

Connections

Linking School Professionals Who Support Student Achievement

Connections, Fall 2006

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BACK TO SCHOOL!

By Jo Anne Gearhart, Editor

Welcome back to another school year! This year marks the **eighth** year of the CDE Connections newsletter. And just to review, the "Connections Group" at CDE is made up of the following school personnel: social workers, nurses, psychologists, educational audiologists, educational interpreters, occupational therapists, physical therapists, adapted physical educators, orientation and mobility specialists, assistive technology specialists, speech language pathologists, and school counselors—all seeking to provide an optimum learning environment for Colorado students to succeed. The purpose of the newsletter is to inform and share the expertise of all of our professions.

Our work takes place in public schools. To get an idea of the magnitude of this endeavor, here are a few useful statistics. The nature of public schools in the U. S. is **changing**. Public school enrollment Pre-K-12 was 49 million in 2006. The racial and ethnic makeup of U. S. public schools is 57 percent white, 16 percent black, 19 percent Hispanic, 7 percent other. Total 2003 education spending nationally was \$450 billion, and sources of public spending was Federal: 8.5 percent, States: 48.7 percent and Local: 42.8 percent. All of these statistics represent marked **changes** from the past. And there is no reason to believe that **continued change** in public education will be part of our future.

As we move forward to catch up and get ahead of the change, keep in mind the importance of informing the public and all education stakeholders of the importance of our work. Supporting student achievement is our mantra and will continue to be at the forefront of our professional development, strategies, and practice.

IN SCHOOLS ACROSS THE U.S. THE MELTING POT OVERFLOWS



Some 55 million youngsters are enrolling for classes in the nation's schools this fall, making this the largest group of students in America's history and, in ethnic terms, the most dazzlingly diverse since waves of European immigrants washed through the public schools a century ago. Millions of baby boomers and foreign-born parents are enrolling their children, sending a demographic bulge through the schools that is driving a surge in classroom construction. It is also causing thousands of districts to hire additional qualified teachers at a time when the Bush administration is working to increase teacher qualifications across the board. Many school systems have begun recruiting overseas for instructors in hard-to-staff subjects like special education and advanced math. If trends continue as they have for 30 years, minority students appear likely to outnumber white students within a decade or so. In six states -- California, Hawaii, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico and Texas -- they already do.



PARENT GUIDES FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS

Read early and read often. The early years are critical to developing a lifelong love of reading. It's never too early to begin reading to your child! The tips below offer some fun ways you can help your child become a happy and confident reader. Try a new tip each week. See what works best for your child. NEA's Read Across America partners Reading Rockets and Colorín Colorado have created parent guides for non-English speakers in Spanish, Haitian Creole, Arabic, Russian, Traditional Chinese, Hmong, Vietnamese, Tagalog and Korean. Download these free guides and share them in your communities. Other parent tip sheets are also available for parents of Kindergartners, First Graders, Second Graders and Third Graders.

<http://www.readingrockets.org/article/7833>



HELP FOR THE CHILD WHO SAYS NO TO SCHOOL

Refusal to go to school is not an uncommon problem; up to one-quarter of children do it at some point. While you might expect the problem to be severest when a child first enters school, it occurs most often and hits hardest at ages 10 to 13. At this age children typically leave the nurturing environment of elementary school and are thrust into the chaos of middle school and the confusion of dealing with so many teachers.

Bullying, often perpetrated by young teens who are unsure of themselves, is one of the most common causes of this problem. Common symptoms of school refusal behavior may include aggressive behavior, clinging to a parent or other adult, defiance, excessive assurance-seeking behavior, refusal to get up or get ready for school, running away from school or home, or having temper tantrums and crying. Studies have shown that failing to deal with school refusal behavior can have serious consequences. In the short term, children who won't go to school decline academically, become alienated from friends and cause family conflicts and financial and legal problems. Common long-term problems include dropping out of school, delinquent behaviors, economic deprivation, social isolation, marital problems and difficulty holding a job. Failing to receive the needed treatment can lead in later life to problems like anxiety disorder, depression or personality disorders.



For more information, go to www.aafp.org/afp/20031015/1555.html



The IDEA 2004 Regulations Are Out!!

The official regulations for IDEA 2004 were finally released at the beginning of August! They can be accessed at: <http://www.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/idea2004.html>.

Much of the new thinking about the identification of specific learning disabilities (SLD) that was in the proposed regulations has been included although, in some cases, the language has been changed. For example, here is one of the sections describing the new requirements for SLD and Response to Intervention:

Section 300.307 on Specific learning disabilities is as follows:

(a) General. A State must adopt, consistent with §300.309, criteria for determining whether a child has a specific learning disability as defined in §300.8(c)(10). In addition, the criteria adopted by the State--

(1) Must not require the use of a severe discrepancy between intellectual ability and achievement for determining whether a child has a specific learning disability, as defined in §300.8(c)(10);

(2) Must permit the use of a process based on the child's response to scientific, research-based intervention; and

(3) May permit the use of other alternative research-based procedures for determining whether a child has a specific learning disability, as defined in §300.8(c)(10).

