



CANADIAN STUTTERING ASSOCIATION  
**2017 CONFERENCE**  
October 28, 2017  Toronto Canada

University of Toronto Campus  
Innis Town Hall, 2 Sussex Avenue  
Toronto ON

Thanks to our sponsors:



Harmonize for Speech



## DAY AT A GLANCE

**8:30 AM to 9:00 AM** - Registration, coffee & muffins

**9:00 AM to 9:15 AM** - Opening Remarks *Town Hall Theatre*

**9:15 AM to 10:15 AM** - Workshops:

- A.** The Fun in Letting Go: Improv for Everyone - Samuel Dunsiger and Brian Jason Woo *Town Hall Theatre*
- B.** The McGuire Program, an Information Session - Panel *Room 222*
- C.** Using Williams' Normal Talking Model to Help Children Make Speech Change - Caroline Bredeson *Room 223*
- D.** Update your Operating System: An examination of your core beliefs about stuttering - Richard Holmes *Room 312*

**10:15 AM to 10:30 AM** - Break

**10:30 AM to 11:30 AM** - Keynote Speaker, Kim Block *Town Hall Theatre*

**11:30 AM to 12:15 PM** - Lunch Provided

**12:15 PM to 1:15 PM** - Workshops:

- A.** Stuttering as a Disability and Human Rights - Dianne Wintermute *Town Hall Theatre*
- B.** Stuttering Research and Perspectives in Speech Therapy - Lisa Wilder, *Room 222*
- C.** Family Matters, Part 1 (for parents) - Eeva Stierwalt and Carla Di Domenicantonio *Room 223*
- D.** Family Matters, Part 1 (for teens and young adults) - Alexandra D'Agostino *Room 312*

**1:15 PM to 1:30 PM** - Break

**1:30 PM to 2:30 PM** - Workshops:

- A.** Performance as Therapy/Therapy as Performance - David Stones *Town Hall Theatre*
- B.** Stuttering Treatments: Perspectives from a Speech-Language Pathologist Who Stutters - Sudipa Bhattacharyya *Room 222*
- C.** Covert Stuttering - Better to Pass as Fluent or Embrace Acceptance? - Onyeka Onochie *Room 223*
- D.** Family Matters, Part 2 (for parents, teens, and young adults) - Alexandra D'Agostino, Eeva Stierwalt, and Carla Di Domenicantonio *Room 312*

**2:30 PM to 2:45 PM** - Break

**2:45 PM to 3:45 PM** - Workshops:

- A.** To Speak or Not to Speak? Stand-Up from a Comedian who Stutters - Joze Piranian *Town Hall Theatre*
- B.** Stuttering and Studying - Audrey Bigras *Room 222*
- C.** An Introduction to Cluttering - Carla Di Domenicantonio *Room 223*
- D.** Breaking the Self-Imposed Silence in our Personal and Professional Lives - Bassel Atallah *Room 312*

**3:45 PM to 4:00 PM** - Break

**4:00 PM to 5:00 PM** - Open Mic *Town Hall Theatre*

**5:00 PM to 5:15 PM** - Closing Remarks *Town Hall Theatre*

## THE CSA CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

This conference was made possible by the volunteer CSA Conference Committee: Casey Kennedy, Program Coordinator and Emcee; Dan Leca, Venue and Audio Visual; Lisa Wilder, Graphics and Web; Carla Di Domenicantonio and Mary Wood, Registrations; Melina Etienne, Volunteers Coordinator; David Stones, Planning; Alexandra D'Agostino, Social media.

## CANADIAN STUTTERING ASSOCIATION

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Charity tax number: 830606943  
Corporation number: 429745-8

# CSA CONFERENCE AGENDA

## MORNING SCHEDULE



**8:30 am** Registration/Sign-In Begins, coffee and muffins served

**9:00 am to 9:15 am** Opening Remarks by Casey Kennedy

TOWN HALL THEATRE

**9:15 am to 10:15 am** Simultaneous Workshops

**A. The Fun in Letting Go:  
Improv for Everyone**

TOWN HALL THEATRE

Samuel Dunsiger and Brian  
Jason Woo

Have you ever written a script on what you're going to say before ordering at a restaurant or making a phone call? As people who stutter, we often have to think about what we're going to say as well as how we're saying it. This workshop is for anyone who wants to put aside the planning and find out how fun living in the moment can be. We're going to explore how improv can benefit us as people who stutter. Improv games will focus on being completely in the moment and reacting with acceptance rather than judgment. The only requirements are to be supportive of each other and be willing to have a good time.

