

INSIDE



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From left to right: Her Honour, Mrs. Ruth Ann Onley, The Honourable David C. Onley, Linda Rogers, KidsAbility School Principal, Kellie Bell, Teacher, William, Student

Visit by the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario

On April 11th KidsAbility School was honoured with a visit from The Honourable David C. Onley, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario and Her Honour, Mrs. Ruth Ann Onley. His Honour is renowned for championing disability issues and for promoting accessibility to enable people to achieve their full

potentials. The Lieutenant Governor visited the composite classroom at KidsAbility School where the students were using augmentative communication devices and specialized equipment to give them greater independence as they participated in classroom activities. For more information about the Lieutenant Governor's visit to KidsAbility, go to <http://www.570news.com/news/local/article/210880--the-lieutenant-governor-of-ontario-in-waterloo>.

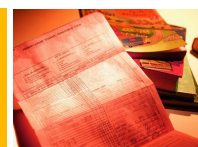
Beamz

KidsAbility School has introduced the Beamz, an interactive music system, to its students. This laser-based music device is connected to a computer and allows children to create music by simply passing their hands through the laser beams. No musical skills are required. Teachers Carol Wiebe and Mary Jane Schenkel coordinated the set-up and introduction of the Beamz.



REPORT CARDS will be sent home on

Monday, June 27, 2011.





Music Therapy

KidsAbility School students enjoyed five weeks of music therapy during spring 2011. Music therapy is used to enhance and develop socialization, communication, self-expression and sensory motor skills. This motivating and calming medium stimulates use of all of the senses and facilitates cognitive function, language and other developmental skills. Our thanks go to Music Therapist Taryn McKinnon for providing this opportunity to all of our students.



Sun Safety at KidsAbility School

The vast majority of skin cancer is caused by overexposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation, *particularly during childhood*. Although sun safety is a year-round concern, it is especially important

during the final months of school when the UV index often reaches or exceeds moderate levels. Even on cloudy, cool, or overcast days, UV rays travel through the clouds and reflect off sand, water, and even concrete. Children can, and sometimes do, get sunburned at school. One of the best ways to protect your child from the sun is to cover up and shield skin from UV rays. During May and June, parents are asked to send sun hats and sunglasses to school with their children for sun protection during outdoor activities. Longer clothing and sunscreen formulated for children are also recommended.

No School !



for KidsAbility School
students on :

Friday, June 10, 2011.

Teachers and educational
assistants will be
participating in
professional
development activities.



Summer Camps & More!

Therapeutic Recreation Services at KidsAbility provides information about summer camps in 2011, resources and guides for inclusive recreation, an equipment loan service and more. For further information, go to: <http://www.kidsability.ca/en/TherapeuticRecreation-Services>.



The Importance of Professional Development

The **Ontario Certified Teachers (OCT)** at KidsAbility School are highly qualified professionals with specific knowledge in the areas of special education, child development, curriculum, assessment, teaching methods, and classroom management. Professional development at KidsAbility School is considered a continuous career-long process that includes regular opportunities and experiences to promote the professional growth of its teachers. KidsAbility School teachers strengthen their teaching practice and professionalism through teacher collaboration, workshops and conferences, Additional Qualifications (AQ) courses, professional reading, peer coaching and reflection. This on-going professional development keeps teachers up-to-date on new research on how children learn, emerging technology tools for the classroom, new curriculum resources, and more.

