



Parent Testimonials

Dimitri

My son has been involved with the Arrowsmith program since it was piloted a couple of years ago. Having such a wonderful program come to Lakeview Montessori was a dream come true for us. Our son has excelled in so many areas since becoming part of this program. Our son has become more social and wants to actively participate in school activities of which he'd never shown an interest before. We have also seen progress in comprehension, fine motor skills and math. The learning environment is incredible! The Arrowsmith Program trained teachers are very passionate about their job and ensure that our children receive the most out of the program. Their compassion and patience with the children provide a most enriched experience. I would recommend this program to anyone.

Dawn Hrycak-Popovic

MS CCC-SLP

Ella

Our child has received interventions since she was 18 months old. School was a struggle even given maximum support. Finally, while on an overseas assignment, we proceeded with an Ed. Psych evaluation to assist the Learning Support team and our family to increase school success. We were given a thorough report and an informal comment on how it was too bad there was not an Arrowsmith Program in the host country we lived in as she felt it would be the best chance of future success. It was the first time we had heard of Arrowsmith program. Fast forward a few years and there was a move to Windsor. After several months in Windsor, we found the program and within a week, we were part of Lakeview and the Arrowsmith Program. Our family is almost two years into the program and are now looking at Secondary Schools

and little Learning Support. Academic success has finally come our way. I have hope for a future filled with potential, independence, academic success and more choice post-Secondary school. I do not think we would be this successful or hopeful without Arrowsmith.

Tricia Yaung
MS CCC-SLP

Zoe

Our daughter began Arrowsmith in September of 2015. As soon as we heard that Arrowsmith School was available in Windsor-Essex County, we immediately contacted the school and asked for enrolment. Previously, my husband and I had researched this amazing program and only thought it was available in the Toronto area. Moving to Toronto was not feasible for our family, so you can only imagine how thrilled we were to hear it was now in our community.

The Arrowsmith School provides unique and individualized cognitive brain strengthening exercises for grade school and high school aged children with learning disabilities. Our daughter was diagnosed with 3 separate seizure disorders in 3 different areas of her brain. We felt that if she was entered in a program that was based on the science of rerouting the brain (neuroplasticity) from damaged pathways, to a better functioning pathway she would function at a higher level and perhaps reroute away from the seizure affected areas that were causing on-going concerns.

Honestly to understand our enthusiasm about the program, you need to understand a day in the life of our daughter. Her learning abilities became inhibited by sensory overload, and depending on the auditory and visual stimulus on any given day, it would affect her ability to understand, process and retain information. Both her fine and gross motor skills could be affected differently throughout the day and differ from day to day as well. Some days she was right on the mark, other days not so much! In everyday life that would translate to an inconsistent understanding of what was being taught, difficulty with everyday sequencing problems in math and language arts, terrible handwriting, concentration and memory problems. All of which were leading to anxiety about who she was as a child and where she fit in amongst her peers. We know we have a child who has the motivation to learn, and believed that if she was taught in a certain way, with specific adaptations made to how "HER" brain functioned, we knew she could retain and learn. Most importantly, she knew it too!

Now going into the 2nd year of Arrowsmith, we can factually state and with great enthusiasm the huge strides our daughter has made as a direct result of enrolment in this program. The first and greatest accomplishment is the change in her seizure patterns. We had been told that because she

was born with them, the likelihood of ever growing out of them was not going to happen. She would be on meds her whole life and that as she matured as a female she would probably need more. As she progressed through the Arrowsmith programming we have noticed the exact opposite is happening! The visual stimuli that could and often did trigger seizure activity was not bothering her anymore. Her ability to cope and sustain in environments that generally would cause her anxiety were now becoming tolerable. That was a stunning! We believed it had to be a direct result of her brain training exercises, after-all her meds had not changed. When we discussed this with her neurologist he believed that something different was definitely happening in her brain. We are thrilled to say that our daughter has been seizure free for over 7 months now! Although she still takes medicine for them, her neurologist is now talking about easing back the dosage and if this pattern continues, perhaps taking her off them completely in the near future.