**Samuel Dunsiger** is a writer and marketer from Toronto. He has attended numerous NSA conferences in the U.S.. This year, he started taking improv classes through Second City Toronto, has performed in one show and hopes to perform more. He credits improv with having benefits for anxiety and stuttering.

**Brian Woo** is an improv actor & body language trainer-in-training. He began his improv journey in 2010 at Durham Improv and Bad Dog Theatre. He has performed at Black Swan Comedy, the Abilities Centre, the Disability Pride Celebration and the Walk for Stuttering Awareness.

**B. The McGuire Program -  
An Information Session**

ROOM 222

Panel

The McGuire Program is an intensive therapy course developed in the 1990s. It has since helped thousands of people who stutter world-wide with its non-traditional methods. A panel of three people who have successfully completed the course will speak about their experience with it and answer questions.

Workshop host **Lisa Wilder** and panel members **Tim Pierce**, **Carolina Ayala** and **Joze Piranian** are all people who stutter who have completed the McGuire Program.

**C. Using Williams' Normal  
Talking Model to Help  
Children Make Speech  
Change**

ROOM 223

Caroline Bredeson

While intended primarily for speech-language pathologists working with children, parents will find this approach helpful. Williams' Normal Talking model is a way of learning about the speech mechanism. The appeal of this approach is the hope it engenders: if we stutter 20% of the time, that means we talk normally 80% of the time; the element of choice introduced—we can choose to react differently to stuttering once we know what we are doing; and the ease of translating this into therapy goals which make sense to children. This interactive workshop will involve audience members in "exploring" the parameters themselves, and provide practical tips for making speech change with children who stutter.

**Caroline Bredeson** is a speech-language pathologist in Ottawa whose practice has focused on treatment of stuttering over the past four years. She has had extensive training through the Stuttering Foundation of America and enjoys teaching and providing supervision for SLP students.

**D. Update your Operating  
System: An examination  
of your core beliefs  
about stuttering**

ROOM 312

Richard Holmes

What is the nature of the stutter experience? What are the beliefs we hold about stuttering that hold us back from our full potential? This workshop will aim to unpack difficult questions about stuttering in order to gain a fresh perspective on it, and leave with sense of empowerment and direction. PWS can make informed decisions about how to handle difficult speaking situations, and enter speech therapy with deliberate purpose and be unapologetically confident in the way we stutter. You will have the chance to learn from others whose lives are affected by stuttering with diverse opinions and backgrounds, all while exploring your own thoughts and feelings in a safe and supportive environment.

**Richard Holmes** is a person who stutters studying to become a speech-language pathologist at the University of Toronto. He is an award winning public speaker and has given a TED Talk on stuttering. If you want to push your comfort zone and get a little silly, his workshops are for you.

**10:15 am to 10:30 am** Break

**10:30 am to 11:30 am** KEYNOTE SPEECH: Kim Block, author



The CSA is pleased to present our 2017 keynote speaker, **Kim Block**. Kim has been a positive voice for people who stutter for two decades and has presented workshops at conferences and events in Ontario, Montreal, British Columbia and the United States. She has had exposure in the media for her delightful children's book, *Adventures of a Stuttering Superhero*, and for raising funds for a person who stutters in Africa. In her previous position as president of the British Columbia Association of People who Stutter, she helped facilitate camp sessions, support groups and community outreach to help educate the public about stuttering. She still organizes gatherings for people who stutter in BC, and created a website for people who stutter and parents of children who stutter. Kim lives with her husband, David, and their two children in Burnaby, BC.

## AFTERNOON SCHEDULE

12:15 pm to 1:15 pm

### Simultaneous Workshops

#### A. Stuttering as a Disability and Human Rights

TOWN HALL THEATRE  
Dianne Wintermute

In this workshop, we will present an overview of the Human Rights Code of Ontario; disability as a protected ground under the Code; how disability is interpreted; and the right to appropriate accommodation in services, employment, education and other areas. We will review relevant case law on the issue of stuttering. We intend to also canvass how stuttering has been considered and what remedies have been ordered in other jurisdictions.

