



## Learning Assistance Teachers' Association

a Provincial Specialist Association of the BCTF

### Upcoming Events

Note: The following data are provided for information only.  
LATA does not endorse or support any of the following:  
\*\* Hyperlinks active

#### **International Dyslexia Association:**

<https://dyslexiaida.org/webinars/>

#### **European Dyslexia Association:**

<https://onlinecourse.eda-info.eu/basics-for-teachers/>

#### **National Center on Intensive Intervention:**

<https://intensiveintervention.org/introduction-intensive-intervention>

#### **Readlly Great Reading: A Crash Course for Parents**

<https://player.vimeo.com/video/398402530>

#### **EDVIEW360 Read - Watch - Listen**

<https://www.voyagersopris.com/edview360>

#### **National Center on Intensive Intervention (US)**

<https://intensiveintervention.org/resource/self-paced-introduction-intensive-intervention>

#### **CANCHILD Webinars (McMaster University)**

<https://canchild.ca/en/research-in-practice/f-words-in-childhood-disability/webinars>

#### **IMSE Orton-Gillingham on Youtube**

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPJqkhSNKynPzgLj4Xuqp9g>

#### **Experience Dyslexia - IDA**

<https://norcal.dyslexiaida.org/experience-dyslexia/>

#### **Florida Center for Reading Research**

<https://www.fcrr.org/>

#### **Reading Simplified: How to Start with the Science of Reading**

<https://readingsimplified.com/science-of-reading-foundational/>

## NEWS & FEATURES

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**Editor:**

**Michelle Redman**

No Newsletters July or August



# Teacher Profile: Viji Shanmugha

District – SD 38 Richmond

Role/Title – District Resource Teacher



I am not attached to any school but to Learning Services. District Resource Teachers (and we are a group of 10) in Richmond, are given a caseload of “schools”, not students. My role is to support Learning Resource Teachers (as they are called in Richmond) in their role supporting students.

Learning Resource Teachers (LRTs) in Richmond do everything: ELL, and both low and high incidence learners. Richmond also has a very large ELL population. Typically, the District Resource Teachers (the team that I work with; we also have an SLP and an EA on our team making it 12) support LRTs with students who have a low incidence disability. So, we work with the EA (attached to the student), LRT and Classroom Teacher, coming up with program planning ideas, inclusion ideas, behaviour support etc., We attend School-Based Team on a need-to-be basis.

But I have a slightly different role. A significant part of my FTE is devoted to literacy. This new role was created in the last couple of years. The idea was to build the capacity of the Learning Resource Teachers through collaboration for students who are struggling to read. Students are not restricted to 1701 designations (though the focus is on the Q designation) but also on undiagnosed students (and even low incidence students) who are not keeping up with their peers. I work a lot in collaboration with the School Psychologists.

I continue to grow by reading and trying to keep up with current research in reading development. I am trained in OG and in LLI.

I think the biggest challenge students face today is the fact that they can access what they want when they want (thanks to the devices and the current state of social media) and I see that their focus on books and reading is low. I have been teaching for quite a while now, and access to devices has certainly changed the interests of students.

I think my strengths are my ability to stay organized, and my own geekiness which has helped me to learn and keep up with ever-evolving technology so I can help kids with it.



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**Viji Shanmugha is a LATA member-at-large**



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## From one of our Scholarship recipients!

After working as a teacher for a number of years in the public school system, I wanted to become better at reaching students with exceptionalities or learning differences. I chose to go back and get my Master of Arts in Educational Studies at Trinity Western University with a special education focus. The MAES-SPED program helped me to develop a broad and deeper understanding of special education and people with exceptionalities, which has helped me to better understand the needs of my students. I now work full time as a learning assistance teacher. It is rewarding to help students who struggle to reach their potential and find their niche in the world and I am thankful to LATA for awarding me this Advanced Studies Scholarship.

**Olivia Rhoddy**

Check out the **Scholarship** application process here!

<http://www.latabc.com/scholarship-information.html>







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**LATA and TIE-BC** present a co-hosted workshop by Michael Bortolotto on advocacy and entrepreneurship for students with diverse abilities.

**Who:** <https://www.michael-bortolotto.com/>

**How to register:**

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/.../advocacy-and...>

**When:** When: Wednesday, November 24 at 3:45 p.m.

**Questions?** Please reach out to LATA:

[psac53@bctf.ca](mailto:psac53@bctf.ca)



It is the supreme art of the  
teacher to awaken joy in creative  
expression and knowledge.