(b) Consistency with State criteria. A public agency must use the State criteria adopted pursuant to paragraph (a) of this section in determining whether a child has a specific learning disability.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1221e-3; 1401(30); 1414(b)(6))

In Colorado, portions of state statutes have already been changed (as of April, 2006) to align with IDEA 2004. The previous category of Perceptual Communicative Disorder (PCD) has officially been changed to Specific Learning Disability (SLD.) An SLD Guidelines Committee at CDE has already begun working on interpreting the new regulations and developing guidelines for special educators and related services providers to use in determining special education eligibility using an RTI approach.

The areas that will need to be addressed for SLD identification under the propose Colorado Rules will include:

- Academic skill deficit(s) and evidence of related cognitive processing deficit(s),
- Inadequate rate of progress in response to research-based instruction/intervention
- Exclusionary factors and the
- Establishment of a need for special education.

In addition to the SLD identification components, the new guidelines will include procedures for universal screening, progress monitoring and documentation, parent involvement, and the individual problem solving process. The changing roles of related services providers will also be addressed.

Harnessing the Power of Social Work in Schools!

October 6-7, 2006
The Village at Breckenridge
Breckenridge, Colorado

Sponsored by: Colorado School Work Committee
Colorado Department of Education
www.cde.state.co.us/ssw



Featured Keynotes:

Kay Cessna, M.A.

“The Power of Remembering What We Do”

&

Dr. John W. Maag

“I Can’t Make You: Attitude Shifts and Derailments for Resistance”

Other sessions include:

Understanding Mexican-American Students:
Strategies for Academic Success

Trauma and the Child’s Brain

Mental Health Services in an RTI Model

Science of Brain Chemistry and Youth Behaviors

Animal Assisted Therapy in Schools

Using the Peace4Kids/Aggression Replacement Model

Brief Solution Focused Therapy with Children and Families

Supporting the Explosive Child

School Social Workers as Leaders in School

Making It Safe2Tell for the Youth of Colorado

Using the Peace4Kids/Aggression

Replacement Training

From Breakdown to Breakthrough: Spirit
of Inquiry in Conflict

Lodging Information: Call 1-888-525-1787 for reservations and mention the CO School Social Work Conference group code **(BC2CCSC)** for discount rates. Make reservations by **September 14th** for special rates.

Registration Information: See www.cde.state.co.us/ssw. If you have questions, contact Kim Hubbard @ 303-866-6690. Registration deadline: Sept. 25th

*** Please send your nomination for the School Social Worker of Distinction Award —see next page.***

DEADLINE IS: September 25, 2006

NASW COLORADO CHAPTER 2006 ANNUAL AWARD

(Award to be presented during the School Social Work Conference in October)

NOMINATION FORM

School Social Worker of Distinction

Awarded to a degreed school social worker for outstanding service to the community and demonstration of social work beliefs, principles, standards and ethics. Please encourage students, parents, and community members input for nomination write up. Also, consider the following criteria: 1) Identification with the profession; 2) Commitment to Clientele; 3) Competency in Field of Practice; 4) Community Involvement & Participation; 5) Adherence to Social Work Values & Ethics; 6) Leadership Roles; 7) Specific Contributions made to the Colorado Chapter. Recipient does not have to be a member of NASW.

NAME _____
(Nominee)

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____

ZIP _____ HOME PHONE _____ BUS. PHONE _____

E-MAIL _____

Submitted by: _____ Title: _____

Phone: _____ Date: _____

Please email, mail or fax this completed form only to:
SSW Conference, c/o Kim Hubbard
Colo. Dept. of Education
201 East Colfax, #300
Denver, CO 80203
303/866-6811 (FAX)
hubbard_k@cde.state.co.us (Email) – Preferred format

*Sponsored by: The Colorado School Social Work Committee,
AGS Publishing, and CDE*

**THE USE AND INTERPRETATION OF THE BASC – 2
Behavior Assessment System for Children**

Developed by Cecil R. Reynolds, Ph.D. & Randy Kamphaus, Ph.D.



Presented by Beth Doll, Ph.D.

Professor of School Psychology, University of Nebraska

Saturday, October 7, 2006

1:00pm – 5:30 pm

The Village at Breckenridge

535 S. Park Ave., Breckenridge, CO 80424

*** REGISTER EARLY - space is limited and
a \$25 deposit is required to reserve your seat ***

This workshop is intended for school social workers and school psychologists. The training will include: measurement basics, the BASC-2 and its components, scoring, interpretation, and intervention applications. BASC-2 is a Level C instrument for user qualifications. The expectation and requirement for new users is consultation from a trained BASC administrator on the scoring and interpretation of the instrument (until mastery). If you have questions, please contact Heather Hotchkiss – hhotchkiss@adams50.org

CDE continuing education hours will be available.

Training Materials will be provided by AGS, (if you have a BASC-2 Manual, please bring it.)

To register, completely fill out the form below and MAIL to:

Kim Hubbard at CDE, 201 E. Colfax, Room 300, Denver, CO 80203

Confirmations will not be sent, but you will be notified if the workshop is full.

For registration questions contact Hubbard_k@cde.state.co.us

Make \$25 deposit check to reserve a seat to: NASW-CSSWC.

Personal checks only! Deposits will be returned to participants at the training.

