

WRDSB PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE CONFERENCE  
 BUILDING SKILLS TO NAVIGATE THE SCHOOL YEARS  
 APRIL 18<sup>TH</sup>, 2015: 8:30 AM TO 3PM

TIME	TOPIC	SPEAKER
9:00 am	<p><b>KEYNOTE:</b>            Diagnosed with several learning disabilities as a child, Lesley was inspired by a teacher to “overcome the odds” and follow her passions in life. Learn how you too can make a difference in the life of your child. This is a very inspiring, refreshing, enlightening talk – you will walk away changed. See <a href="http://www.dreaminprogress.com/motivational.html">http://www.dreaminprogress.com/motivational.html</a> for additional details.</p>	Lesley Andrew, Canadian actress, motivational speaker
10:30 am	<p>1. <b>Anxiety in Children</b> – Is your child anxious about succeeding in school, or even going to school? This speaker from Lutherwood will provide some very practical steps that will help you support your child. See <a href="http://www.lutherwood.ca/">http://www.lutherwood.ca/</a> for information on further programs.</p>	Joel Fairlie
	<p>2. <b>Win Win in any kind of meeting</b> – this speaker from Conrad Grebel’s Peace &amp; Conflict Studies program will show you how to cooperate in meetings so that everyone can win. This includes school council meetings. <a href="https://uwaterloo.ca/conflict-management/">https://uwaterloo.ca/conflict-management/</a></p>	Jason Dykstra
	<p>3. <b>Getting ready for kindergarten</b> – what can you do to get your child ready for school? No, it does not involve teaching them the multiplication tables at age 4. This experienced daycare teacher from the YMCA will show you how easy it really is to get ready. <a href="http://www.ymcacambridgekw.ca/en/index.asp">http://www.ymcacambridgekw.ca/en/index.asp</a></p>	Stacey McCormick
	<p>4. <b>Autism spectrum kids and video games</b> – how to use them for good. If your child is very focused on video games, learn how to turn that passion into a career path and social connector mechanism. Speaker is one of the founders of Every1games. <a href="http://every1games.ca/">http://every1games.ca/</a></p>	Sarah Drew
	<p>5. <b>Elementary Math: What’s the problem?</b> Experienced WRDSB educator explains the new math and what your child is learning in school.</p>	Christine MacTavish
	<p>6. <b>Advocating for your child</b> – Experienced WRDSB educators explain what to do if your child needs support with a school issue. Who do you talk to, what can you say?</p>	Barbara Williams & Sharon Newmaster
	<p>7. <b>What can you do with science?</b> Some students mistakenly think Science is difficult, boring, or cold. Learn how to change their minds and see the amazing experiences and careers that studying science can bring to your student.</p>	Perimeter Institute
	<p>8. <b>Helping our Children Thrive in the Outdoors:</b> Remember playing outside all day until the street lights came on? Many children today are growing up without meaningful contact with the natural world. Explore balancing outside time with screen time in this digital age.</p>	Jane Thompson

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12:45 pm	1. <b>Money Smart Kids</b> – convinced your child spends their allowance or their pay the minute they receive it? The author of <i>A Parent’s Guide to Raising Money Smart Kids</i> explains basic concepts in financial literacy for you and your child. <a href="http://robintaub.com/">http://robintaub.com/</a>	Robin Taub
	2. <b>Suicide Prevention</b> – Sadly, this touches many of our lives. Come and learn to recognize the signs. This speaker from the Waterloo Region Suicide Prevention Council will talk about prevention, intervention, and postvention. <a href="http://wrspsc.ca/">http://wrspsc.ca/</a>	Tana Nash
	3. <b>Teens &amp; Books – how to encourage reading</b> Contrary to popular opinion, many teens do like to read but have trouble finding something worth reading. Learn from an experienced High School librarian what to look for and how to encourage those conversations.	Sue Danic
	4. <b>Easing the transition from High School to University</b> – Student Success teacher from the University of Waterloo explains how to avoid the rude shock that first year students often experience. <a href="https://uwaterloo.ca/student-success/">https://uwaterloo.ca/student-success/</a>	Melissa McNown Smith
	5. <b>Math Enrichment for Grades 6 to 12</b> - The University of Waterloo hosts free weekly enrichment activities called Math Circles. Hear the Centre for Math Education director explain what you can do at home to encourage “out of the box” math thinking. The aim of the CEMC is to encourage enjoyment, confidence, and ability in math and computer science among Canadian students. <a href="http://cemc.uwaterloo.ca/">http://cemc.uwaterloo.ca/</a>	Ian VanderBurgh
	6. <b>Walk a mile in my shoes</b> – This is an interactive workshop that gives participants an understanding of what it may feel like to have a learning disability by engaging in a series of exercises. Current information and research on LDs is incorporated, as well as how they may impact a child’s mental health and everyday functioning at home and school. Practical strategies that can help support well-being and success in children with LDs across environments will also be introduced. <a href="http://www.childdevelop.ca/about-us">http://www.childdevelop.ca/about-us</a>	Kate Cressman
	7. <b>Improving reading skills is fun</b> – If your child thinks reading is too hard, this workshop will offer practical tips on how to change attitudes and improve success.	Barbara Williams
	8. <b>French at home</b> – You don’t speak French but your child is in French Immersion or Core French. What can you do at home to help?	Wanda West

TIME	TOPIC	SPEAKER
2:00pm	<p>1. <b>Nurturing the Scientists in your Family</b> - Children are naturally curious and usually ask lots of questions. Even when we do not know the answers ourselves, we can encourage that curiosity and help our K-8 students develop the skills to explore their thinking and seek solutions for their questions. Wilfrid Laurier professor Les Asselstine will share ideas for encouraging and supporting the development of scientific and technological literacy. He will also explore the question, “How do I help my child with a science project?”.</p>	Les Asselstine
	<p>2. <b>Emotional Intelligence</b> – what is it and why does it matter? Some researchers believe that children with “emotional intelligence” will go further in life than those with “intellectual intelligence”. Learn to support these relational skills in your child in this presentation by a local Doctor of Psychology.</p>	Manuela Ullrich
	<p>3. <b>Math in French</b> – Since math is heavily dependent on word problems, how can a student do well in math when it is taught in French? Experienced WRDSB teacher will show how this works.</p>	Wanda West
	<p>4. <b>Improve your research skills, improve your grades</b> - Digital literacy teachers will show parents how many educational resources are available on the WRDSB website and how to use them. Not for library geeks only.</p>	Elaine MacKenzie
	<p>5. <b>Specialist High Skills Majors</b> - The SHSM is a ministry-approved specialized program that allows students to focus their learning on a specific economic sector while meeting the requirements for the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) and assists in their transition from secondary school to apprenticeship training, college, university, or the workplace. This sector specific training can include anything from Information Technology to Horticulture. Come and see what options your child has in the WRDSB. Coop programs will also be covered.</p>	Ron Hoekstra
	<p>6. <b>Homework – what really matters?</b>  Homework can be stressful for both parents and children. This workshop will discuss the following questions to equip parents to help without actually doing the homework for their child.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the role of homework in my child's learning?</li> <li>• How much time should be spent on homework?</li> <li>• Can I still help my child with homework if English is not my first language?</li> <li>• Why is it so difficult for my child to finish his/her homework?</li> <li>• How can I identify learning struggles in my child?</li> </ul> <p>Melodie Shantz is an experienced local teacher and tutor.</p>	Melodie Shantz