

Newsletter



Teacher Help Summary



Teacher Help is a web-based program that assists teachers in providing evidence-based interventions to students with mental health disorders. The program provides access to information, as well as expert-coach and peer support when needed. Currently three modules (Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder [ADHD], Specific Learning Disorder [SLD], and Autism Spectrum Disorder [ASD]) are at different stages of development. *Teacher Help* will further enable educators to provide flexible and comprehensive evidence-based interventions to students in the classroom.

What's Going On Now?

Usability Testing of the New Online Platform

- We opened up the *Teacher Help* for ADHD elementary school module to teachers in NS to find out what they think of the new online platform provided by Velsoft® Training Materials.
- Now that testing is completed, the changes will be incorporated to help fine tune the program on this platform prior to beginning the nation-wide RCT.
- A summary report of the results from this testing will be sent out now that the study has been wrapped up!

Preparing and Sending Out a News Release

- As you may remember, CIHR distributed a national announcement highlighting the 22 projects that received eHIPP funding. As part of this initiative, we distributed a release locally through Dalhousie University. Please copy and paste the link below to check this out!
- <http://bit.ly/1YGgEli>

Development of Content and Planning for the RCT

- In collaboration with the *Teacher Help* co-investigators and new staff we have begun developing the content for the ADHD high school modules and revising the LD elementary school module. We have also begun the process of developing the ASD elementary and high school modules.
- In preparation for the nation-wide RCT we have devised a work plan and timeline over the next year and a half, and have begun the process of working out the RCT protocol.

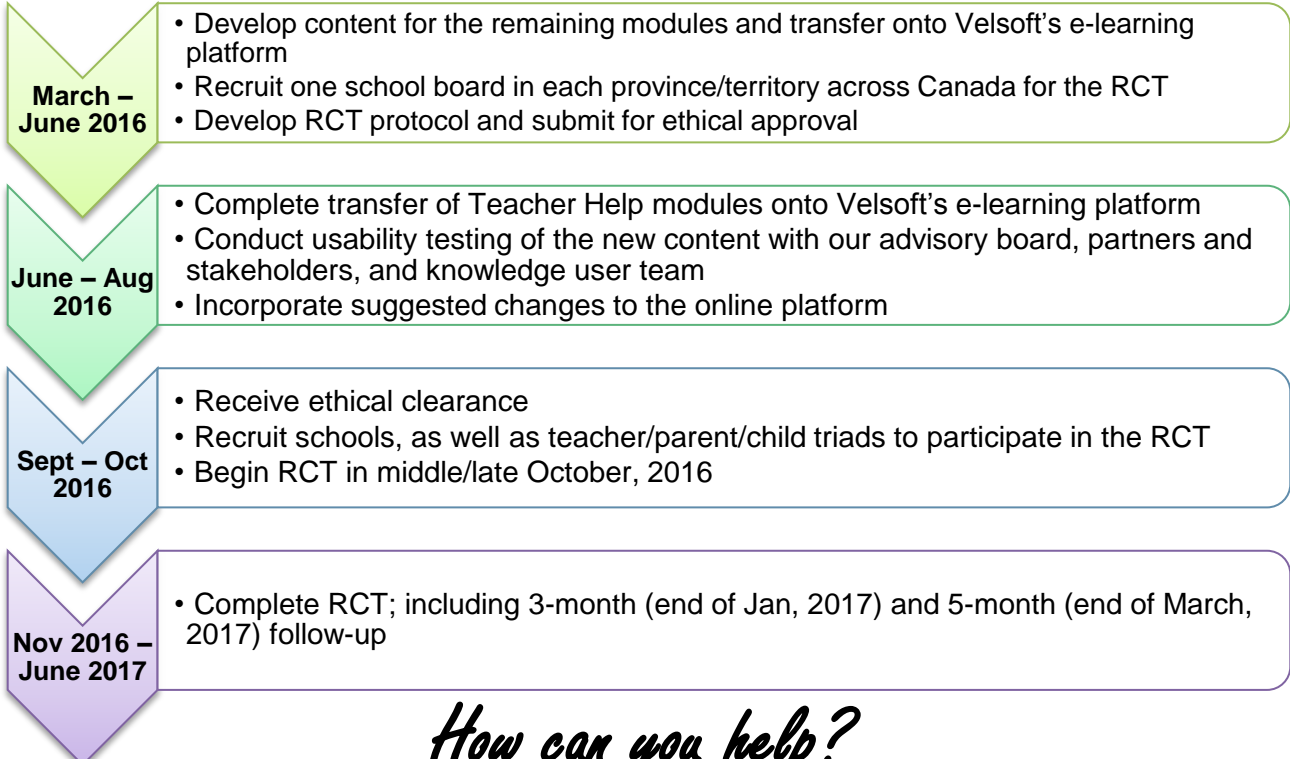
What's Coming Up?