****Please print legibly!****

Name: _____

Social Worker: _____ Psychologist: _____

School District: _____ Phone: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Special Meals/Accommodations: _____

Colorado Speech Language Fall Conference

"Beyond Speech-Language Pathology: Working with Children with Challenging Behaviors"

*It takes a village to raise a child....
But it takes a team to make them thrive.
Empower your team with the tools to recapture the valuable time lost in managing
challenging behaviors of the children on your caseload.*

JOIN OUR KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:

**Dedre Werner, Ph.D. Psychologist at Children's Hospital Denver
and
Jeff Kupfer, Ph.D., BCBA Licensed Psychologist & Board certified Behavior Analyst**

as they explore the underlying issues that are common to children with behavioral issues and promote innovative solutions that will help your multidisciplinary team, parents and caregivers help your child to thrive.

Friday, October 27, 2006

8:00 AM to 5:00 PM
Denver Marriott
4900 S Syracuse, Denver, CO 80237



Registration Costs:

	<u>Before Sept.30</u>	<u>After Sept. 30</u>
CSHA Members	\$110.00	\$135.00
Non-CSHA Members	\$135.00	\$160.00
Two People (Bring a team member and send in two registrations together!)		
	\$160.00	\$185.00
Student	\$ 60.00	\$ 85.00

Continental breakfast and lunch included.

A special thanks to all CSHA members, CEU's are complimentary. For non-CSHA members the cost will be \$25.00 at the door for CEU's. Graduate credit available upon request at the door also.

To register or for more information go to our website: www.cshassoc.org or email us at cshassoc@aol.com or call the CSHA office at 720-733-9097



New Mental Health “Fast Facts” Now Available!

Three new titles have been added to CDE’s series on **Evidence Based Practices in School Mental Health**. New “Fast Facts” are now available for **Depression, Suicide Prevention and Youth Gambling**.

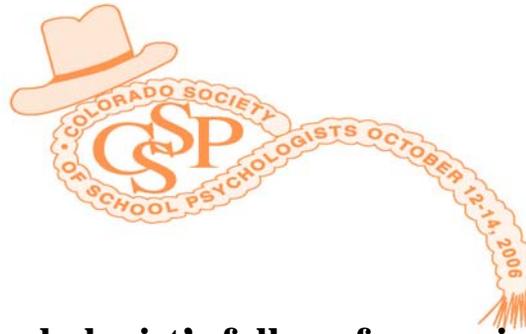
Because depression can affect as much as 28% of all adolescents, according to researchers at the University of Oregon, the “Fast Facts” sheet on **Depression** includes characteristics of childhood depression along with information on what schools can do. Four evidence based interventions, including the Penn Resiliency Program and Cognitive Therapy, are described in detail and additional resources and references are provided

Youth Suicide is also a serious concern in Colorado with as many as 7% of adolescents responding to the Youth Risk Behavior Survey reporting a suicide attempt. Populations that are especially at risk include Hispanic girls, African-American males aged 15-19, Gay, Lesbian and bisexual youth, and Native American youth. Research indicates that suicidal youth are not likely to seek help. Therefore, innovative approaches to screen and assess youth and help educators recognize suicide warning signs are ways to reach those youth who are most at risk. Six evidence-based suicide prevention programs are described on this “Fast Facts.”

Youth Gambling is receiving increasing attention and a 1996 study found that between 4.4% and 7.4% of adolescents exhibit compulsive or pathological gambling behaviors. This “Fast Facts” includes signs of youth gambling along with information on what schools can do to address youth problem gambling, along with resources and references.

Additional titles in the “Evidence Based Practices in School Mental Health Fast Facts” series include: Anger Management and Violence Prevention, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Behavior, Bully Proofing and Conflict Resolution, Social Skills and an overview of Evidence Based Practices. All of the Fast Facts are available on the CDE web site at www.cde.state.co.us.

**Life on the RtI Frontier:
Theory into Practice
October 12—14, 2006
Vail, Colorado**



The Colorado Society of School Psychologist’s fall conference is perfect for any educator today! While this remains the pre-eminent professional development opportunity for school psychologists, this conference will be perfect for RtI teams, RtI coaches, building administrators, district administrators, counselors, school social workers, general education teachers and special education teachers.

Our preconference speaker will be Randy Allison from Heartland AEA in Iowa. No one knows the ins-and-outs of an RtI environment better than Heartland AEA. In fact, Heartland AEA staff were instrumental in actually writing the RtI book (from NASDSE). Thursday October 12 will be devoted to “Moving from Theory to Practice Using a Response to Intervention Framework.” Iowa is the national model for services in an RtI system. Come learn from an expert in this field. You’ll get practical strategies you can use when you return to work on Monday!

The Colorado Department of Education is proud to present our Keynote speaker on **Friday, October 13, 2006**. “Reviewing the Core Components of RtI: Taking Stock of What’s in Place & Planning for Successful Implementation” by Beth Harn, Ph.D. We’ll discuss where your school is in implementing RtI and how to make RtI successful.

We’ll have over 30 more presentations that include districts, BOCES and schools implementing RtI and lessons learned. There will also be a variety of sessions that do not specifically address RtI but remain hot topics in education today.

Everyone is welcome! Go to www.cssponline.org (click on the conference tab) to learn more and to register online. If you have any questions, contact Sarah Cannon, CSSP Conference Facilitator at smwcannon@aol.com.



