

May HIGHLIGHTS

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Special Education Questions, Resources and Strategies for Families

Wednesday May 6, 2026
6:30 pm to 7:30 pm
[JOIN TEAMS LINK HERE.](#)

Empowering Teens with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Tuesday, May 12, 2026
10 am to 11 am
[May 12, 2026 Registration Link](#)

Wednesday, May 13, 2026
6:30 pm to 7:30 pm
[May 13, 2026 Registration Link](#)

Important Dates

Elementary PA Days:

June 5, 2026
June 26, 2026

Secondary PA Days:

June 25, 2026
June 26, 2026

School Year Holidays:

Victoria Day: May 18, 2026

2026-2027 School Year:

First Day of School: September 8, 2026

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](#).

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.

Resources

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




Every Voice Matters: Celebrating Speech, Language & Hearing Month



May is **Speech, Language and Hearing Month**, a time to celebrate communication in all its forms! This year, we are highlighting **Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)** — a condition that affects how children understand and use language.


Children with DLD may have difficulty following directions, expressing their ideas, or finding the right words, but with the right supports, they can thrive and succeed.

In classrooms, staff focus on strategies that support all learners, such as:

-  using clear, simple language
-  giving extra time to respond
-  encouraging children to share their ideas in different ways

At home, you can support your child by:

- Giving them time to finish their thoughts
- Expanding on what they say (e.g., “dog” → “Yes, a big brown dog!”)
- Talking together during everyday routines

 *This month, we celebrate every child’s unique way of communicating and continue to build spaces where all voices are heard and valued.*

Please view the [DLD Fact Sheet](#) for practical, classroom based strategies shared with educators. You can use the same strategies to support your child at home too!

Resources

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services

May is Speech and Hearing Month: Access to Everything

May is ***Speech and Hearing Month*** in Canada. It is a time to raise awareness about communication health and the many ways access shapes student success. Speech-Language & Audiology Canada's 2026 theme, "**Access Changes Everything**," reminds us that access can profoundly influence learning, participation, relationships, and well-being. In schools, this month is an opportunity to highlight communication health, share helpful resources, and promote the supports that help students learn and participate fully.

In the TDSB, we know that communication access is not one-size-fits-all. For some students, access may include strong classroom acoustics, remote microphone technology, visual supports, captions, and early intervention. For others, access may include American Sign Language (ASL), Langue des signes québécoise (LSQ), interpreters, or other human supports. In some classrooms, meaningful access includes a combination of these supports. Meaningful access can happen through spoken language, signed language, listening, viewing, reading, writing, and connection with others.

For students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing, access can make a significant difference in both learning and belonging. When communication barriers are reduced, students are better able to engage in classroom learning, develop language, build peer relationships, and strengthen their sense of identity within the school community.

There are also simple ways educators can support access every day. Consistent use of SEA-funded remote microphone systems for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students can improve access to instruction and discussion. Visual supports such as written keywords, captions, and paired spoken-or-signed and written instructions help reinforce understanding. Small environmental changes, such as reducing background noise and ensuring technology is charged and ready, can also make a meaningful difference. These strategies support Deaf and Hard of Hearing learners and often benefit many other students as well.

This month is also an opportunity to celebrate the richness and diversity of the Deaf community, including the important role of ASL and LSQ in communication and identity. As we recognize Speech and Hearing Month, the TDSB Deaf and Hard of Hearing team celebrates all the ways students communicate and all the ways schools can build access. Whether through listening technology, visual supports, inclusive classroom practices, or sign language access, **access changes everything**.

Learn More:

[Speech-Language & Audiology Canada \(SAC\)](#)

[Canadian Academy of Audiology \(CAA\)](#)

[World Hearing Day / WHO](#)

[VOICE: For Children who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing](#)

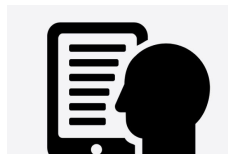
Resources

Blind and Low Vision Services

Toward Independence, the TDSB Blind/Low Vision Services Student Newsletter, is a long-standing tradition that highlights student voices and shares their lived experiences. The newsletter primarily features contributions from TDSB and TCDSB students with a visual impairment and is shared with peers who also receive Blind/Low Vision Services across the board.