Albert Einstein



# Screen Addictions, Screeners, and Effects of Screen/Gaming Addictions on our Youth

by Michelle Redman

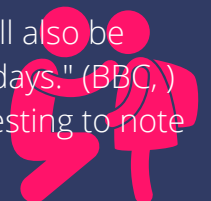
A few years ago the World Health Organizations officially recognized 'Gaming Disorder'. Since that time, there has been a proliferation of free online screeners for anyone to take. The Psychological community has also been busy developing a variety of measures to screen for Gaming Disorder, including the "Gaming Addictions Identification Test" (often mentioned online) (Vadlin, 2016). In a systematic review of 32 tools, through 320 studies with over 450 000 participants, 5 tools were identified as better than the rest in the quest of an internationally recognized instrument to identify screen or gaming addictions. The GAIT was not among those that made the cut. The top 5 all had strengths and weaknesses, however, they did all adhere to DSM-IV (Diagnostic Manual of Mental Disorders) and ICD-11 (International Classification of Diseases) guidelines (King et al., 2020). The expansion of internet use is obvious when considering the rates of internet access 13 years ago in Britain when only 17% of the population even had a smart phone compared to today when 95% of 16-24 year olds have a smart phone. Additionally, Ofcom (2021) report that 78% of Britains say they could not live without their phones (Ofcom, 2021).

**What's driving the demand for screening tools?** An excess of dopamine simply-put. Gaming and screentime both result in dopamine spikes in users. The repeated exposure and overload of dopamine is managed by the brain by tipping to the pain receptors in an attempt to balance the input. Both pain and pleasure are processed in the same location within the brain. This drives an addictive response to balance and maintain dopamine levels in the brain. (Lembke, 2021)

**In the classroom,** educators see this in increasing ways. ADHD is increasing and increasingly difficult to manage, even with medication. Students are falling apart when separated from their phone, self-isolating, and disengaging from daily life. This is becoming a more and more common observation by teachers across North America (Karadağ & Kılıç, 2019) (Latham, 2018). From a personal view, this author has observed a wide variety of technology limitations within classrooms in BC. There is a growing acceptance of persistent use (even off topic from the educational goal) by teachers as they themselves carry their phones, respond to texts, and answer calls at all times throughout the day. School Districts are encouraging use of student technology as an answer to the extraordinary costs of both purchase and care. Teachers implementing 'no phone' policies or 'phone hotels' are often targeted by both students and parents. This is a growing issue that will be at the forefront of educational decisions going forward, especially as the median age of youth with smart phones decreases.

**Around the World:** China has already pushed the alarm for screen addictions and the number of treatment centres is growing across the country while China attempts to maneuver the intertwined paths of technology and education (Du, Jiang, & Vance, 2010) (Chou & Hsiao, 2000). A Taiwanese study of college students found that those identified as addicts spent 3x as much time on the internet as their non-addicted peers (Chou & Hsiao, 2000). In an attempt to address the growing threat of widespread addiction and the resultant effect on national productivity, China implemented Game Censors and structured broad limitations nationwide in 2018 including:

"Gamers under 18 will be banned from playing online between 22:00 and 08:00. They will also be restricted to 90 minutes of gaming on weekdays and three hours on weekends and holidays." (BBC, ) All part of the nation's move to limit addiction growth and protect child health. It is interesting to note that China is one of the world's largest gaming markets (BBC, 2021 ).



## How will we move forward in a time of technological transformation in our society?

While China is implementing limitations for children's health, what are North American schools doing to support children and families during a time of uptick in internet growth? How has the pandemic affected our reliance on screens? Vulnerable learners are often pushed online or onto a screen for programming, behaviour management, and regulation. Teachers, especially teachers of the neurodivergent, should be asking questions and advocating for healthy decisions. How can we make this a reality? Please reach out to LATA BC with your personal stories, observations, or research into screens, screen addiction, strategies, and thoughts on the topic!