Colorado Society of School Psychologist's Conference Vail Is the Place to Be, October 12 – 14, 2006

By Sarah M. W. Cannon

Anyone involved or interested in new developments in education should make their way up to Vail, October 12 – 14 for the 2006 Colorado Society of School Psychologist's conference. This year's theme is "Life on the RtI Frontier: Theory into Practice", and the focus will be just that, Response to Intervention and what it means for you. While this conference remains the pre-eminent professional development opportunity for school psychologists in our state, it is open to anyone who is interested. If you didn't get your brochure in the mail, or even if you did, you can go to www.cssponline.org, check out the conference tab, get all the details and register online with a credit card.

CSSP is excited to bring you a fabulous offering of speakers and activities this year. Seven invited speakers and 31 other presentations will be featured throughout the 3-day conference. Thursday, October 12, will be devoted to "Moving from Theory to Practice Using a Response to Intervention Framework" with Randy Allison from Heartland AEA in Iowa as the Pre-Conference speaker. The session will talk about the day-to-day job of school psychologists in an RtI model. No one knows the ins-and-outs of an RtI environment better than Heartland AEA. In fact, Heartland AEA staff were instrumental in actually writing the RtI book (from NASDSE). Come learn from an expert in this field!

Randy Allison was Supervisor of School Psychological Services at Heartland for 15 years where he coordinated school psychology services for 55 public and 32 private school districts in central Iowa with a staff of 60 school psychologists. Randy has worked extensively with school psychology staff, other special education support staff, local district teachers, and school administrators on transformation and staff development at both the individual and systems level. In addition to his work at Heartland, Randy has consulted with a number of school districts in numerous states as they work toward the development of problem solving systems and data-based decision making activities.

Also on Thursday, October 12, will be an evening with Dr. Jerome Sattler. Dr. Sattler will discuss social, emotional and behavioral assessment based on his new book, *Assessment of Children: Behavioral, Social, and Clinical Foundations (Fifth Edition)*. We are honored to have Dr. Sattler joining us. Assessment will continue to play a large role in RtI, and no one knows assessment better than Dr. Sattler. His textbooks are the books professors of assessment have used for years.

The Colorado Department of Education is proud to present our Keynote speaker on Friday, October 13, 2006. "Reviewing the Core Components of RtI: Taking Stock of What's in Place & Planning for Successful Implementation" will be presented by Beth Harn, Ph.D. This session will pick up where Dr. Harn left off last year. Response to her was so overwhelming; we had to bring her back! Beth will give you practical tools you can use Monday morning when you return to work. She'll discuss where your school is in implementing RtI and how to make RtI successful. Dr. Harn is the Co-Principal Investigator and Coordinator for Project CIRCUITS (Center to Improve Reading Competence Using Intensive Treatments School-wide) at



EDUCATIONAL AUDIOLOGY NEWS

This year marks a big change for Colorado educational audiologists. They will miss the remarkable leadership of a true audiology pioneer, Cheryl Johnson. Cheryl raised the bar and set the standard for educational audiology services in the state, and she brought national and international attention to Colorado's statewide educational audiology network. Consequently, Colorado school-based audiologists are some of the most progressive, respected and involved members of their field, which is a tribute to her unwavering guidance and support.

Stepping in as the new CDE Audiology Consultant is Lisa Cannon, an educational audiologist with Denver Public Schools. She is excited about the new opportunity to represent audiologists on the Connections/Related Support Services Team at CDE, and to work closely with Sheryl Muir as she supports services to students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Lisa may be reached at Lisa_Cannon@dpsk12.org or 720.424.9154.

2006-07 Colorado Educational Audiology Meeting Dates

September 19, October 18, January 16, February 21, and May 15

(locations and topics to be determined)

NEW LISTSERV FOR SLPs SERVING STUDENTS WHO ARE DEAF/HARD OF HEARING

There is a new listserv for SLPs working with students who are deaf and hard of hearing, or for those who would like to lurk and learn. SLPs who contacted Sheryl Muir will be automatically added to the list by August 21. If you did not contact Sheryl, you may join this list by sending a blank email from the email address you wish to use for this listserv to slpdhh-join@web.cde.state.co.us. Thereafter, you can send emails to slpdhh@web.cde.state.co.us. If you encounter any difficulties joining or using the listserv, please contact Sheryl Muir at muir_s@cde.state.co.us or 303-866-6909.



LENDING LIBRARY ITEMS SPECIFIC TO ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY

The Colorado Services for Children with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss has a lending library available to persons working with children and youth who are deafblind and/or who have significant support needs. The library is housed at the Colorado Department of Education. Information about the inventory and the ordering procedures can be found on the project website at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-Deafblind.asp>

The library has the following O&M publications:

