

**Title of Presentation:** Paying Attention to Inattention: Will understanding the neuroscience of attention help clinicians and educators help inattentive youngsters?

**Abstract:** Inattention in the classroom is not as noticeable as disruptive behavior such as hyperactive and impulsive behavior and rarely triggers referral for assessment and service. However, there is consistent evidence that inattention has an insidious effect on literacy and numeracy outcomes. Moreover, academic interventions are less effective for children with attention problems than for children with academic problems only. So what can be done to increase recognition of these children and to promote better literacy and numeracy outcomes? In this presentation, I will first summarize research findings on the significance of inattention in the classroom. Next, I will highlight recent advances in the neuroscience of attention and discuss to what extent this knowledge might help clinicians and educators recognize, assess, and support these youngsters. I will conclude by describing our school-based research project in which we work with teachers to help make accommodations in instructional practices to support students with attention problems.

## **Biographical Sketch (2007)**

**Rosemary Tannock, PhD**

Rosemary Tannock, PhD, holds a Tier 1 *Canada Research Chair in Special Education and Adaptive Technology* at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education in the University of Toronto. Also, she is a *Senior Scientist* at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, Canada, a *Professor of Psychiatry* and *Professor of Special Education & Adaptive Instruction* at the University of Toronto.

Her clinical research program investigates the causes and treatment of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), with a specific focus on its cognitive manifestations and overlap with learning disabilities. Most recently she and her colleagues have developed an integrated set of multimedia resources on ADHD/Inattention for teachers that include a public-domain website [[www.teachadhd.ca](http://www.teachadhd.ca)], which houses most of the resources. Dr Tannock and her colleagues are currently collaborating with several school boards in Ontario, Canada to investigate the effectiveness of a sustained Teacher Professional Development Program (based on these materials) in terms of teachers' instructional practices and the academic and behavioural outcomes for children with severe inattention/ADHD.

She received a Distinguished Achievement Award from the Association of Educational Publishers for her article, "Reconceptualizing ADHD," in *Educational Leadership* (November 2001). In the 2004-2005 academic year, she was an invited Fellow in an

International “Think-Tank” on the causes and treatment of ADHD, held in Oslo, Norway at the Centre for Advanced Study at the Norwegian Academy of Sciences and Letters. During the 2006-2007 academic year she has been invited to give a series of workshops and seminars on the cognitive and academic aspects of ADHD and their implications for assessment and classroom instruction, to professionals in health and education in Norway, Greece, Iceland, China, Singapore, and Australia. She has over 100 peer-reviewed publications and has contributed chapters on ADHD and Learning Disabilities to major texts used internationally.

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