

FUNDING AWARDED FOR PARTNERSHIP AIMED AT SUPPORTING AT-RISK UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Halifax, Nova Scotia – The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) has awarded \$199,721 to support a partnership project that targets university students at risk for academic difficulties because of a history of unidentified reading difficulties.

The Partnership, led by Dr. Hélène Deacon, Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology and Neuroscience at Dalhousie University, has received this three-year funding to foster the *Partnership for Student Success: Identifying and supporting at-risk university students*.

The partnership is designed to evaluate the effectiveness of outreach to and support of university students at risk for academic difficulty *before* these difficulties occur.

The project

The project is targeting specifically university students with a history of reading difficulties. Universities currently have few, if any resources, to identify these students but they do, however, have a whole host of academic and advising supports on offer. The partnership will test a new tool, previously used primarily for research purposes, for its potential to connect university students who are at risk for academic difficulties with available support services. Students who are at risk for academic difficulties because of a history of unidentified reading difficulties could benefit from this proactive outreach and support. The partnership is designed to test this possibility.

Project partners

The Partnership brings together a cross-sector, pan-Canadian network of Student Services units, educational psychology researchers, and dissemination organizations. The research team consists of Drs. Rauno Parrila (University of Alberta), Jamie Metsala (Mount Saint Vincent University), Sonya Major (Acadia University), and Krista Ritchie (IWK Health Centre).

The knowledge dissemination team consists of the National Adult Literacy Database (NALD) Inc.; the Learning Disabilities Association of Nova Scotia; ABC Life Literacy Canada; and the Canadian Association of College and University Student Services. Together we will develop and disseminate effective practices in the identification and support of university students at risk for academic difficulties.

The Language & Literacy Lab, directed by Dr. Hélène Deacon, is an active and internationally regarded research lab at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Reading is an essential skill in today's economy. Our research team is dedicated to learning how children and adults read so that we can support optimal outcomes for all. For more information, visit <http://lanqlitlab.psychology.dal.ca/>

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Dalhousie University contact:

Dr. Hélène Deacon

Associate Professor, Department of Psychology and Neuroscience

Tel.: 902-494-2538

Email: helene.deacon@dal.ca

NALD contact:

Christy English

Editor and Stakeholder Liaison

Tel: 506-462-5034 or toll-free: 1-800-720-6253

Email: christy.english@nald.ca