

MARCH HIGHLIGHTS

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Upcoming TDSB Parent/Caregiver Sessions

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 (as per Ministry):

Mid-Winter Break: March 16-20, 2026
Good Friday: April 3, 2026
Easter Monday: April 6, 2026
Victoria Day: May 18, 2026

Helping Your Child Navigate Everyday and Big School Changes

This session will help parents and caregivers understand how everyday changes (“little t”) and bigger school changes (“Big T”) can affect their child’s learning and well-being. We’ll share simple, practical ways schools support transitions and how families can help children feel more confident and prepared at home and at school.

 **Date:** March 26th, 2026

 **Time:** 11:30 a.m.

 **Format:** Virtual Webinar for Parents and Guardians

 **Register [HERE](#)**

Summer Camp 2026

Here is a list of [Summer Camps and Programs](#) for your consideration.

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 a guide, you require additional information, please reach out to the principal of your child’s school/your neighbourhood school. Videos and translated versions are also included within some of the guides.

It's National Disability Awareness Month!

In recognition of Disability Awareness Month, we're highlighting the empowering role of **assistive and adaptive technology** in supporting diversity. Accessibility tools and features on computers and iPads can support writing, reading, organization, and foster independence, engagement, communication and of course, play.



For children who struggle with handwriting, using a computer for written tasks is very helpful. Remember, keyboarding takes practice. Click on the [handout](#) below for some free typing programs!

LEARNING TO TYPE

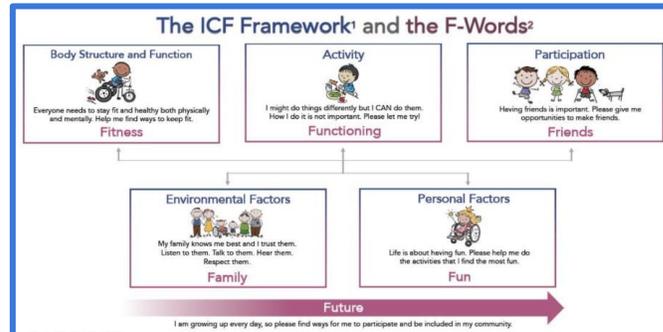
Check out our TDSB Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy Resources on Assistive Technology on How to Create Electronic Books, Using Switches at Home and more!

[Assistive Technology](#)



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Have you heard of the F- WORDS in Childhood Disability? Click on the link below to find out!



Click here to listen to the Parent/Caregiver session on "[The F-words-Framework- a Strengths Based Approach to Child and Youth Development](#)"

Disability and Sexuality

Talking to our kids about their bodies and sexual health can be a challenging conversation for many, but it's incredibly important for their safety. Providing children with accurate language and education about their bodies significantly reduces their vulnerability and promotes their overall well-being.

Click on our [Parent/Caregiver Educator Session about Health Bodies](#) for support and guidance on this vital topic.

Talking to our Children about their Bodies and Sexual Health



Resources

From Occupational Therapy/Physiotherapy Services



Why "Crossing the Midline" Matters

Did you know that one of the most important milestones for your child's physical development is crossing an invisible line?

Crossing the midline refers to the ability to reach across the middle of the body with the arms or legs to perform a task on the opposite side. It might look simple, but it's actually a sign that the left and right sides of the brain are communicating effectively!

How it impacts your child:

- **Gross Motor Skills:** foundation for crawling, walking, and core stability. Without this skill, kids might "switch hands" halfway through a task instead of reaching across, which can affect coordination and balance.
- **Fine Motor Skills:** Crossing the midline allows a child to write across a whole page or cut with scissors without having to stop and shift their entire body.
- **Self-Care:** From zipping up a jacket to tying shoes, these activities depend on both hands working together across that centre line.

Strengthening this skill builds the neural pathways necessary for everything from playing sports to reading and writing. Check out [this video on Crossing the Midline from TDSB Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy Services](#) for a deeper dive into how this works and some fun ways to practice at home!



Supporting Parents and Caregivers in Navigating Services for their
Child, Youth, or Young Adult with
Developmental Disabilities and/or Complex Disabilities
TDSB Virtual Information Session Dates 2025/26
Hosted by TDSB Social Workers

March 9 (AM) & 30 (PM)

Planning for Adulthood: Part 2

Learn About Community Supports for Life After High School including
Community Day Programs, Employment Programs, and Post-Secondary Options.

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

virtualfairinfo@tdsb.on.ca

Resources

From

tdsb | Special Education
and Inclusion
Psychological Services

What happens to the Brain in Adolescence?