## Looking for video references to begin discussions with students, families or peers? Check out the following:

<https://www.screenedoutfilm.com/> from Canadian director and filmmaker Jon Hyatt

<https://www.screenagersmovie.com/> and check out the follow-up production 'Screenagers Next Chapter'

<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/video/screen-addiction-fact-fiction/> from PBS

### References

BBC. (2021) Video game addiction: China imposes gaming curfew for minors. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-50315960>

Chou, C., & Hsiao, M. (2000). Internet addiction, usage, gratification, and pleasure experience: The taiwan college students' case. *Computers & Education*, 35(1), 65-80. doi:[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0360-1315\(00\)00019-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0360-1315(00)00019-1)

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Latham, H. (2018, ). What ADHD kids can teach us about screen addiction: Attention deficit children are the canaries in the coal mine when it comes to device addiction - they're the most vulnerable. *The Spectator* Retrieved from <https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/what-adhd-kids-can-teach-us-about-screen/docview/2129979561/se-2?accountid=14656>

Lembke, A. (2021, August 13,). Digital addictions are drowning us in dopamine. *The Washington Post* Retrieved from [https://www.wsj.com/articles/digital-addictions-are-drowning-us-in-dopamine-11628861572?reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](https://www.wsj.com/articles/digital-addictions-are-drowning-us-in-dopamine-11628861572?reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

Machell, B. (). Ben machell. (may 30, 2020 saturday). she got her first phone at 8. at 17 she is an extreme screen addict. not everyone thinks there's a link.; the power of likes and the dopamine hit - is our smartphone habit really a problem? ben machell asks the experts. . Retrieved from <https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6017-HVG1-DYTY-C4SB-00000-00&context=1516831>.

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# Refugee by Alan Gratz

Classes using REFUGEE by Alan Gratz?  
Check out this reading list for accessibility, provocation, or parallel titles!

## Refugee by Alan Gratz

Provocation materials, connected readings, and parallel reading material

1. **The Harmonica** by Tony Johnston
2. **Glean and Glow** by Eve Bunting
3. **Grandfather's Journey** by Allen Say
4. **The Arrival** by Shaun Tan
5. **Journey** by Aaron Becker
6. **Jars of Hope** by Jennifer Roy
7. **Eirika's Story** by Ruth Vander Zee and Roberto Innocenti
8. **The Unwanted: Stories of the Syrian Refugees** by Don Brown
9. **Zenobia** by Morten Durr
10. **Illegal** by Eoin Colfer and Andrew Donkin
11. **Anne Frank** by Richard Tames
12. **What was the Holocaust** by Gail Herman
13. **Who was Anne Frank?** by Ann Abramson
14. **10 True Tales Escape to Freedom Brave Young Refugees** by Allan Zullo
15. **Outcasts United** by Warren St. John
16. **Enrique's Journey** by Sonia Nazario





## Association links and Post-Graduate programming



### [Autism Awareness Centre Inc.](#)

Check out the recorded webinars available through this Canadian site:

<https://autismawarenesscentre.com/product-category/past-webinars/>

### [Autism Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Awareness - Find resources through POPFASD](#)

<https://www.fasdoutreach.ca/resources/>



### [Get Involved with Special Olympics BC !!](#)

<https://www.specialolympics.ca/british-columbia>

### [Vancouver Island University Graduate Diploma in Special Education:](#)

<https://www.viu.ca/programs/education/inclusive-education-special-education-graduate-diploma>



### [University of Northern BC MEd. in Special Education:](#)

<https://www2.unbc.ca/calendar/graduate/education>





# Cool Tools!

**Woo Hoo!** One of our members has secured a Canadian supplier of this handy tool!!! Great for in-class support, intervention, and adapting materials. The Legiliner™ comes in multiple sizes and is refillable.

<http://www.faststamp.ca/>

**CONTACT:**

**Fast Stamp**

**250-861-9121**

[faststamp@shaw.ca](mailto:faststamp@shaw.ca)



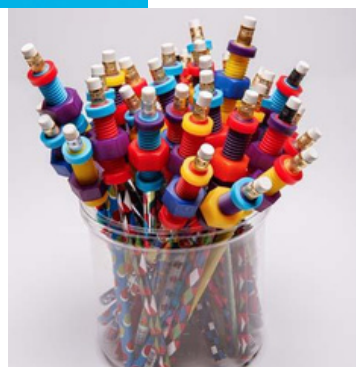
**Looking for a variety of supportive tools, toys, and materials?**

**Contact:**

## Tools for Kids

<https://www.toolsforkids.ca/>

Phone: 780-455-1004



**A Canadian Company!**



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Do you know a local supplier we should highlight? email [psac53@bctf.ca](mailto:psac53@bctf.ca)

# FREE RESOURCES!

Visit these blog posts for information and free resources:

