

A Message from the Director of the Arrowsmith Program

The Arrowsmith Program identifies and strengthens the weaker cognitive capacities that underlie learning disabilities that affect learning and the acquisition of academic and social skills.

Our program has been available in the Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) since 1997 and is now offered in schools in Canada, the United States and Australia. Our goal is to see the Arrowsmith Program more broadly available in both the public and private school systems.

Learning disabilities are estimated to afflict five to ten percent of the school age population; within this group there are thousands of students in public and private schools who can benefit from our program. Students without formal identification who are struggling in one or more subjects can greatly benefit from the program as well.

A student who is appropriate for the Arrowsmith Program is of average or above average intelligence and has one or more of the learning dysfunctions described on our website and in this brochure. Please visit our website to view our introductory videos.

A report that documents the effectiveness of the Arrowsmith Program in the TCDSB including an increase in the rate of acquisition of specific academic skills and a reduction in the amount of resource support required after the student left the Arrowsmith Program is available on our website. This report also describes the success achieved when students were able to mainstream in high school with no or minimal resource support.

Our website also has the full text of several research studies and reports and other articles including “Raising Cognitive Capacity” that appeared in the September 2008 issue of the Ontario College of Teachers magazine, “Professionally Speaking.” We recommend three books: “The Brain That Changes Itself” by Dr. Norman Doidge on the science of neuroplasticity, which is the foundation of the Arrowsmith Program and Chapter 2 describes the work of Arrowsmith School; “The Woman Who Changed Her Brain” by Barbara Arrowsmith-Young, that chronicles the history of the Arrowsmith Program and illustrates through case studies what happens when specific cognitive functions are impaired and the transformation that occurs through the application of cognitive exercises to strengthen these weak mental capacities; and “Brain School” by Howard Eaton that describes the success of students at Eaton Arrowsmith School in Vancouver in terms of improved cognitive functioning and how this allows these students to participate more fully and effectively in the world as well as demonstrating significant changes pre and post Arrowsmith on academic and cognitive test measures. We have scheduled information sessions throughout the school year at Arrowsmith School in Toronto for educators and others interested in the field of learning disabilities. These sessions provide an opportunity to learn about our program and observe students working on the Arrowsmith cognitive programs in their classrooms.

Please visit our website for a list of dates or contact us to arrange a presentation on another date or at your school if you have a group of your own. We also invite visitors to attend one of our evening parent open houses at Arrowsmith School in Toronto or at our affiliated school in Peterborough that are listed on our website.

If you would like more information or to speak with a member of our staff about our methodology or implementing our program in your school or board, please contact us by email at info@arrowsmithprogram.ca or by telephone at 416 963-4962.

Barbara Arrowsmith Young
Director, Arrowsmith Program