- Care and Feeding of the Long White Cane: Instructions in Cane Travel for Blind People
- Orientation and Mobility: A Family Program for Developing Travel Skills in the Community
- Preschool O&M Screening.
- Standing On My Own Two Feet: a Step-by-Step Guide to Designing and Constructing Simple Individually Tailored Adaptive Mobility Devices for Preschool-age Children Who are Visually Impaired
- Mobility Training Curriculum for Students Who Are Deaf and Blind, by Clifford Black
- O&M Resources, Part 1: Overview, Curriculum and Teaching Activities
- O&M for Visually Impaired Students
- The Road To Freedom: A Parent's Guide to Prepare the Blind Child to Travel Independently
- Independence Without Sight or Sound: Suggestions for Practitioners Working with Deaf-Blind Adults
- Travel Tales: A Mobility Storybook
- O&M for the Visually Impaired.
- Foundations of Orientation and Mobility
- Get Up and Go!: Fun Ideas to Help Visually Impaired Children to Move Confidently
- Imagining the Possibilities: Creative Approaches to O&M Instruction
- Teaching O & M in the Schools: An Instructor's Companion
- Orientation and Mobility Techniques: A Guide for the Practitioner

If there are recommendations for other books to be added to the lending library specific to the topic of O&M, please be in touch with Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us In addition to the lending library, Tanni now has a copy of ACVREP O&M Certification Examination Study Guide in her office library that can be checked out through her.

O&M WORKLOAD FORMULA GUIDELINES

Over the summer months, a small group of certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists met to draft workload guidelines. The document is ready to be piloted among the work group members to determine its efficacy across different caseloads and providers. It is anticipated that the guidelines will be shared at the spring 2007 annual O&M Conference. For more information, contact Tanni Anthony at (303) 866-6681 or anthony_t@cde.state.co.us

Educational Interpreter Update

By Ali Boyle, Educational Interpreter Coordinator

I hope this finds you all rested and off to a great start of the new school year. We have been working hard planning the upcoming Symposium on Deafness, Language and Learning which will be hosted at the Cheyenne Mountain Resort in Colorado Springs November 17-19, 2006. We are pleased to announce that your feedback has been heard and the 7.5 hours skills workshop will be held on Saturday, November 18th. Be sure to get your registration in early as there will be a cap on attendance and a registration deadline date. We also encourage you to attend on Sunday as Peter Cook will be performing and we will be presenting the Educational Interpreter of the Year award. Send in your nominations for your deserving peers.

The dates have been set for the EIPA skills test this year and there will be five opportunities. They are as follows: October 14-15, January 6-7, February 10-11, March 31-April 1, and May 5-6. To register and to find the location, visit the website at www.ed.arizona.edu/ask12. The cost of the skills test is \$250. The EIPA written test windows are the months of September, February, May, August, and November. There are several pre-approved proctors around the state who are working to set dates and locations for your convenience. Contact me if you have a special location request.

CDE sponsored a very successful Oral Transliterating basic training in June at CSDB. This Clarke School for the Deaf training was well attended; the advanced training will hopefully be scheduled for October. The feedback from participants in June was extremely positive and we hope to repeat this training again next summer. This training can benefit interpreters who work with students who use speechreading only or simultaneous communication.

CRID has set up a mentoring program for interpreters called Mentoring For Everyone. They will be offering training and a variety of mentors for

your convenience. CDE is working closely with them to provide some funding to help defray the cost to working educational interpreters. This is a wonderful opportunity especially for those who are working toward their state authorization. Watch for registration flyers.

We would like to provide workshops during the year so if you have ideas or suggestions please let us know. Lastly, the best way to get and send information about educational interpreting is to join the listserv and check your email regularly. To join, send a blank email to edinterp-join@web.cde.state.co.us from the email address you'll want to use for this. From then on, you can send emails to edinterp@web.cde.state.co.us. We've used this list to share information about any upcoming training opportunities, updated information about TTEs and Authorization, testing opportunities, and job announcements. This could also be a great forum for problem-solving.

I hope you all have a wonderful school year. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Ali Boyle

Colorado Educational Interpreter Coordinator
303-506-9316
ali.boyle@bvsd.org



September

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

October

GAY AND LESBIAN HISTORY MONTH

November

NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH



The Least Restrictive Environment What's the big deal?

I was practicing a golf swing the other day. It felt as though I were back in high school – motorically incompetent, gangly, with a length of arms to rival an orangutan.

I have practiced a golf swing many times; though one would never know. Even family members refuse to greet me on the driving range. Alas, their embarrassment cannot trump my own.

I don't think I can be blamed for giving up. Predictably though, with the passing of enough time my flushed cheeks begin to pale and my memory fades.

I try again. The cycle develops. I quit. I try again. I quit. I try again.

Why do I never improve?

What is that factor that must be present in order to improve a motor skill or to develop a new motor pattern?

Some might say perseverance, focus, stick-to-it-tiveness. How about repetition? As a group of OTs, PTs, and APEs, I suspect we could agree that repetition is that absent factor.

Learning a golf swing serves as a great parallel to facilitating the development of a motor skill in a student. A student needs to repetitiously engage in an activity in order develop motor learning of that activity. A student needs to repetitiously engage in an activity within the environment in which the activity naturally occurs. As OTs and PTs how can we build repetition of an activity into a students' academic day? This question defines, in part, the role of the school based practitioner. This question encapsulates the challenge of the school based practitioner.

Whether it be to learn to use a piece of adaptive equipment, to learn to cut, write, increase length of paces walked in a gait trainer, learn to navigate the school with a power wheelchair, repetition of the task is required in order to develop learning of the skill.

Whether we take an adaptative or remediative approach to intervening on behalf of a student, it is incumbent upon us to problem solve how to create natural opportunities for engagement in the task throughout the academic day.

