



Special Education Superintendent Update

September 2020



Special Services Summer Highlights

During the month of August, TCDSB held the first face-to-face programming for students since the closure. Almost 150 students were welcomed at three sites: St. Joan of Arc, Loretto College and St. Pius X.



MEDD students took part in a host of experiential learning activities, games, academic lessons and arts and crafts. The students were supported by over 80 teaching and support staff as well as administrators and volunteers adhering to strict Health and Safety protocols.





Supporting our



Thanks to a special grant from the Ministry, members of the TCDSB clinical team were able to offer counseling services to hundreds of students over the summer months. They were also able to facilitate over 22 mental health literacy workshops to students virtually, through the summer continuing education courses.

As well, the Mental Health Team developed a half-day Professional Development for the system for a mentally-healthy return to school with the following resources:

- A short presentation about key messages for a mentally-healthy return to school for principals to facilitate with their staff, including some reflection questions.
- A one hour webinar on mental health with key messages about equity and diversity to be shared with staff. Included were also some resources for teachers to implement brief and simple social-emotional strategies with students upon return to school, virtually or in person (e.g., The First 10 days and Beyond from [School Mental Health Ontario](#) (SMHO)).
- A 45-minute webinar on Staff Well-Being that staff can view as their self-paced professional development.
- A 45-minute webinar on Supporting Students' Anxiety that staff can view as their self-paced professional development.

As well, we sent out a Tip Sheet from SMHO for Principals on Student Mental Health and Return to School: Understand and Respond to Parent Concerns.



We will also be sending out a Tip Sheet for Parents and Families: [Noticing Mental Health Concerns for Your Child](#) to support a mentally-healthy return to school for all.

[illegible]

A word cloud shaped like a brain, containing terms related to psychology and neuroscience. The most prominent word is 'psychology' in the center. Other visible words include 'behavior', 'cognitive', 'mental health', 'neurons', 'central nervous system', 'emotions', 'depression', 'psychological', 'personality', 'dopamine', 'social', 'mind', 'well-being', 'disorders', 'problem solving', 'personality', 'philosophy', 'neuroscience', 'cognitive', 'emotions', 'depression', 'psychological', 'personality', 'dopamine', 'social', 'mind', 'well-being', 'disorders', 'problem solving', 'personality', 'philosophy', 'neuroscience'.



autism





SPECIAL SERVICES



TCDSB SPEECH & LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT



Supporting Students and Families
with Virtual Intervention
July - August 2020



Virtual Speech and Language Intervention Summer 2020

During July and August, eight TCDSB SLPs:

- provided intervention to **31** students
- conducted **106** intervention sessions



WHO?

- Students on our caseload during 2019/2020
- Students from kindergarten to secondary:
 - at risk (LD, LI, ADHD)
 - KLP
 - Complex Communication Needs
 - Motor speech
 - ASD
 - Down Syndrome

Why?

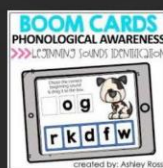
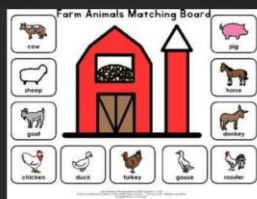
- Offer continuity of services to students and families
- Build capacity in parents, siblings, and other family members
- Improve student's communication skills
 - Speech (articulation/voice/fluency)
 - Language (receptive/expressive vocabulary, grammar, questions...)
 - Social Communication (joint attention/turn-taking/play/conversation)
 - Literacy (phonological awareness/decoding/reading/reading comprehension)
 - Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)

WHAT?

AAC -
Augmentative and
Alternative Communication
systems

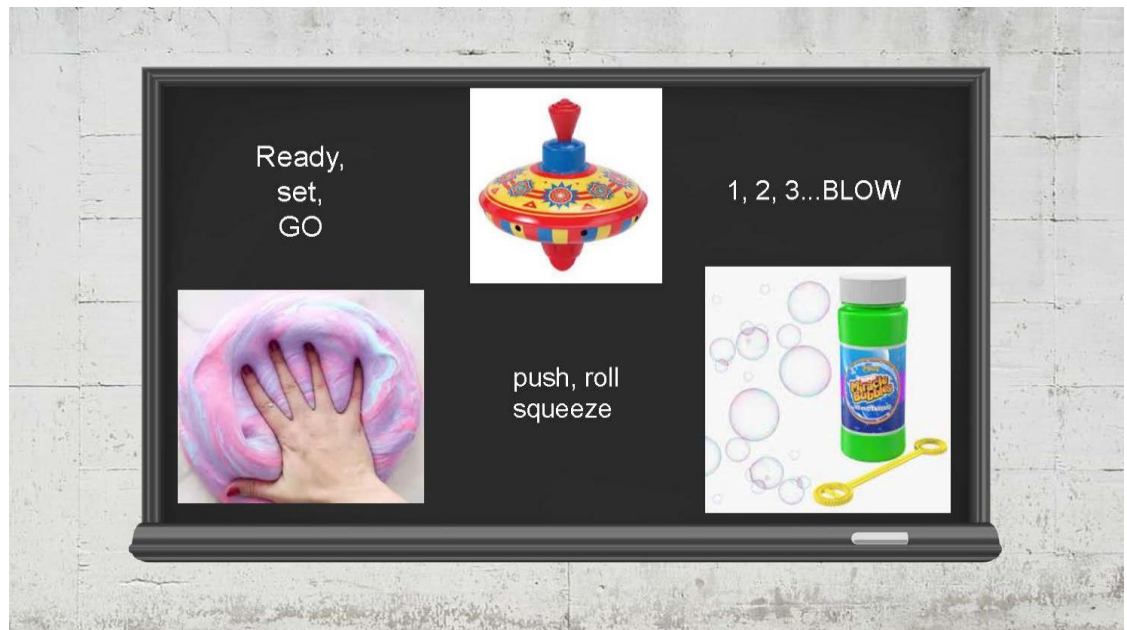


Online
intervention
activities



Games





Parent Perspective

"I am giving Jayden butter cake, he refused it, instead he went to show me the Flip 'n Talk and point (to) KFC...thank you so much for this Ms.Tania. Without these pictures, he would have just cried and I wouldn't have been able to figure out why."

Take away.....

Virtual intervention (via Zoom, OTN, Google Meet) is an effective and efficient way to support students. We were able to support students' communication skills development as well as build capacity in their parents and caregivers.