1. <https://sites.google.com/pattan.net/pattan-literacy/2020-pattan-literacy-symposium/language-comprehension-strand>
2. <https://www.idaontario.com/french-sl-resources/>
3. <https://sarahsnippets.com/>
4. <https://thisreadingmama.com/>
5. <https://www.themeasuredmom.com/>
6. <https://www.mrsdscorner.com/>
7. <https://www.oneroomschoolhouse.net/>
8. <http://www.breezyspecialed.com/>
9. <https://mrspspecialties.com/>
10. <https://www.earlywood.org/domain/159>
11. <https://sharemylesson.com/collections/special-education>
12. <https://learn2teachwithbrandie.com/resources-teachers/>
13. <https://specialneedsforspecialkids.org/resource-library/>
14. <https://do2learn.com/>
15. <https://autismclassroomresources.com/free-special-education-webinars/>
16. <https://education.ufl.edu/ufl/virtual-teaching/main/>
17. <https://www.reallygreatreading.com/heart-word-magic>
18. <https://www.carlasiravo.com/music>
19. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPJqkhSNKynPzgLj4Xuqp9g>

Do you know of free resources we should add to our list??  
email [psac53@bctf.ca](mailto:psac53@bctf.ca)



## **November Question:**

What do you want to learn more about in the coming months? Please email [\*\*psac53@bctf.ca\*\*](mailto:psac53@bctf.ca)

We are continuing to look for your recommendations for Level A and Level B assessment resources!

Please email [\*\*psac53@bctf.ca\*\*](mailto:psac53@bctf.ca)

We are excited to begin building a resource bank as part of the LATA website!

**Check out the following groups on Facebook and let us know who else to follow:**

[LATA BC](#)

[Canada's Science of Reading - What I Should have Learned in College](#)

[Special Education Resource Teachers](#)

[Special Education Teacher Leaders](#)

[Math Intervention Matters](#)

## **Members' Questions:**

Please send your recommendations to [psac53@bctf.ca](mailto:psac53@bctf.ca)

Do you have a question that we can put to members?

Send us an email: [\*\*psac53@bctf.ca\*\*](mailto:psac53@bctf.ca)

## **Join the Executive:**

Volunteering as a member-at-large on the LATA Executive is a great way to build cross-district relationships, to share ideas for great resources, to support others in the field, and to bring speakers to your colleagues through invitation at our annual conference in October.

***Please contact us if you are interested in joining the Executive.***



# LATA Goals

The LATA Executive continues to work towards the goals identified below:

- 1. To increase engagement with LATA members by using effective communication strategies**
  - a. Website, Email, Newsletters**
  - b. Social Media**
    - i. Twitter and Facebook to support**
- 2. To support and to provide mentorship for those moving in to the Special Education field**
  - a. Scholarship - application available on <http://www.latabc.com/>**
  - b. Connecting with new-to-district and mentorship organizations within various school districts**
  - c. presentation at New Teachers' Conferences (e.g., BCTF New Teachers' Conference, January 2021)**
- 3. Continue offering Learning Support/Inclusive Education professional development opportunities for members (service to members)**
  - a. Collaborative Teacher Inquiry Project (TIP)**
    - i. We are fortunate to work alongside Catherine Quanstrom and Jessica Willows, BCTF Facilitators, for five half-day meetings to discuss**
      - 1. The goal of this project is to collect data from BCTF Learning Assistance Teacher members on**
        - a. the challenges faced by them in this role**
        - b. to identify areas/resources/supports for members**
        - c. seek guidance on ways to improve and increase support for students with learning disabilities/challenges/exceptionalities.**
      - 2. Thank you for supporting future surveys and for reaching out to us via email with any suggestions and supports on this topic. See the BCTF Inquiry cycle.**
    - b. Seeking out new and diverse speakers for workshops and the annual LATA conference.**
    - c. Engage with Ministry of Education staff, University departments, etc., as appropriate.**
    - d. Network and Collaborate with other PSAs**
    - e. PSA Council meeting update**
      - i. Three times a year, the Presidents of the 32 Provincial Specialist Associations (PSA) meet to discuss issues of importance to the membership and to represent issues faced by members. The next PSA Council meeting is on March 4. Please send your Executive ([psac53@bctf.ca](mailto:psac53@bctf.ca)) any issues of importance so that we can discuss possible ways for changes to be brought about in working and learning conditions.**
    - f. Workshops offered through district-based conferences (e.g., Surrey Teachers' Association (May), Victoria Teachers' Association (Feb 12, 2021))**