Beverly Rainforth PhD., P.T. and Jennifer York-Barr, PhD., P.T. address this issue, amongst many other issues, in their Second Edition of *Collaborative Teams for Students with Severe Disabilities – Integrating Therapy and Educational Services*. Drs. Rainforth and York-Barr explore the philosophical, legal and programmatic foundations of related service provision within an educational environment. From CDE, we are pleased to announce that Beverly Rainforth, PhD, P.T. will be the keynote speaker for the 2006-2007 OT/PT/APE Conference. Be sure to join us and join in on the dialogue: LRE – What's the Big Deal?

And as for me? Well, I suppose, with enough repetition swinging that club, I could go from looking like a complete idiot to just looking like a total fool. How's that for a motivator?

Sandra S. Meagher, OTR
Meagher_s@cde.state.co.us

OT, PT, APE CONFERENCE UPDATE

We are pleased to offer a nationally recognized speaker, researcher, and practitioner to our annual CDE sponsored conference. Beverly Rainforth, Ph.D., P.T. will be presenting on Integrating Therapy and Educational Services. Dr. Rainforth is a prolific educator, researcher and author. She has co-authored a phenomenal book, *Collaborative Teams for Students with Severe Disabilities*. Within this text she outlines the philosophical, legal, and programmatic foundations to best practice. She brings her expertise and practical guidance towards school-based practice to Colorado for our annual conference. Because of her demanding schedule, Dr. Rainforth does have limited availability. The specific date of the conference will be determined within the next few weeks.

Please refer to your list serve for continued updates. When the date of Beverly Rainforth's availability is determined a message will be sent over the list serve and posted on the CDE calendar. Registration information will be available at that same time.

ATTN: APEs



Don't feel neglected, Kerrie Berends, Ph.D., from Texas Woman's University and adjunct instructor with North Texas University will be presenting to your specific needs. Dr. Berends will be addressing collaborative techniques, activity modifications in the general PE environment, and programming ideas for the student with significant needs.

We are looking forward to an excellent conference. Thank you in advance for your interest and participation.

ACT Reports Good News for Colorado!

ACT reports that scores are up in states that administer the ACT to all students! This year marked the fifth year that Colorado and Illinois have tested all public school students. In both states, the average composite scores have increased. In Colorado, the score has risen from 20.1 to 20.3 and that score compares to 21.1 nationally where most students are self-selected, college-bound students. This is a terrific accomplishment by all Colorado's public school students! In fact, on average, students from across all family income levels in Colorado have increased their achievement since last year (something not seen nationally!) As a result of this success, two other states, Michigan and Kentucky are following suit and will start testing all 11th grade students in 2007 and 2008 respectively. **Congratulations, Colorado students and all Colorado school counselors who work tirelessly to provide greater access to college for them!**

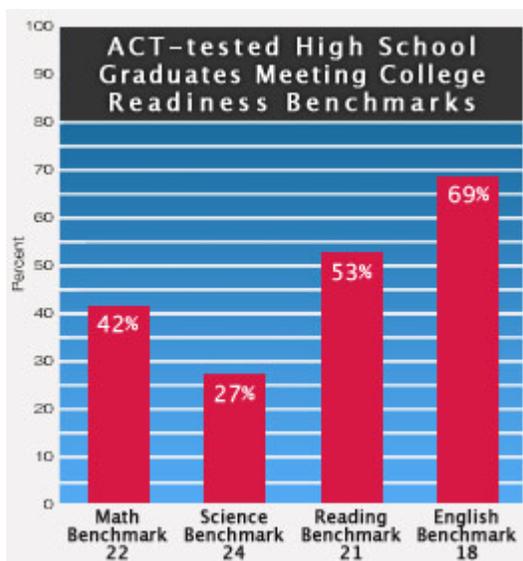
In other ACT news:

Average ACT Scores Up for 2006

The nation's high school class of 2006 made some significant headway over previous years, with jumps in average scores, number tested, and readiness for college. The results suggest that student academic achievement and college readiness are truly on the rise. **Important highlights:**

- **The average national composite score is 21.1, which is up from 20.9 in the past two years**
- **This year's report includes the ACT Writing Test results for the first time.**
The test was taken by 36 percent of ACT-tested grads and the average score is 7.7 on scale of 2 to 12.
- **A record number of high school grads took the ACT this year—more than 1.2 million.**
The biggest gains were in East Coast states.
- **College readiness improved in all four subject areas, but the majority of test-takers are still lacking college-ready skills in math and science.**

Of particular significance, more students met or exceeded ACT's College Readiness Benchmark scores this year than last.



However, many ACT-tested graduates are still likely to struggle in first-year college courses, particularly in math and science. To see a state-by-state comparison of college readiness indicators, go to ACT's website at www.act.org.

2006 CSCA Annual Conference*

*Due to ASCA Conference coming June, 2007, CSCA is moving its annual conference to the fall, 2006.

“Empowerment for Success”

November 9th & 10th
Omni Hotel, Broomfield

Featured Speakers

Marilyn Van Derbur

“Lessons Learned from Ultimate Betrayals and Unconditional Love”

Helpful Interest Sessions

Student Success Models

Miss America By Day
Lessons Learned from Ultimate Betrayals
and Unconditional Love



Marilyn Van Derbur

A guide for parenting... resource for professionals...
handbook for survivors of sexual abuse... love story

ASCA Model Implementation

*Honoring Counselors
of the Year*

Dr. Adolph Brown
**“Yesterday’s Schools and Today’s
Students—Closing the Achievement Gap”**



Dr. Carolyn Stone
ASCA President

To register, go to: www.cosca.org.

