Intensive Support Programs (ISPs).

PROGRAM DETAILS & SUPPORT

-  • In-person at various TDSB locations (Half-day programs)
-  • Focus on developing independence
-  • Programming areas: Functional Literacy & Numeracy, Activities of Daily Living, Communication, Social Skills

Please Click [HERE](#) for Summer School Application.

VISIT OUR SUMMER SCHOOL WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION & FLYER

Resources

Celebrate the Spectrum

Endless Possibilities in Every Pattern

April 2, 2026

World Autism Day



AutismONTARIO

Each April, people from across Ontario come together to show their support for autistic people. Join the fun and Celebrate the Spectrum with us in the lead-up to **World Autism Day on April 2** and throughout the month of April.

AUTISM: SEE THE POTENTIAL



tdsb | VIRTUAL DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES CONNECT

Supporting Parents and Caregivers in Navigating Services for their Child, Youth, or Young Adult with Developmental Disabilities and/or Complex Disabilities

April 13 (AM) & 20 (PM)

Future Planning

Learn How to Set Meaningful Goals for Your Child and Explore Key Resources That Support Growth, Independence, Financial Security, and Community Inclusion.



[Join the meeting now](#)
Meeting ID: 266 605 358 806 6
Passcode: Yn7aj358

TIMES:
Morning Session: 9:30 am - 12 Noon
Evening Session (A Repeat):
5:30 pm - 8 pm

