

# WigWag



A Publication for Hanen Certified Speech-Language Pathologists

## Learning Language and Loving It™: Implementation at Sault College within the ECE program

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In 2006, Lorna Connolly Beattie, Andrea Welz and Colleen Brady (all professors at Sault College in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario) were trained in Hanen's Learning Language and Loving It™ Program for ECEs. Not only were they among the first people to be certified as Hanen ECEs, but they quickly decided to incorporate the Program into the ECE curriculum at Sault College. Here's what they had to say...

### *Why we decided to provide the Learning Language and Loving It (LLLI) Program to the students:*

We were already familiar with the Hanen Centre and LLLI, and believe in the principles that are presented in the program. We believe that the skills learned in the LLLI Program fit with developmentally appropriate practice and what we were already teaching. Having our students formally trained in LLLI would ensure that our students build these skills, and that they could practice what they learn out in the ECE community.

### *How becoming a licensed LLLI Program Leader has enhanced our skills and knowledge:*

Using the materials allows us to analyze where students are at in their learning and assists in moving their learning forward. It has enhanced our own knowledge of language development and the ability to incorporate this knowledge and terminology into other areas of our teaching. We have

developed our skills in providing video feedback. Rather than being overly directive or analytical, we can more effectively guide the students learning by recognizing the skills they have and the opportunities for growth and improvement. Guiding students through this reflective process is a valuable and necessary skill as an ECE.

### *The impact of the program on the students:*

The students have developed many techniques to use in promoting children's social, language and literacy development. They are now able to include the LLLI terminology in their descriptions of children, and incorporate what they've learned in other areas. We observed them pulling information from earlier sessions into later sessions, thus integrating what they learned into their practices. We noticed that students could more clearly see the value of one-to-one interactions and small groups when working with young children much more than they had prior to their introduction to the LLLI program. The videotape feedback sessions were a powerful eye-opener for the students in observing their interactions with children through a different lens.

### *Feedback from students:*

Overall, students have been very positive about the LLLI training. Here is a small sample of the feedback we've received:

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*"I loved it. It taught me a lot and gave me skills to use to help children with their language development."*

*"It was integrated into different courses which made it easy to see how you use it in all aspects of teaching."*

*"How I group children is different. One child I worked with was very reluctant, so I grouped him with the appropriate children to encourage interaction."*

*"I have been able to speak at the child's level, extend their play, and hold meaningful conversations."*

*"It allowed me to see what areas I needed to improve upon as well as the areas I was doing well in. Self-reflection is the key to development."*

### ***How we managed to fit the program into our existing curriculum:***

We believe we've formulated a sound approach to integrating the *Learning Language and Loving It* Program into our ECE curriculum. The first step was to revise our Language and Literacy course, and integrate the LLLI principles into this course because it fit well with our desired developmental outcomes.

However, we work with the LLLI program materials over 3 semesters of our program. Our format is as follows.

#### ***Semester 2***

Students take the Language and Literacy course using the *Learning Language and Loving It* guidebook as their textbook. The sessions of the program are taught within the confines of this course, so that all of the theory is presented and evaluated.

At the same time, within our Integrated Seminar II course, the students revisit the key *Learning Language and Loving It* strategies which will prepare them for their first videotape session. They then complete the

videotape in their field practice placement and meet with one of the three ECE Faculty (all are LLLI Program Leaders) for their video feedback session.

This video assignment is built into the grading scheme for all Seminar Classes.

#### ***Semester 3***

Within our Integrated Seminar III course, the students again re-visit the *Learning Language and Loving It* strategies which will prepare them for their second and third videotape feedback sessions and once again complete the videotaping in their field placement and receive video feedback from one of the three ECE Faculty.

#### ***Semester 4***

Within our Integrated Seminar IV course, the students once again re-visit key LLLI strategies that will prepare them for their fourth videotape session, and once again complete the videotaping in their field placement and receive video feedback from one of the ECE Faculty.

If students have completed all the components at a satisfactory level (attended the required number of hours of in-class LLLI sessions and completed all 4 videotapes), the graduating ECE student receives their LLLI certificate.

### ***How the program enhanced our current curriculum:***

We believe that *Learning Language and Loving It* has emphasized the importance of daily interactions with children. The students acquire practical skills that they can take and implement immediately into their work with young children. The Program supports our curriculum's strong foundation in developmentally appropriate practice. We have utilized the Program's principles and materials in several other courses where there is a natural fit. It has improved students overall observational skills regarding child development and planning appropriate

activities. Furthermore, it reinforces our curriculum focus around being child-centered, building relationships with children and that language development is much more than talking.

***Advice for faculty in other colleges looking to make LLLI part of their curriculum:***

You will need to have your whole educational team on board and committed to the process. You will also need college administrators to recognize the value and importance of implementing LLLI into your curriculum so that they are supportive of this change in faculty workload in order to incorporate the video feedback sessions as well as the financial costs of being trained.

In addition, it is important to get the word out to your community about the LLLI initiative, so that they recognize the value of this training and are supportive of students that are learning and practicing the LLLI principles and videotaping in their field placements.

We also appreciated the collaboration with The Hanen Centre in providing us with the training and supporting us in developing a plan to appropriately implement LLLI within the ECE program at Sault College.

For further information about the LLLI Program at Sault College, please contact:

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If you would like more information on how to incorporate *Learning Language and Loving It* into your college's ECE curriculum, please contact Program Manager Janice Greenberg at [janice.greenberg@hanen.org](mailto:janice.greenberg@hanen.org). WW