During adolescence, the brain undergoes a dramatic transformation. The adolescent brain is highly adaptable, making it a prime time for learning and growth. Experiences during this period—positive or negative—can shape long-term mental health. Here are some of the changes that happen to the teenage brain that may shape the approaches that educators take with this age group. Educators and parents should keep in mind that these brain changes may lead to changes in teens' behaviour. Educators may benefit by using techniques that focus on novelty and reward while also being sensitive to emotional and biological changes.

Remodeling & Refinement

- **Synaptic pruning:** The brain trims unused neural connections to make processing more efficient.
- **Myelination:** Nerve fibers get coated with myelin, speeding up communication between brain regions.

Prefrontal Cortex Development

This area—responsible for decision-making, impulse control, and planning—is one of the last to mature. **Teens may struggle with long-term thinking or regulating emotions** because this “executive center” is still under construction.

Limbic System Activation

The limbic system, which governs emotions and reward, develops earlier than the prefrontal cortex. This imbalance can lead to **heightened emotional responses and risk-taking behaviour**.

Dopamine & Reward Sensitivity

Dopamine levels spike, making teens **more sensitive to rewards and novelty**. This helps drive learning and exploration but can also increase susceptibility to peer pressure and thrill-seeking.

Sleep Shifts

Melatonin release happens later at night, making teens **naturally inclined to stay up late and sleep in**. This biological shift often clashes with early school schedules, contributing to sleep deprivation.

Resources

From Speech Language Pathology (SLP) Services

♥ Big Feelings, Calm Moments: March's Story Spotlight

This March, our featured story is *Anh's Anger* by Gail Silver — a gentle and powerful book that helps children understand what anger feels like and how to calm their bodies and minds. Through Anh's journey, children learn that big feelings are normal and that there are peaceful ways to work through them.

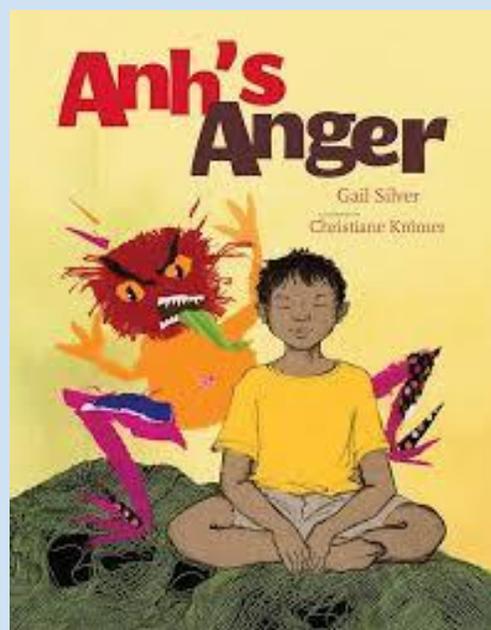
In this lesson, students will explore emotion vocabulary, self-regulation strategies, and ways to communicate their feelings with others.

At home, you can extend the learning by asking:

- 🌱 “What does anger feel like in your body?”
- 🌱 “What helps you feel calm when you're upset?”

We hope that this story supports meaningful conversations about feelings and helps children build tools for calm and connection.

View the [lesson here](#).



Resources

From Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services

Classroom Acoustics: Small Changes, Big Impact

Did you know that in a typical classroom, a student with a hearing difference may miss up to 50% of what is said due to background noise and poor acoustics? While we can't always renovate our buildings, we can make small, high-impact changes today to ensure every student has equal access to what is said in the classroom.

Top 5 Tips for a "Sound-Friendly" Classroom:

1. **Preferential Seating**: Seat students away from high-noise areas like open doors, buzzing overhead projectors, or windows near busy streets. Positioning students near the teacher and/or centered to the whiteboard can significantly reduce listening fatigue.
2. **The "Tennis Ball" Trick**: Hard surfaces create echoes. You can dampen "impact noise" by placing *Chair Glides* (specially sourced tennis balls) on the bottoms of chairs. Adding rugs or soft wall displays/student work also helps absorb sound.
3. **Manage Environmental Noise**: Close doors and windows during direct instruction to block out hallway traffic. Be mindful of the "hum" from technology turning off equipment when not in use clears the "sound stage" for your voice.
4. **Use Visual Cues**: Always pair spoken messages with visual aids like charts, outlines, or key terms on the board. This provides a "safety net" for students who may have missed a word due to background noise.
5. **Strategic Pausing**: Give students extra time to process information. By pausing frequently and checking for understanding, you allow the student's brain to "catch up" after working extra hard to filter out distractions.

Why it Matters: Good acoustics don't just benefit Deaf and Hard of Hearing learners; they help all learners and can even protect teachers' vocal health!