- By late spring/early summer we will have the new content developed and on the e-learning platform provided by Velsoft®.
- By the end of June, 2016 we hope to have one school board from each province and territory across Canada willing to participate in the RCT.
- Over the summer (June-August, 2016) we plan to conduct usability testing with our key stakeholders and advisory board on the new content. **Keep a look out for the ask to review the new content during this time!**

Check out the next page for project timelines and how you can help!



What are the Project Timelines?



How can you help?

Research Team	Development Team	Partners and Stakeholders	Knowledge User Team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for designing and implementing the research studies (i.e., usability testing and the RCT) • Maintain engagement of the team in the research process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for development of content for the Teacher Help modules • Input on the content from the Advisory Board through participation in usability testing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for providing the infrastructure and resources needed to develop and deliver the Teacher Help program in a sustainable way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide input on Teacher Help content through participation in usability testing • Resources and contacts within psychology & education to help facilitate relationships and research

As part of our effort to engage school boards early on, we are asking everyone to let us know if you have an established relationship with a school board, in Canada, and if so could you facilitate their involvement in the upcoming RCT next Fall?

If so, please email the project manager, Sarah Brine, at Teacher.Help@dal.ca or Dr. Penny Corkum at Penny.Corkum@dal.ca!



The Teacher Help Team



The *Teacher Help* Team represents a range of disciplines, including psychology, education, psychiatry, pediatrics, occupational therapy, speech language pathology, business, and social work. Institutions across Canada are also represented such as Dalhousie University, McMaster University, Mount Saint Vincent University, IWK Health Centre, Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids), Truro Pediatrics, University of Toronto, University of British Columbia, University of Alberta, University of Manitoba, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, and Velsoft® Training Materials, a business based in New Glasgow, NS. Each issue of the *Teacher Help* newsletter will highlight members from one of the teams in our [In the Spotlight](#) section. **Check out the next page for a closer look at members of the Research Team, one of our key Knowledge Users, and our Industry Partner!**

Research Team

- *Principal Investigator:* Penny Corkum
- *Co-investigators:* Terry Bennett, Nez Elik, Melissa McGonnell, and Isabel Smith
- *Statistician:* Pantelis Andreau

Development Team

- The Research Team in collaboration with Rosemary Tannock, Janet Mah, Judith Weiner, Rhonda Martinussen, Andre Benoit, Pamela Blotnick-Gallant, Ainsley Boudreau, Margie McKinnon, Teresa Bennett, Wendy Roberts, Sarah Shea, John LeBlanc, Marilyn MacPherson, Sandra Hodgetts, Joanne Volden, Lucyna Lach, Alison McInnes, Tracey Williams, Stephanie Aubrey

Partners and Stakeholders

- *Industry Partner:* Velsoft® Training Materials: Jim Fitt, CEO
- *Dalhousie Industry Liaison and Innovation:* Margaret Palmeter & Doris Grant
- *NS Health Research Foundation (NSHRF):* Marli McNeil
- *National Associations:* CADDRA: Dr. Declan Quinn; LDAC: Claudette Lorocque; Autism Canada: Laurie Mawlam

Knowledge User Team

- *Teachers:* Annie Baert (NS Dept. of Education)
- *Youth:* Michael Ungar & Lisa Lachance (CYCCL) and Ann Junker (MICYRN)
- *Parents:* Frank Gavin (CFAN)
- *School Psychologists:* Joseph Snyder & Don Saklofske (CASP) and Juanita Mureika (CPA – Educational and School Psychology Section)
- *Health Practitioners:* Francine Vezina (NS Dept. of Health and Wellness)
- *NeuroDevNet;* Dan Goldowitz

STAFF



Sarah Brine, M.A.S.P

Sarah has taken on the role of Project Manager for the *Teacher Help* eHIPP project. Sarah is a recent graduate from the School Psychology Program at Mount Saint Vincent University, and has been a member of Corkum LABS for the past 2 years.

Pamela Blotnick-Gallant, M.A.S.P

Pamela has joined the *Teacher Help* team to help develop the content for the *Teacher Help* ADHD and Learning Disabilities (LD) High School modules, as well as revise the LD Elementary School module. Pamela has her Masters Degree in School Psychology, and has worked on *Teacher Help* in the past as the Project Manager during the RCT for the *Teacher Help* for ADHD Elementary School module.