Other changes our daughter has experienced and continues to experience include: less anxiety about schoolwork because now it is becoming easier for her to understand and retain information, huge strides in sequential memory tasks, i.e. improvements in math and problem solving, she loves putting together puzzles now, she also enjoys reading and writing more. Her ability to journal, compose and plan story outlines is truly a joy to witness. She loves going to Arrowsmith and school now because as she has stated "they get how my brain works and it's working better mom!"

As parents we all want the best for our children. We want to be able to provide them with the tools that will help them cope and live happily and successfully in the world. If you have a child who is struggling to learn and you know deep down, and they know deep down, that there has to be a better and different way for them to learn, then The Arrowsmith School and it's programs are something that you should seriously research and look in to. We believe in their programming and the passionate commitment of The Arrowsmith School, and the educators teaching our child. They are educated, professional, compassionate and passionate about all the children they work with! For our daughter, the changes are dramatic, life altering and we have no doubt will continue to progress, assisting us with preparing her for a bright future.

Mark Goulet Marianne Gignac

Christopher

Arrowsmith has made a huge difference in our son's life. Two and a half years ago when he started the program in grade 5 it was a challenge for him to be able to pick up a pen and get his thoughts down on paper even though he was capable of describing things in great detail verbally and is extremely bright. Now he is completing work in his regular class by hand instead of using a computer or having someone write for him. His letters are more

legible and the amount he can write at one sitting isn't even comparable. Before Arrowsmith I thought that the difficulty writing was partially a physical problem but now I realize how complex a process writing is and how far he's come.

Prior to Arrowsmith I used to think that our son was being disobedient when I sent him upstairs to brush his teeth and get a sweatshirt. I didn't understand how hard that was for him to keep in his head. Since Arrowsmith he's become more responsible with his belongings and can remember multiple tasks at once. He's even started sorting things and certain parts of his room have some organization which was never the case before.

More important than that though is the change in his relationship with his younger brother. Before Arrowsmith the interaction between my sons was often negative with a lot of fighting and not a lot of tolerance on my older son's part. Now, the boys play together all the time and even band together against their parents. The positive change in his relationships and interactions is amazing and will serve him for the rest of his life. This year our son who used to avoid large groups and social situation has asked to go to summer camp on his own!

The program is a HUGE commitment and a lot of work and patient both on the part of the child and the parents but the difference between this and programs that help kids compensate is that the changes will be there with them for life long after we are not around to help them. It's made a huge difference to our son's self-confidence.

Kind regards,

Allison Hawkins CPA-CA

Quinn

It's so difficult to put in a paragraph what Arrowsmith has meant to our family in regards to our son Quinn, because there is just so much to share, but I'll try to condense it.

Quinn was born 3 months premature weighing in at a pound and a half. He was part of a follow up program through Met hospital's NICU for 6 years. Everything seemed to be progressing well enough until he got to school. That's when we started to notice things were not going as we had thought. By grade 1 the bottom was falling out. We got a call from his teacher in October of that school year saying she couldn't teach him. Try to imagine as a parent what that was like to hear and to try to understand. We took him to have him tested by a psychologist to find out what was wrong. The results were inconclusive and all over the map. An auditory processing disorder was definite but the jury was out on whether he was dealing with cerebral palsy and/or brain damage from

