

Scottish Rite searching for volunteers to help children with dyslexia in Muskoka

No teaching background needed to help children learn

Community Oct 30, 2017 by [Mary Beth Hartill](#) Bracebridge Examiner



Ken Veitch (left), Bruce Fraser (third from left) and Don Coates give Scottish rite Charitable Foundation of Canada National executive chair Matthew Todd a tour of the satellite learning centre in Bracebridge for children with dyslexia. - Mary Beth Hartill/Metroland

BRACEBRIDGE — It has been two years since the Dyslexic Learning Centre opened in Bracebridge and the group is still searching for volunteers.

The Muskoka centre is a satellite office of the Barrie location and the first of its kind for the Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation of Canada Learning Centres for Children. The foundation's national executive director Matthew Todd of Dartmouth, N.S., paid the Muskoka site, located in the basement of the Pinegrove Fellowship Church in Bracebridge, a visit on Friday, Oct. 13. He was impressed by what he saw.

“Our biggest problem has always been recruiting tutors,” he said of the centres across the country. “It’s still a major concern of all of our centres.”

Todd highlights that 45 to 50 per cent of the prison population are dyslexic and that a tutor can play a big part in changing a child’s fate.

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Matthew Todd

“It says there that they are falling out of the system,” he said. “It’s our fault as a society.”

He said once perspective tutors come through the door and see the work that they do and the strong impact they can make on children’s lives they get a lineup of people willing to help. This has not happened in Muskoka as of yet. But, he said they have to be honest with perspective volunteers. There is 45 hours of specialized training and are expected to work with the child until they graduate from the three-year program.

“But once they’re in, they are keepers,” he said.

They are not looking for people with teaching backgrounds. In fact, Todd had an extensive career in banking.

“We’re all on a level playing field in this specialize way of training,” he said. “You’ve just got to be prepared to work hard and volunteer with the child. But it’s sure worth it.”

At the end of the day, it is seeing children who once struggled in school because of dyslexia excelling and embracing school and life as they never have before.

To learn more about the program visit barrievalleyscottishrite.com, contact Ross Martin at ross.martin3@hotmail.ca or call 705-325-1708 or email Ken Veitch at kcveitch@muskoka.com.