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### UPCOMING EVENTS

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INTELLECTUELLE  
March 13 - 19, 2016

CURRENT TRENDS IN  
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MARCH 21 and 22, 2016

CQJDC CONFERENCE  
HILTON QUEBEC,  
QUEBEC CITY  
April 25 - 27, 2016

Copy Editor  
Robin Colyer

## **Bravo for a New CBC Initiative**

CBC is beginning a pilot project to make Canadian Public Radio available to the 1.3 million Canadians who are deaf or hard of hearing. Beginning in February, with the help of a grant from the Broadcasting Accessibility Fund, they will post the written transcript of the show "The Current" on their website ([CBC.ca](http://CBC.ca)) on a daily basis and film, edit and post one radio documentary interpreted in American Sign Language each month.

"At The Current, we strive to bring our audience stories that encourage them to think about our world and our society in ways they might not have considered," said Anna Maria Tremonti. "This project will give people who are Deaf or hard of hearing an opportunity to join us in that process and to be part of a larger conversation about what is happening around us. I am delighted to be part of the effort to open that door to this important group of Canadians."

"CBC produces a number of internationally renowned, award-winning documentaries each year, many of which are broadcast on The Current. By offering these documentaries in ASL-interpretation, CBC expects to engage and entertain Deaf audiences in an exciting new way, in many cases in their preferred language (ASL) for the first time."

To read the full article follow the link: [CBCradiopilotproject \(http://www.broadcastermagazine.com/news/cbc-announces-pilot-project-to-make-public-radio-available-to-deaf-and-hard-of-hearing/1004003288/?&er=NA\)](http://www.broadcastermagazine.com/news/cbc-announces-pilot-project-to-make-public-radio-available-to-deaf-and-hard-of-hearing/1004003288/?&er=NA)

## **Educational Pathways**

In order to help clarify the options for students with intellectual disabilities within the educational programs of MEESR, the Centre of Excellence PIM has put together a flyer called Educational Pathways. This can be accessed through our website at the following link:

[Educational Pathways flyer](#)

## ***Do we have unrealistic beliefs concerning students with intellectual disability's sexuality?*** by Kymberley Morin

Sex Education can be, for some, a delicate subject to approach and seems to be at the heart of many debates since the Quebec Ministry of Education (MEESR) has put in place its 2-year pilot project for the school years 2015 to 2017. Concerns of what is considered appropriate content and appropriate age are brought forward by parents and teachers. Regardless of what they might consider appropriate or not, our “youth deserve access to unbiased and truthful information to help them be informed and empowered to make decisions about their bodies,” Pilger, V.<sup>1</sup>

Pilger goes on to explain that there are benefits to offering sex education to our youth, which bring about healthy sexual behaviours that go beyond the subject of contraception, communication, boundaries and consent.

When it comes to our youth with intellectual disability (ID), healthy sexual behaviours are unavoidable subjects that must be addressed not only when a crisis presents itself. Too often, people with ID reach adulthood without ever receiving any basic knowledge relating to sexuality.

“It is easier to address and tackle issues of physical access and discrimination faced by people with disabilities than it is to address exclusion from sexuality. Consequently, education and support around sexuality, sexual health and personal relationships has tended to be avoided or ignored.” (Pownall, J.D. & al.).

Apart from finding it difficult to discuss sexual matters with our youth with intellectual disability (ID), our unrealistic beliefs about people with ID could potentially play an important role on why we find ourselves with

a population of young adults with ID who are inadequately prepared when it comes to healthy personal relationships and healthy social interactions.

### ***Unrealistic beliefs***

Some of the following mistaken beliefs held by some parents about people with ID make it all the more important to address the necessity of providing sex education to students with ID.

Many parents of young adults with ID are unaware that their child is sexually active. They believe their child is not interested in sex or has no desire to be in an intimate relationship, and has “fewer sexual feelings than adolescents without disabilities.” (Pownall, J.D. & al.) They fear that discussion surrounding sexuality will only encourage sexual and inappropriate behaviour.

Discussions between adults and youth with ID about sex can be difficult and contentious when one believes that people with ID have no desire for intimate relationships or don't have the same sexual feelings as people without disabilities.

Parents, especially mothers of young adults with ID also believe that their child is unable to “make sensible or informed decisions around sexual relationships and contraception.” (Pownall, J.D. & al.). This can explain why parents feel the need to protect and shelter them rather than provide them with information. Since they believe their child has fewer opportunities to develop social experiences and explore their sexual identity, discussions about sex seem meaningless and potentially provoke anxiety in their child.

Parents of children without disabilities often rely on their child's need for increased independence as a sign that it is time to have or initiate discussions about sex. Conversely,

<sup>1</sup> Victoria Pilger, is Funding and Partnerships Coordinator at Head & Hands

parents of children with ID who see that their child has continuous dependence on adult support, and might for a large proportion of their life be under the supervision of adults, see little relevance in discussing sex with their child until they are much older.