The goal of *Toward Independence* is to build connection, foster self-advocacy, and provide students with the opportunity to see their experiences reflected in others. To ensure full accessibility, the newsletter is produced in multiple formats, including braille, large print, audio recordings, and AODA-compliant digital versions compatible with screen readers.

The Winter 2026 edition focuses on contrasts, how perspective and time can impact our mindset. We hope that you enjoy reading these stories, reflections, and insights through a Blind/Low Vision lens, and that they inspire you to think about contrasts in your own life.



TRANSITION RESOURCE GUIDE

The the Regional Assessment and Resource Centre (RARC) with support from the Ontario Ministry of Education, has developed the Transitions Navigator Hub. This bilingual platform is designed to bring together clear, practical, and relevant resources for students, families, and educators navigating pathways to post-secondary education, training, employment, and community living.

The expanded [Transition Resource Guide](#) website includes detailed information on the Workplace Pathway, reflecting a strong commitment to co-construction and authenticity.

Community Safety Skills

May is time to start getting ready for summer which can include getting out and exploring your neighbourhood and community.

This month, we are focusing on building essential **community safety skills** with your child. From navigating sidewalks and safely crossing the streets to understanding directions, these everyday skills are key to fostering independence, confidence, and safety.

Read on for some practical tips and activity ideas you can use at home and in your neighbourhood.

Recreational Opportunities in the Community

Refer to the [accessible playgrounds link](#) for more information in your area.

[Toronto Parks and Recreation Services programs, activities, and spaces](#) are available as a community recreational option. [Variety Village](#) hosts many programs and services in the east end of Toronto.



Red Light, Green Light:
Developing Community Navigation Skills



Community Navigation Skills

Listen or view one of the previous TDSB OT/PT parent/caregiver sessions titled [“Red Light, Green Light: Developing community Navigation SKills.”](#) This recording shares ideas on how to practice community related safety skills.

It is Mental Health Awareness Month

In recognition of mental health awareness month, the [Just Breathe handout](#) talks about the benefits of deep breathing including the calming effects it can have on your body by stimulating your vagus nerve.