To make hotel reservations, Call the Omni Hotel at 1-800-843-6664. Ask for the CSCA hotel room rate.



School Counselor Funding in California to Dramatically Increase!

The American School Counselor Association applauds the recently approved increase in funding for school counselors in California. State Secretary of Education, Alan Bersin, announced a bipartisan agreement to allocate \$200 million to provide more school counselors to middle and high schools of California. With the \$200 million, California will hire approximately 3,000 credentialed school counselors statewide. This will bring down the student/school counselor ratio to 500:1 for middle schools and 300:1 for high schools. The new funding will bring the current California student/school counselor ratio closer to the national average of 488:1. Congratulations to the school counselors of California—WAY TO GO!

ASCA National Model Takes Root in Colorado!

The ASCA Model Implementation is alive and thriving in Colorado! The Colorado School Counselor Association again co-sponsored, along with the Education Trust, its second Summer Institute at the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs. Two tracks were offered: Track A for first-time schools and Track B for returning schools. The emphasis was on developing action plans around “closing-the-gap” activities, examining evidence-based practice, and implementing measurement and accountability systems. Second-year teams enjoyed sharing their specific results as part of their first-year action plans.

CSCA continues to be impressed with the efforts of school counselors around the state as they move to implement the National Model. Districts like Pueblo District 60, St. Vrain School District, Thompson Valley School District,



Adams 14 School District, Denver Public Schools and Boulder Valley School District are leading the way. Several of these district’s school counselors are planning on presenting at the CSCA Conference at the Omni Hotel, Broomfield in November.

Stay tuned in this newsletter and in the CSCA Connections newsletter for updates of the continuing efforts of school counselors who are implementing the ASCA Model in Colorado!



A Primer on Autism and Autism Spectrum Disorders

What is autism? Autism is not a disease, but a developmental disorder of brain function. People with classical autism show three types of symptoms: impaired social interaction, problems with verbal and nonverbal communication and imagination, and unusual or severely limited activities and interests. Symptoms of autism usually appear during the first years of childhood and continue throughout life. Although there is no cure, appropriate management may foster relatively normal development and reduce undesirable behaviors. People with autism have a normal life expectancy.

Autism affects an estimated one of every 166 births; 1 to 1.5 million Americans are diagnosed with autism or autism spectrum disorders (National Institutes of Health, 2004). Autism strikes males about four times as often as females, and has been found throughout the world in people of all racial and social backgrounds.

Autism varies a great deal in severity. The most severe cases are marked by extremely repetitive, unusual, self-injurious, and aggressive behavior. The mildest forms of autism resemble a personality disorder associated with a perceived learning disability.

What are some common signs of autism? The hallmark feature of autism is impaired social interaction. Children with autism may fail to respond to their names and often avoid looking at other people. Such children often have difficulty interpreting tone of voice or facial expressions and do not respond to others' emotions or watch other people's faces for cues about appropriate behavior. They appear unaware of other's feelings toward them and of the negative impact of their behavior on other people.

Many children with autism engage in repetitive movements such as rocking or hair twirling, or in self-injurious behavior such as biting or head-banging. They also tend to start speaking later than other children and refer to themselves by name instead of "I" or "me." Some speak in a sing-song voice about a narrow range of favorite topics, with little regard for the interests of the person to whom they are speaking.

People with autism often have abnormal responses to sounds, touch, or to other sensory stimulation. Many show reduced sensitivity to pain. They also may be extraordinarily sensitive to other sensations. These unusual sensitivities may contribute to behavioral symptoms such as resistance to being cuddled.

How is autism diagnosed? Autism is classified as one of the pervasive developmental disorders. Because it varies widely in its severity and symptoms, autism may go unrecognized, especially in mildly affected individuals or in those with multiple disabilities. Researchers and therapists have developed several sets of diagnostic criteria for autism. Some frequently used criteria include:

- Absence or impairment of imaginative and social play
- Impaired ability to make friends with peers
- Impaired ability to initiate or sustain a conversation with others
- Stereotyped, repetitive, or unusual use of language
- Restricted patterns of interests that are abnormal in intensity or focus
- Apparently inflexible adherence to specific routines or rituals
- Preoccupation with parts of objects

Children with some symptoms of autism, but not enough to be diagnosed with the classical form of the disorder, are often diagnosed with *Pervasive Developmental Disorder—not otherwise specified (PDD—NOS)*. The term *Asperger Syndrome* is sometimes used to describe people with autistic behavior but well-developed language skills. Children who appear normal in

their first several years, then lose skills and begin showing autistic behavior, may be diagnosed with *Childhood Disintegrative Disorder (CDD)*. Girls with *Rett's Syndrome*, a sex-linked genetic disorder characterized by inadequate brain growth, seizures, and other neurological problems also may show autistic behavior. PDD—NOS, Asperger Syndrome, CDD, and Rett's Syndrome are sometimes referred to as **Autism Spectrum Disorders**.