### ***Impact on sex education and teachers of students with intellectual disability***

Parental beliefs concerning sexual matters and their child makes the task of educators more challenging when parents perceive their child to have little interest in sex or sexual relationships, to have fewer sexual feelings than children without ID, and to be unable to make sensible or informed decisions. When parents feel discussions on sexual matters can provoke anxiety in their child and are meaningless because their child has few opportunities to develop their autonomy or develop friendships, this adds to the challenge of teaching sex education to students with ID.

Not only will teachers need to step out of their comfort zone when teaching sex education to their students, but they will need to seriously decide on how to prepare parents when sex education will be mandatory for all students in 2017.

Teachers will need to prepare for this inevitable reality by understanding how a person's disability affects sexual expression, for example, the inability to stop oneself from touching a stranger or the inability to pick up important social cues. They will need to be supported by receiving training and being provided with materials targeted for students with ID. Schools will also play an important role in helping parents to understand the importance of teaching sex education to their child.

Although sex education can be a difficult subject for some to take on, let's keep in mind that sexual abuse is at least 150%

greater in this population than the risk for individuals without disability regardless of their gender or age (Sobsey, 1994). This is explained by the very nature of how society treats individuals with intellectual disability and views their sexuality (Griffiths, 2007; Sobsey, 1994). If we continue to create powerlessness, offer little or no opportunities for decision making, and deny our students with ID a sense of control, we are preventing individuals with ID the right to a self-determined life, which creates an ideal situation for abusers (Griffiths, 2007). (Watson, S.L. et al.) As teachers, we can contribute greatly to the well-being of our students' lives. Let's take this opportunity to reflect and especially to prepare students with ID to safely and successfully participate in society to the best of their ability.

### **References:**

- Pownall, J.D., Jahoda, A. & Hastings, R.P., (2012). Sexuality and Sex Education of Adolescents with Intellectual Disability: Mother's Attitudes, Experiences, and Support Needs. *Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities* Vol. 50, No. 2, 140-154.
- Robinovitch, C. & Labrosse, M. Celia Robinovitch, (September 14, 2015). Quebec launches mandatory sex ed pilot program Community groups prioritize early consent education. *The McGill Daily*
- Watson, S.L., Richards, D.A., Miodrag N., & Federoff, J.P., (2012). Sex and Genes, Part 1: Sexuality and Down, Prader-Willi, and Williams Syndromes. *Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities* Vol. 50, No. 2, 155-168.

## Sex Education Resources for Parents:

***Sexuality Education for Children and Adolescents with Developmental Disabilities: an instructional manual for parents or caregivers of and individuals with developmental disabilities. Sexuality across the Lifespan.*** by DiAnn Baxley and Anna Zendell, Florida developmental disabilities council, inc. 2005  
[https://www.autismspeaks.org/docs/family\\_services\\_docs/parentworkbook.pdf](https://www.autismspeaks.org/docs/family_services_docs/parentworkbook.pdf)

### ***Sexuality and Disability: A Guide for Parents***

Alberta Health Services, Sexual and Reproductive Health Education and Health Promotion  
2009

<http://www.arc-spokane.org/PDFs/Sexuality%20and%20Developmental%20Disability%20parent%20guide.pdf>

***The Girl's Guide to Growing Up*** by Terri Couwenhoven, M.S., Woodbine House, 2011

***The Boy's Guide to Growing Up*** by Terri Couwenhoven, M.S., Woodbine House, 2012

***Boyfriends and Girlfriends: a guide to dating for people with disabilities*** by Terri Couwenhoven, M.S., Woodbine House, 2015

[http://www.amazon.ca/s/ref=nb\\_sb\\_noss?url=search-alias%3Daps&field-keywords=Terri+Couwenhoven&rh=i%3Aaps%2Ck%3ATerri+Couwenhoven](http://www.amazon.ca/s/ref=nb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Daps&field-keywords=Terri+Couwenhoven&rh=i%3Aaps%2Ck%3ATerri+Couwenhoven)

## Resources for Teachers:

### **A List of Resources for Teaching Sexuality**

[https://www.erinoakkids.ca/ErinoakKids/media/EOK\\_Documents/Autism\\_Resources/Resource-List.pdf](https://www.erinoakkids.ca/ErinoakKids/media/EOK_Documents/Autism_Resources/Resource-List.pdf)

### **Offre de formation:**

**Affectivité et sexualité des personnes présentant une déficience intellectuelle (DI) - Réservée milieux scolaires**  
**Formateur : Carole Boucher**

Lieu : 1025, rue Marguerite-Bourgeoys, Trois-Rivières, salle 237

## ***Proving that one person can make a difference***

*by Kymberley Morin*

Have you heard of Ruth Thompson? She is the Founder and President of Hugs Café. What's so special about this Café? It is a nonprofit café with a mission of training and offering employment opportunities to adults with special needs "while providing dignity, self-worth and developing respect in the community." (Hugs Café).