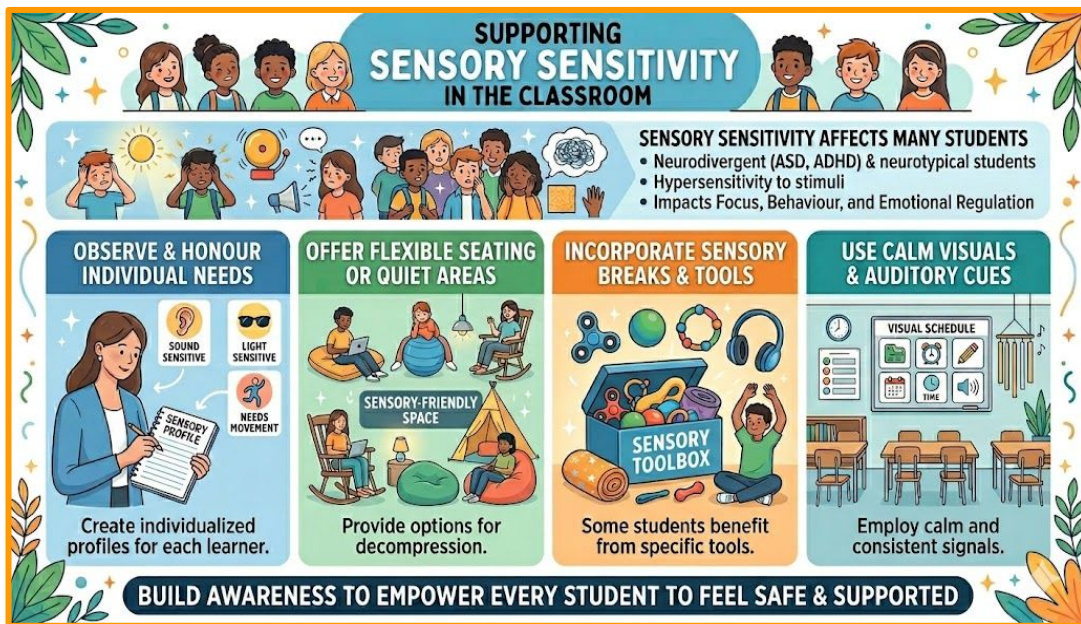
Resources

Supporting Sensory Sensitivity in the Classroom

TDSB Psychological Services

Sensory sensitivity can affect how students experience the classroom environment. Students with neurodiversity such as ASD or ADHD can be hypersensitive to sensory stimuli. But even neuro 'typical' students are affected by the physical environment around them. Bright lights, loud noises, crowded spaces, or even certain textures can overwhelm sensitive learners—impacting focus, behaviour, and emotional regulation. When educators are setting up their classrooms, they should keep in mind the sensory needs of their students as much as possible! Teachers play a pivotal role in creating a sensory-friendly space by:

- Observing and honoring individual sensory needs (e.g. creating a sensory 'profile' for each learner)
- Offering flexible seating or quiet areas for decompression
- Incorporating sensory breaks and tools (like fidget items or noise-canceling headphones). Some children may benefit from a 'sensory toolbox' to use when needed.
- Using calm, consistent visual and auditory cues.
- Building awareness around sensory sensitivity empowers every student to feel safe and supported.



Rick Hansen Foundation Scholarship

Rick and Amanda Hansen believe that people of all abilities should have the right to a barrier-free education. The Rick & Amanda Hansen Scholarship for Youth with Disabilities provides financial support to Canadian youth with disabilities to pursue post-secondary education. Funding of up to \$10,000 per year (up to a maximum of \$40,000) is available for youth with disabilities looking to complete a 1 to 5 year post-secondary program at a publicly funded institution in Canada.



Applications are currently open and will be accepted for the 2026 - 2027 academic year until **Wednesday, May 15, 2026, at 11:59 pm Pacific Time.**

Further information and the application for this scholarship can be accessed [here](#).

Resources

Easter Seals Red Shirt Day®



EASTER SEALS

**Red Shirt
Day®**

OF ACTION FOR ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION

SAVE THE DATE!

**RED SHIRT DAY 2026 IS ON
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3RD.**

#RedShirtDay #RedForAccessibility

Red Shirt Day® is an annual event in celebration of National AccessAbility Week. It is a day when people across Canada come together and wear red in schools, workplaces and spaces everywhere in order to create a visible display of solidarity: to show their support for persons and families of those who are living with disabilities, celebrate the achievements of people living with disabilities, and to pledge their commitment to help create a fully accessible and inclusive society that honours and values the contributions of people of all abilities in all aspects of life in Canada.

National AccessAbility Week: May 31 to June 6, 2026

Established in 2017, [National AccessAbility Week](#) celebrates and highlights some of the important initiatives aimed at creating an Accessible Canada.

May is Community Living Month

Community Living Month is a province-wide annual awareness campaign to recognize the accomplishments of the Community Living movement. This May 2026, join Community Living Ontario and our [124 local associations across Ontario](#) as we show why Connections That Count matter for people who have an intellectual disability and their families!

**COMMUNITY
LIVING MONTH
2026**



Mental Health Awareness Month

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, a time to shine a spotlight on the importance of mental wellness in our communities. At the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), we

recognize that supporting the mental health of our students is fundamental to their overall well-being and academic success. As educators, we play a vital role in creating a nurturing and inclusive environment where all students feel supported and understood. This month, let's renew our commitment to promoting mental health literacy, fostering resilience, and breaking down the stigma surrounding mental illness. Whether through classroom discussions, mindfulness activities, or access to support services, every effort we make contributes to building a healthier and more compassionate school community.

Join us in prioritizing mental health and wellness this May and beyond. Together, we can empower our students to thrive emotionally, academically, and socially. For more information and considerable resources on mental health and wellbeing, please access the Mental Health and Wellbeing Toolkits for all Grades, [here](#).