**Dianne** has been a permanent lawyer with ARCH Disability Law Centre since 2009, following a 2 year secondment at ARCH from 2003 - 2005. From 1991 - 2009, Dianne was the Executive Director of East Toronto Community Legal Services. Her practice has focused on the intersection of poverty and disability in a variety of legal areas. She has represented persons with disabilities and/or the organizations that support them before tribunals and boards and at all levels of court, including the Supreme Court of Canada.

#### B. Stuttering Research and Perspectives in Speech Therapy

ROOM 222  
Lisa Wilder

Firstly, this workshop will look at brain research and the use of pharmaceuticals to control stuttering. What does research tell us about how a brain "wired for stuttering" impacts other functions? Then the history of speech therapy and new perspectives in the field will be explored. Is there a "best" stuttering treatment? What skills should a speech therapist treating the adult stutterer bring to the table in order to bring about lasting change?

**Lisa Wilder** is an artist and graphic designer. She has been on the CSA board of directors since 2007 and also was involved in the British Columbia Association of People who Stutter in the 1990s.

#### C. Family Matters: Part 1 for Parents

ROOM 223  
Eeva Stierwalt and Carla Di Domenicantonio

Parents will come together to share stories and offer support to one another, sharing each other's parenting journeys. Discussion will touch on topics that uniquely relate to parenting a teen or young adult who stutters (e.g., dating, college/university experiences, work interviews, etc.) Participants will be invited to generate questions for their children as a group in preparation for part two of this workshop. This workshop is suited to first-timers and conference veterans.

**Eeva Stierwalt** is the mother and supporter of Alexandra D'Agostino, with whom she has attended 7 NSA conferences and led several workshops for parents. Eeva is an IT professional at the London Public Library, and is Past-Chair of the Innovative Users Group with over 1,000 library members worldwide.

**Carla Di Domenicantonio** is a registered Speech-Language Pathologist (Ontario), who has had a career-long interest in stuttering and related fluency disorders. Carla has worked in hospital settings, and currently practices in her private office in Burlington.

#### D. Family Matters: Part 1 for Teens and Young Adults

ROOM 312  
Alexandra D'Agostino

Teens and young adults who stutter will come together to share stories and offer support to one another, sharing each other's stuttering journey. Facilitated by a young adult who stutters, discussion will touch on topics that uniquely relate to growing up with a stutter. Participants will be invited to generate questions for parents as a group. Fun will also be on the agenda! This session is suited to first-timers and conference veterans.

**Alexandra D'Agostino** is 24 years old and recently obtained her BA from Wilfred Laurier University with a combined honours in Anthropology and Psychology, and is now a student at Nipissing University's Nursing Scholar Practitioner program in Toronto. She has stuttered since she was seven, and is on the CSA's Board of Directors. She is also involved with the National Stuttering Association in the US.

1:15 pm to 2:30 pm

### Break

1:30 pm to 2:30 pm

### Simultaneous Workshops

#### A. Performance as Therapy/ Therapy as Performance

TOWN HALL THEATRE  
David Stones

A surprising number of the world's greatest orators have been people who stutter. How can this be? The link between optimal fluency and deep diaphragmatic breathing, careful enunciation, intonation and word emphasis has been known to actors and stage performers for years. As follow up to his successful "Toward Improved Fluency" workshop at the 2016 conference, David explores these concepts and leads participants through a series of interactive exercises guaranteed to get your blood flowing, your potential showing and your voice glowing!

**David Stones** is a mostly retired business executive, a successful consultant, and a person who stutters. He's now taking a deep breath as a poet, performer and spoken word artist. He transformed his first book of poetry, Infinite Sequels, into an acclaimed one man show. David has two new poetry collections in the works and performs regularly as a feature poet throughout the GTA and southern Ontario. He's a member of the League of Canadian Poets and the Ontario Poetry Society and resides in both Toronto and Stratford.

#### B. Stuttering Treatments: Perspectives from a Speech-Language Pathologist Who Stutters

ROOM 222  
Sudipa Bhattacharyya

This is a presentation on various stuttering treatments, from someone who is both a Speech-Language Pathologist as well as a person who stutters. The presentation will be followed by an interactive discussion during which we will discuss various topics such as personal experiences of being people who stutter, experiences with speech treatment, different aspects of stuttering, and "tips" to bring back to Speech-Language Pathologists from people who stutter.

**Sudipa Bhattacharyya** is a school board Speech-Language Pathologist. She is also a person who stutters, who has worked on her speech using several treatment strategies. She currently works with children with a variety of challenges including stuttering, and educates the adults in their lives too.