Susan Summerby-Murray M.H.Sc S-LP(C)

Susan is a Speech Language Pathologist who has many years of experience working with children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in the school system. Susan has also taught about ASD at Mount Allison University. She has joined the team to help develop the content for the *Teacher Help* ASD Elementary and High School modules.





Penny Corkum, PhD (Registered Psychologist)

Dr. Corkum is a full professor in the Clinical Psychology Program and the Department of Psychology & Neuroscience at Dalhousie University where she is also cross appointed in Psychiatry and Pediatrics. Her clinical practice, research, and teaching are in the areas of child psychopathology and sleep. Dr. Corkum has a particular interest in neurodevelopment disorders in children with a focus on ADHD, LD, and ASD, and she has an extensive background in and passion for school psychology. Dr. Corkum is the Director of the Colchester East Hants ADHD Clinic (CEHHA), and Scientific Staff at the IWK Health Centre.

Principal Investigator



Co-Investigators

Nezihe (Nez) Elik, PhD (Registered Psychologist)

Dr. Elik is a registered school and clinical psychologist, with a dual-appointment as an assistant professor at the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Neuroscience (part-time) and a staff psychologist at McMaster Children's Hospital. She is a member of the accredited Psychology Residency faculty at Hamilton Health Sciences, and an external supervisor of independent studies and Honours theses of undergraduate students at the Department of Psychology, Neuroscience, and Behaviour. She specializes in the assessment and treatment of children and adolescents with developmental, learning, and social-emotional difficulties and chronic health conditions. She is also focused on improving inter-professional collaboration in the hospital setting and between home, school, and hospital in order to maximize the use of resources and obtain the best outcomes for children and adolescents.



Isabel M. Smith, PhD (Registered Psychologist)

Dr. Smith is a Professor and the Joan and Jack Craig Chair in Autism Research in the Department of Pediatrics at Dalhousie University. As a clinical-developmental psychologist, she relishes the opportunity to supervise many undergraduate and graduate trainees through her cross-appointment in the Department of Psychology and Neuroscience. Dr. Smith consults widely in regard to her clinical expertise in the diagnosis of ASD. She directs the IWK Autism Research Centre, based at the IWK Health Centre, which focuses on studies of early identification and intervention for children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), the developmental trajectories of individuals with ASD, and development and evaluation of interventions designed to improve the capacities of parents, healthcare providers and educators to meet the needs of children and youth with ASD.





In the Spotlight



Melissa McGonnell, PhD (Registered Psychologist)

Dr. McGonnell is the co-coordinator of the School Psychology Program at Mount Saint Vincent University, and specializes in psychoeducational assessment and consultation with children, teens, and adults. Prior to completing a PhD in Clinical Psychology at Dalhousie University, Dr. McGonnell worked as a teacher for 17 years, primarily with children and adolescents with learning disabilities. She has a particular interest in the assessment of learning disabilities and ADHD. Dr. McGonnell is committed to ensuring that assessment findings are clearly communicated and that appropriate and helpful recommendations are developed in consultation with individuals, families, and other professionals working with them.



Teresa (Terry) Bennett, M.D., FRCPC, PH.D (Child Psychiatrist)

Dr. Bennett is the Co-Director (clinical lead) of McMaster Autism Research Team (MacART), and a child psychiatrist at McMaster Children's Hospital, a core member of the Offord Centre for Child Studies. She is the McMaster lead investigator for the RILISE and TIDE multi-site randomized controlled trials of novel ASD medications. Dr. Bennett recently received funding to implement the Family Check up, a targeted prevention and intervention program addressing childhood emotional and behaviour problems.

Knowledge User And Industry Partner

Annie Baert, NS Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Annie Baert is the Nova Scotia provincial Learning Disabilities Consultant. Annie has been in this role for five years which is part of the Student Services Division within the Student Equity and Support Branch in the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. Prior to this Annie was the Executive Director of the Learning Disabilities Association of Nova Scotia. In this role she developed and advocated for access to evidence-based programming and services for children, youth, and adults with learning disabilities.



Jim Fitt, CEO of Velssoft® Training Materials

In 1988 Jim Fitt founded Velssoft, an e-learning company devoted to creating and delivering effective and engaging training materials for trainers and instructors. A private company headquartered in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, Velssoft has powered more than 9000 clients in over 90 countries. Velssoft currently has 350 courses and over 1.3 million online courses assigned to learners, making Velssoft among the world's most trusted brands in the development and delivery of training content. Velssoft has won numerous accolades and awards, the most recent being Exporter of the Year (2013), awarded by the province of Nova Scotia.