his early birth, the depth of his difficulties were unknown and re testing was recommended. His learning profile showed that he would either fall behind and never reach his peers or it would just plateau. The school system didn't have answers for us, they just wanted to make things easier for him. The level of frustration, tears and anxiety were rising not just for our son but the whole family. At one point he said he wished he was like the other kids and that he just wanted to go to Heaven. That's when we knew we had to take serious action. We moved him to Lakeview Montessori where there were smaller classrooms, more teachers per student and a teaching style that appealed to all learners. This helped some but we still had to find a way to help him. At this point we didn't know if he would ever reach his full potential or what kind of a future he would have. Through a meeting with other mom's experiencing what we were I was given Barbara Arrowsmith Young's book, *The Woman Who Changed Her Brain*. In its pages I saw my son and for the first time I had hope for him and his future. We are now in our 3rd year of Arrowsmith. ***This program has given us our son back.*** His anxiety has lessened; our home life is so much improved. For the first time in his life he isn't so focused on himself, his fears or his ability to remember or understand. He is able to express his feelings, he is empathetic to others. School has improved greatly. He is getting perfect on spelling tests and is finally able to learn math facts. This boy who couldn't even add 1 +1 in his head and needed objects to count is now adding/subtracting in his head and on paper. I didn't know he couldn't read because he had memorized the stories I read to him.... Now he reads independently. He is writing creative writing stories. He can be given several instructions where before one was all he could handle or remember. He never understood before or after, nuances, sarcasm, he couldn't handle the grey areas of life.... These are all gone now. He understands movies and plot lines. For the first time he can hold full and in depth conversations with people. He finally can recognize other people's emotions. He can think and plan long term. He is reading and doing google searches on things of interest. One time he wanted to know about the Statue of Liberty so he googled it, then told me all about it days later. I was floored. He is taking part in school activities without the need of me or another adult to give him the confidence to see it through. He is even going to try piano next year! For the first time, I see his sense of humour and I love his use of sarcasm. He is very responsible. He looks after his turtles and our dogs. Quinn will get his homework out on his own and do it. I won't lie to you, it's been hard work for him and it's taken a great deal from us to support him and push him. I have had to learn to step back which isn't easy when they have needed you so much. It's empowered our whole family. He has a few more years to go but for the first time he has hopes, dreams and a future. He even talks of college, his future career and his desire to have a family. I am so excited for him.

Arrowsmith doesn't just transform a brain for academics but it transforms a person into 'living a whole life'.... An answer to prayer!

Kelly Bondy

Olivia

After seeing what Arrowsmith has done for my son, I knew my daughter could reap the benefits of this program.

My daughter gets decent grades in school. Last year I volunteered to read a novel with her and other class mates once a week. After sitting in on the reading I noticed she was not as strong of a reader as most of the girls in the group. I was not overly concerned

though, like I said she is a good student. What did concern me was that she was reluctant to read out loud. Slowly she was retreating, becoming more shy. I also noticed that she was still mixing her b's and d's up. For some reason none of the tactics to correct this were working. Her printing was so messy; she could not even read her own writing, something I myself struggled with. She would constantly ask me the same questions over and over. I assumed it was to get attention because her brother did require much of it in our home. But one day she just said mom... I can't remember what you say. I forget a lot. Then it hit me... After focusing so much on our son I hadn't realized that maybe she needed some extra help. Maybe because it didn't seem so big in comparison to him, or maybe I was too distracted to see her and her needs. That's not a proud momma moment. My husband and I talked and decided we should have her tested and just see what's going on, see if she needed anything and we both agreed to act if the results said we needed to. Sure enough she had some deficits and they were in the areas we had thought.

By Christmas, just 4 months, into Arrowsmith we realized she stopped reversing her b's and d's. Her careless mistakes in math were going away and her memory for information was increasing. Her reading has improved immensely. She even offers to read aloud to us all at the dinner table. That messy handwriting is all but gone. Her spelling... Not only is she getting perfect but she gets the bonus word as well. I am so excited for her. I want her to see only open doors in her future... To know she can pick and pursue any dreams and not let her lack of confidence hold her back anymore. I am so grateful to this program, it has really helped her academically but more importantly it has helped her see herself in a new light. I highly recommend the Arrowsmith program. Why should our kids learn to cope with something rather than overcome it?

Kelly Bondy