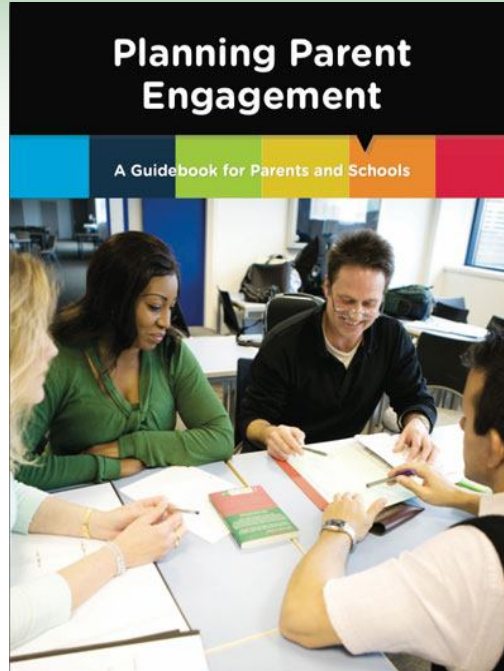
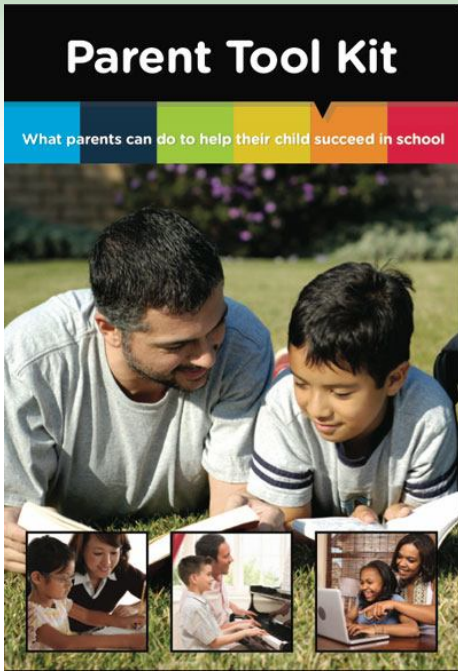
During the school year 2010-2011, professional development activities have included the following topics: autism, early literacy, behaviour management, social skills training, assessment tools and strategies, music therapy, Handwriting Without Tears, Full Day Early Learning Kindergarten, augmentative and alternative communication, Active Learning workshop, Ministry of Education in-services, Kindergarten AQ course and more.

Preparing Your Child for Senior Kindergarten

Entry into Senior Kindergarten marks an important transition in your child's life. Parents play a vital role in helping their child adjust quickly to the new school setting, enjoy learning, and develop a positive attitude towards education. To support the transition to the community school, parents may choose to do the following:

- 🍏 Arrange for a visit to the Senior Kindergarten classroom.
- 🍏 Take photos of the new school, teacher, and classroom to include in a book for your child.
- 🍏 Visit the playground at the new school.
- 🍏 Arrange a play date with other children who will also attend your child's new school.
- 🍏 Create an "All About Me" book to introduce your child to the new teacher.

For additional suggestions on how to prepare your child for senior kindergarten, refer to "***The Bridge to Transition – A Parent's Guide: Transitioning from KidsAbility School to Community Schools.***" Every family received a copy of this guide in March 2011.



Parent Tool Kit

The [Council of Ontario Directors of Education](http://www.ontariodirectors.ca) (CODE) recently released a publication designed to help parents support their children and increase student success. The **Parent Tool Kit** describes hands-on activities and key messages about what parents could do to support their child in doing homework, helping with projects and making real life connections to the classroom.

The **Parent Tool Kit** and the accompanying **Planning Parent Engagement Guidebook** are available in PDF format on the CODE website. The development and distribution of the Tool Kit was funded by the Ministry of Education of Ontario.

<http://www.ontariodirectors.ca>

Autism Forum

The third annual Autism Forum will be held **Friday, June 10, 2011** at Bingemans from 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. It is open to parents, caregivers, students, paediatricians, family physicians, and other professionals. The cost which includes breakfast and lunch is \$99 for professionals and \$25 for parents and students. Many KidsAbility School staff will be attending. Visit the KidsAbility website for a list of speakers.

KidsAbility School Picnic

The Year-End KidsAbility School Picnic is on **Wednesday, June 29, 2011** which is the last day of school for students.

Zoe the Clown will be a guest entertainer.



KidsAbility School Library at the Waterloo Site has moved!

In March 2011, KidsAbility School library was relocated to a larger, brighter setting in the Pavilion at the Waterloo site. Teacher-Librarian Carol Wiebe now conducts library classes for our students in this new location.