As a teacher, Ms. Thompson has always had a passion for students with special needs and cooking. In 2004, she moved to Texas and taught cooking classes to adults with special needs. Her goal was to help her students "develop new skills, become more independent, and enhance their self-worth." (Hugs Café). When she retired, she wanted to continue to contribute to the betterment of adults with special needs lives and that's when Hugs Café came to be.

Besides having a great and important mission, TripAdvisor rates it as an excellent place for great food, value, and atmosphere.

Want to know more on how she is changing the lives of many people? Visit [hugs.cafe.org](https://hugs.cafe.org)

## Upcoming Conferences



### April 25 - 27, 2016 CQJDC Conference Hilton Quebec, Quebec City

6th Biennial Conference of the Comité québécois pour les jeunes en difficulté de comportement/ Québec Committee for Youth with Behavioural Difficulties

[WEBSITE](http://www.cqjdc.org)

Registration is open.

EMAIL: [gro.cdjqc@mda](mailto:gro.cdjqc@mda)



### Current Trends in Autism Conference 2016

TRANSITION PLANNING AND EMPLOYMENT  
FOR ADOLESCENTS AND ADULTS WITH AN ASD  
MARCH 21 and 22, 2016

UQAM - Cœur des sciences, Amphithéâtre  
(SH-2800), Pavillon Sherbrooke  
200, rue Sherbrooke Ouest, Montréal, QC  
H3C 3P8

headline speaker Peter Gerhardt, EdD  
Simultaneous translation available.

[WEBSITE](http://www.centre-gold.ca)

## Events of note



### [I Can Dream Theatre](http://www.icandreamtheatre.com)



is a community based organization that gives adults with special needs the opportunity to develop their talents in the area of the performing arts.



Projet RAD est une organisation qui permet aux personnes ayant des besoins particuliers de suivre des cours et ateliers inclusifs de danse urbaine dans un environnement chaleureux, sécuritaire et adapté à leurs besoins.

[WEBSITE](http://www.projetrad.ca)

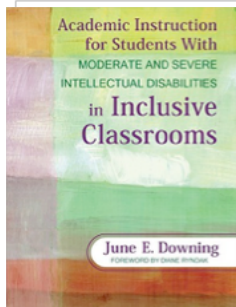


SEMAINE QUÉBÉCOISE DE LA  
DÉFICIENCE INTELLECTUELLE  
March 13 - 19, 2016

[WEBSITE](http://www.semainedeficienceintellectuelle.ca)



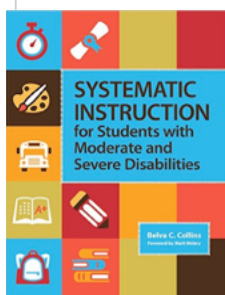
## Books of Interest!



### Academic Instruction for Students With Moderate and Severe Intellectual Disabilities in Inclusive Classrooms

by June E. Downing Ph.D

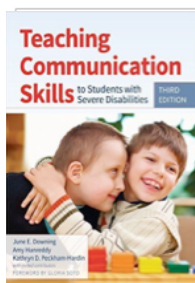
Packed with instructional strategies for students with significant disabilities, this research-based resource helps teachers adapt their curriculum, work collaboratively, develop accurate assessments, track student progress, and more.



### Systematic Instruction for Students with Moderate and Severe Disabilities

by Belva Collins Ed.D.

Developed by a seasoned educator who has trained thousands of teachers, this one-of-a-kind textbook fully prepares teachers to use systematic instruction procedures to link core content with critical life skills.



### Teaching Communication Skills to Students with Severe Disabilities

by June E. Downing Ph.D., Amy Hanreddy Ph.D., and Kathryn Peckham-Hardin

Today's best research strategies are in the new third edition of this trusted textbook and teaching guide. Current and future education professionals will get up-to-date information and practical guidance on the entire process of supporting communication for students of all ages, from assessing their communication skills to involving peers and adults in intervention.

## Organizations of Note!



**Centre d'intégration  
à la vie active**

<http://www.civa.qc.ca>

This organization's mission is to provide services for people with physical disabilities, to help them integrate into the community and lead healthy, active lives.



The C. A. R. E. centre is a day-centre for adults with severe physical disabilities in the Montréal area, offering a program of recreational and educational activities in English to adults over 21.

### **Corpuscule Danse**

<http://www.corpusculedanse.com/corpuscule.php#questce>

A dance company based on Integrated Dance, Corpuscule Danse offers a variety of dance workshops including those for children from 7 to 11 years old in an inclusive setting.

### Who are we?

Our Centre is one of 6 Centres of Excellence mandated by MELs to provide support, professional development, research activities and provincial expertise to the English sector. We service students who are physically, intellectually or multi-challenged in a school setting. Our team consists of our coordinator, Kymberley Morin and our secretary, Robin Colyer collaborating with Manon Lessard, Special Needs & French consultant for the ETSB.

### **Centre of Excellence for the Physically, Intellectually and Multi-Challenged**

Kymberley Morin , Coordinator

Robin Colyer, Secretary

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