Since hearing problems can be confused with autism, children with delayed speech development should always have their hearing checked. Children sometimes have impaired hearing in addition to autism. A small percentage of people with autism are savants. These people have limited but extraordinary skills in areas like music, mathematics, drawing or visualization.

What causes autism? Autism has no single cause. Researchers believe several genes, as well as environmental factors such as viruses or chemicals, contribute to the disorder. Studies of people with autism have found abnormalities in several regions of the brain, including the cerebellum, amygdala, hippocampus, septum and mamillary bodies. Neurons in these regions appear smaller than normal and have stunted nerve fibers, which may interfere with nerve signaling. These abnormalities suggest that autism results from disruption of normal brain development early in fetal development. Other studies suggest that people with autism abnormalities of serotonin or other signaling molecules in the brain. These findings are preliminary and require further study. The early belief that parental practices are responsible for autism has now been disproved.

What role does genetics play? Recent studies strongly suggest that some people have a genetic predisposition to autism. Scientists estimate that, in families with one autistic child, the risk of having a second child with the disorder is approximately five percent, or one in 20, which is greater than the risk for the general population. Researchers are looking for clues about which genes contribute to this increased susceptibility. In some cases, parents and other relatives of an autistic person show mild social communicative, or repetitive behaviors that allow them to function normally but appear to be linked to autism.

Do symptoms of autism change over time? Symptoms in many children with autism improve with intervention or as the children mature. Some people with autism eventually lead normal or near-normal lives. However, reports from parents of children with autism indicate that some children's language skills regress early in life, usually before age three. This regression often seems linked to epilepsy or seizure-like brain activity.

How can autism be treated? There is no cure for autism at present. Therapies, or interventions, are designed to remedy specific symptoms in each individual. The best-studies therapies included educational/behavioral and/or medical interventions. Although these interventions do not cure autism, they often bring about substantial improvement.

- **Educational/behavioral interventions:** These strategies emphasize highly structured and often intensive skill-oriented training that is tailored to the individual child. Therapists work with children to help them develop social and language skills.
- **Medication:** Doctors may prescribe a variety of drugs to reduce self-injurious behavior or other troublesome symptoms of autism, as well as epilepsy and attention disorders. Most of these drugs affect levels of serotonin or other signaling chemicals in the brain.

What aspects of autism are being studied? The National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS), part of the National Institute of Health, supports research which includes studies aimed at identifying the underlying brain abnormalities of autism through new methods of brain imaging and other innovative techniques. Some scientists hope to identify genes that increase the risk of autism. Others are studying specific aspects of behavior, information processing, and other characteristics to learn precisely how children with autism differ from other people and how these characteristics change over time. The findings may lead to improved strategies for early diagnosis and intervention. Related studies are examining how the cerebellum develops and processes information, how different brain regions function in relation to each other, and how alterations in this relationship during development may result in the signs and symptoms of autism.

Adapted from Publication #96-1877, Office of Scientific & Health Reports, NIH; for more info, check out www.autism.org or www.autism-society.org

Upcoming Events



October 5-6, 2006—14th Annual CO School Social Worker Conference
“Harnessing the Power of Social Workers in Schools”
The Village at Breckenridge; go to: www.cde.state.co.us/ssw

October 5-7, 2006—State Conference on Visual Impairment
“Know Your ABCs: All Blind Children
Contact: Tanni Anthony—anthony_t@cde.state.co.us

October 12-14—Colorado Society of School Psychologists
“Life on the RtI Frontier: Theory to Practice”
Vail Cascade Resort and Spa; go to: www.cssponline.org

October 27—Colorado Speech and Hearing Association Conference
“Beyond Speech Language Pathology: Working
With Children with Challenging Behaviors”
Denver Marriott; go to: www.cshassoc.org

November 2-4—PEP Conference
Breckenridge; call 303-866-6943 or contact Katherine Keck
at Kech_K@cde.state.co.us.

November 9-10—Colorado School Counselor Association Conference
“Empowerment for Success”
Omni Hotel, Broomfield; go to: www.cosca.org

November 17-19—CO Symposium on Deafness, Language, and Learning
Cheyenne Mountain Conference Center and Resort, Colorado Springs
<http://www.csdb.org/what's5happening/symposium%202007.htm>

Looking Ahead



American Speech and Hearing Association National Conference
“Building Bridges Through Communication”
November 16-18, 2006; see www.asha.org



National Association of School Psychologists
New York Hilton; New York City
March 27-31, 2007; see www.nasponline.org



School Social Worker Association of America
Orlando, Florida
April 19-21, 2007; see www.sswaa.org



American School Counselor Association National Conference
Denver Convention Center
June 23-27, 2007; see www.schoolcounselor.org

CONNECTIONS NEWSLETTER IS ONLY ELECTRONIC!

FYI: The CDE Connections newsletter is an electronic newsletter. To it is disseminated electronically and posted on the Related/Support Services website:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/RSS-Connections.asp>

School counselors can access the CDE Connections at www.cosca.org. Every effort will be made to communicate each posting with all school-based related and support person providers via listservs and email distribution lists. For those disciplines without an electronic “connection,” a post card will be mailed to announce the posting of the newsletter. Please continue to be in touch with your discipline-specific consultant on your newsletter needs.

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