Donations to KidsAbility School

Thanks to the generosity of donors, KidsAbility School has been able to purchase specialized equipment and resources and to offer additional programs that would otherwise have been unavailable to our students. With donations, KidsAbility School has purchased eight iPads and iPad accessories so there is an iPad in *every* KidsAbility classroom. Purchases have included adapted gross motor equipment for physical education such as the Crazy Car riding toy, a Tai Chi ball, and the Adjustable Multi-Ring Basketball Stand. Sensory toys included the Magic Paint Box, Adapted Ramp Riders, sensory rings, a Mobile Snoezelen, and a Tactile Tabletop. Augmentative communication devices such as the Big Talk Triple Play Communicator, a Personal Talker, and the Flying Colors Wobble Switch have also been purchased with donations. Adapted Push Scissors, a Slant board and the Captain's Chair seating system will allow for greater participation and independence for some students. In addition, the therapeutic horseback riding program and the music therapy sessions were possible *only* because of donations to KidsAbility School. Our sincere thanks go to all the donors who have so generously supported KidsAbility School during School Year 2010-2011.



Volunteers at KidsAbility School

KidsAbility School would like to thank the many dedicated volunteers who have given so selflessly of their time and talents throughout school year 2010-2011 to support the school's vision of "Children prepared for school success." Under the direction of teachers, volunteers have assisted in the classrooms in many ways:

From left to right: Tom Jeary, Volunteer, Catherine Nyman, Physiotherapist and Huda, Student

- 🍏 Working with individual students or with a small group to strengthen learning
- 🍏 Providing one-to-one support for a child during therapeutic swim time and horseback riding
- 🍏 Assisting with the supervision of children during recess, gym time and nutritional breaks
- 🍏 Preparing classroom materials and resources
- 🍏 Building or adapting special equipment (e.g. pool slide, mobility cart)



Therapeutic Horseback Riding

Students from Kellie Bell's and Lisa Bedrosian's composite classes at KidsAbility School participated in an 8-week horseback riding program at Pride Stables. Therapeutic horseback riding promotes special friendships between rider, horse, and volunteers. It utilizes the horse as a medium of therapy. The horse's movement simulates the human walking motion and the horse's body temperature supplies passive heat massage thereby relaxing spastic muscles or stimulating lax muscles. It provides a calming experience where children can develop body awareness and a sense of balance. The children love it and benefit immensely!

Retirees!

Please join us in congratulating four school staff retirees this June 2011: Cindy Wass, special education liaison teacher, Wendy McIntyre, communication class special education teacher, Jean Douglas, educational assistant, composite class and Trudy VanDoormaal, educational assistant, composite class. Combined years of service at KidsAbility, often beginning as volunteers and transitioning into staff positions, is well over 60 years. You will all be so missed! We do wish each of you well in future endeavours and who knows, maybe we will see some of you back volunteering in September!

Art Across the Curriculum



Not only is art fun and motivational for students, it is a valuable tool to teach concepts across the Kindergarten curriculum. Art education allows children to express their creativity while developing listening, problem solving and critical thinking skills. In addition, art fosters a greater understanding of different subject areas. Art activities can be used to reinforce reading comprehension, teach new vocabulary, explore science, teach different mathematical concepts, and much more.

For art ideas that parents can do in the home using readily available items, view the video podcast "Art Experiences" on the Ministry of Education website: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/abc123/> As your child experiments with colours, shapes, textures and patterns, parents can make learning through art fun and entertaining.





Stock Transportation Receives Safety Award

Stock Transportation has provided quality school bus transportation for KidsAbility School for eight years. Recently, Stock Transportation was recognized for their impressive safety record with the 2010 Safety Award for North America of National Express Corp. Congratulations, Stock Transportation, for your well-deserved award! Our special thanks go to the drivers, some of whom have been driving KidsAbility School students for almost 20 years.



Mission and Vision

Our Vision:

Children prepared for school success.

Our Mission:

KidsAbility School Authority in collaboration with families and the KidsAbility Centre for Child Development serves young children with special education needs.

The school provides:

- 🍏 Services for children with communication, physical and developmental disabilities
- 🍏 Early identification of the child's strengths and special needs
- 🍏 Early intervention to develop strategies that address the child's individual needs
- 🍏 Education and therapy services
- 🍏 Junior kindergarten programs that are accommodated and modified to meet each child's development
- 🍏 Staff support to the family in preparing for entrance of their child into a community school
- 🍏 Communication and collaboration with the local district school boards and private schools to support the transition of students from KidsAbility School into community schools