

WigWag



A Publication for Hanen Certified Speech-Language Pathologists

Bringing Learning Language and Loving It™ to St. Lawrence College

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In 2002, after several failed attempts to fill community based *Learning Language and Loving It* (LLLI) programs, Lysiane Caparelli and Dianne Height, Speech-Language Pathologists in Cornwall, Ontario attended an Early Childhood Education Advisory Committee meeting at the Cornwall campus of St. Lawrence College to sing the praises of the LLLI program. Their goal was to have the program incorporated into the ECE curriculum and to disseminate this approach to facilitating children's social, language and literacy skills *before* educators got into the work force.

The idea took hold and, in 2004, the second year ECE class had the option of taking LLLI as an elective in their second semester. In order to deliver a full LLLI program, the program was co-taught by two SLPs. The seven, three-hour class nights were alternated with five video nights, explained below. The additional class time allowed for a lot of the optional information to be shared. The final class in the semester incorporated "Sharing Sensitive News". The classes were taught on Tuesdays, and the students headed into placements Wednesdays-Fridays where they videotaped themselves and captured specific strategies that had been taught in the previous class. The students signed up in pairs for a half-hour video appointment slot with the SLP. They also completed Video Feedback Sheets which accompanied the video. The video was then cued to a five minute segment in which they felt they had captured the intended strategies. The discussion, feedback and grading was focused on this 5-minute

video clip and the student's comments on the video feedback sheet. While there was no opportunity for on-line feedback, educators retained the valuable opportunity to learn through videotaping.

This is now the fourth year of the delivery of the program, and LLLI is now a required course! In years one and two, the course grading was pass/fail (meaning that no specific grade was given). In year three, grading was implemented for the Action Plans, Observation Guides and Video Feedback Sheets. This has secured much more consistent participation on the part of the students. There have been some minor, Hanen-approved modifications to the program, such as the inclusion of several activities drawn from the "Teacher Talk™" program. These activities and resources were used to strengthen the classes on literacy, print and fostering peer interaction.

Changes might yet again be coming to LLLI at St. Lawrence College. The College is very interested in the "Train the Trainer" model promoted by Hanen, which allows qualified Early Childhood Educators to become licensed *Learning Language and Loving It* Program Leaders. For budgetary reasons, the College would prefer to have the course taught by one of their full-time faculty and, lucky for them, one of their faculty members took part in the very first LLLI class that was offered at the College. They are looking at implementing these changes for the 2008-2009 school year.

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Although the class discussions and class participation can be a little difficult to get going because the students lack years of rich child care experience, they bring fresh enthusiasm and energy to the program. They feel privileged that they are graduating and competing for jobs with a skill set that not all ECE grads have. **WW**

Note: For more information about how *Learning Language and Loving It* is being integrated into academic programs, or how Early Childhood Educators can be licensed as *Learning Language and Loving It* Program Leaders, please contact Janice Greenberg at janice.greenberg@hanen.org.