**C. Covert Stuttering –  
Better to Pass as Fluent  
or Embrace Acceptance?**

ROOM 223

Onyeka Onochie

This workshop will explore the struggle that people who stutter face in the workplace and at school. We will discuss the desire to appear fluent so as to avoid discrimination and the appearance of inferiority. Audience members will share experiences, strategies, and outcomes for passing as fluent versus advertising/disclosing that they stutter. This workshop will explore the emotional toll that people who pass as fluent feel on a daily basis.

**Onyeka Onochie** is a person who stutters, and has been a practicing pharmacist for over 7 years. Onyeka graduated from McMaster University in 2004 with a Bachelor of Engineering, and The University of Toronto with a Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy in 2009.

**D. Family Matters: Part 2,  
Parents and Children  
Come Together**

ROOM 312

Alexandra D'Agostino,  
Eeva Stierwalt, and Carla  
Di Domenicantonio

This workshop provides an opportunity for parents, teens, and young adults to continue discussions initiated in Part 1, and to collectively answer the questions received from the other group. Answers will be shared and discussed during the second half of the session, when parents and children join each other.

Bios above.

2:30 pm to 2:45 pm

Break

2:45 pm to 3:45 pm

Simultaneous Workshops

**A. To Speak or Not to  
Speak? Stand-Up from a  
Comedian who Stutters**

TOWN HALL THEATRE

Joze Piranian

This workshop will begin with Joze's personal story (which won the inspirational public speaking competition 'Speaker Slam' in May 2017) as well as a discussion of why humour is so important (a speech that won a club-level Toastmasters humour contest.) Joze will then guide participants through an introduction to stand-up comedy and the basics of joke writing, and participants will be encouraged to come up with one joke about their own stutter. Volunteers will then have the opportunity to step out of their comfort zone and perform their own stuttering joke in front of the crowd. Joze will also perform some of his own stand-up comedy material.

**Joze Piranian** is a lifelong stutterer on a mission to destroy his fears one stage at a time. From avoiding speaking to actively embracing the challenge through public speaking, stand-up comedy or interacting with strangers, Joze's journey is one of self-acceptance, paradigm shift and perseverance.

**B. Stuttering and Studying**

ROOM 222

Audrey Bigras

Are you a student? Do you stutter? You are at the right place! This workshop is a safe place to discuss and share our stories, success, issues, and challenges related to stuttering in the school environment (high school, college, university, etc.)

**Audrey Bigras** is a member of the Board of Directors of the Association des Bègues du Canada (ABC), a francophone stuttering association based in Montreal. In 2015, she launched her stuttering blog, Advertising Stories, and she enjoys communicating about stuttering! This is Audrey's third CSA conference.

**C. An Introduction to  
Cluttering**

ROOM 223

Carla Di Domenicantonio

This session will provide a historical account of cluttering as a distinct fluency disorder that often "teams up" with stuttering. After decades of being ignored by researchers and experts in the field of speech-language pathology, interest in this less known fluency disorder has re-awakened. What do we know about cluttering? How is it different from stuttering? What ties the two together? The presenter will aim to provide answers.

**Carla Di Domenicantonio** is a registered Speech-Language Pathologist (Ontario) and Canadian representative for the International Cluttering Association. She has had a career-long interest in stuttering and other fluency disorders. Carla currently practices in a private office in Burlington.

**D. Breaking the Self-  
Imposed Silence in our  
Personal and Professional  
Lives**

ROOM 312

Bassel Atallah

In the first part of this workshop, Bassel will speak about his experiences growing up as a child and teenager who stuttered, and his decision in adulthood to take speech therapy to pursue his ambitions of becoming a teacher. Bassel will share the challenges he faced during his early teaching days. The second part of the workshop will be an interactive conversation with the audience to explore practical everyday routines and strategies that help in confidence building, refuting negative self-talk, and finding our personal comfort zones in public speaking, whether that be in a professional setting, giving a toast at a party, or sharing a joke with a group of friends.

**Bassel Atallah** has had a speech impediment since childhood, but he only began attending speech therapy as an adult after deciding to pursue a career in teaching. He now teaches at Dawson College and McGill University, and he regularly gives classes in public speaking at both schools.

3:45 pm to 3:55 pm

Break

4:00 pm to 5:00 pm

Open Mic

TOWN HALL THEATRE

5:00 pm to 5:15 pm

Closing Remarks