Resources

ASD After School Skills Development Program Spring 2026 Session

The Spring Sessions of the ASD After School Skills Development Program will run from March 24 to June 9, 2026. The program is available to students in Grades 4-10 who have been diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. This program provides an opportunity for students to develop, build and enhance their social communication skills through weekly virtual sessions.

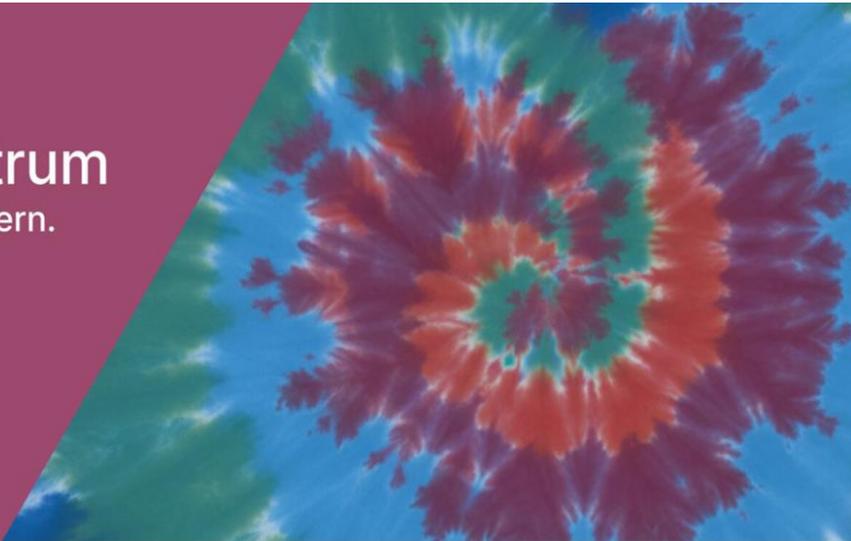
The [parent information letter](#) includes the link for registration for Grades 4-10 students with ASD. The [registration](#) period will remain open until Friday, March 7, 2026. Please contact Special Education at SpecialEd@tdsb.on.ca with any questions.

Celebrate the Spectrum

Endless possibilities in every pattern.



April 2, 2026
World Autism Day



World Hearing Day

March 3rd is World Hearing Day.

The theme for 2026 is:

[From Communities to Classroom: hearing care for all children!](#)

To learn more about the positive impact of identification and support for hearing differences, visit [World Hearing Day 2026](#).



Resources



World Down Syndrome Day

World Down Syndrome Day [WDS](#) is marked each year on **March 21**. The 21st day of the 3rd month signifies the triplication of the 21st chromosome which causes Down Syndrome.



TDSB staff and students are encouraged to participate in the [‘Lots of Socks’ campaign](#) to raise awareness and create a single global voice advocating for the rights, inclusion, and well-being of people with Down Syndrome. Engaging in the campaign includes wearing socks that are bold, colourful or mismatched, to stir up conversation and remind people that things that are different are still beautiful and wonderful!

[Down-syndrome-fact-sheet \(dsat.ca\)](#)

Epilepsy Awareness Month

Bring Epilepsy Education to your Classroom – Celebrate Purple Day on March 26, 2026

Epilepsy Awareness Month is here, and **Purple Day on March 26** is a global movement to increase awareness about epilepsy. Spread awareness in fun and creative ways - encourage students to wear purple, create purple art, bake purple treats, learn about epilepsy and show their **Purple Spirit!** Check out the [Epilepsy Awareness Classroom Kits](#) provided by [Epilepsy Toronto](#), created to bring awareness to your school all month long; including lesson plans for K-12, printable posters, morning announcements and more! Let's show support for the 1 in 100 people living with epilepsy—together, we can make a difference! Share examples of your class' Purple Spirit on Instagram or X using #PurpleSpirit2026.



Easter Seals Month:

Easter Seals Ontario dedicates March to raising awareness and support for children and youth with physical disabilities through Easter Seals Month. This year, they are shining a light on the stories, perspectives, and contributions of individuals with physical disabilities. Join this March to help create a more inclusive, accessible, and equitable society for children and youth with physical disabilities at [MarchIsEasterSealsMonth.org](#)



Neurodiversity Celebration Week - March 16-20

Neurodiversity Celebration Week is a worldwide initiative that challenges stereotypes and misconceptions about neurological differences. It aims to transform how neurodivergent individuals are perceived and supported by providing schools, universities, organizations, and others around the world with the opportunity to recognize the many skills and talents of neurodivergent individuals, while creating more inclusive and equitable cultures that celebrate differences and empower every individual.



Neurodiversity Celebration Week

For more information and resources for schools, please visit the [neurodiversity week website](#).