

The RESOURCE

Creating Avenues of Success for Dyslexics!

Vol. 24, Issue 2

founded in memory of Samuel T. Orton

Fall 2009

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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Reading Problems? What is Dyslexia?

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October 13, 2009

What is Dyslexia?

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Riverside (page 9)

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Las Vegas (page 6)

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IDA 60th Annual Conference

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February 12-13, 2010

Branch Conference with Rick Lavoie

& C. Wilson Anderson

Riverside (page 6)

April 17, 2010

1st Annual Dyslexia Dash

Fairmont Park, Riverside (Page 15)

Aural Reading for Bright Students with Dyslexia

by Mike Matvy, Ed.S., N.C.S.P., School Psychologist/Assistive Technology Specialist for the Knox County Schools, Knoxville, TN.

Editor's Note: Mike has graciously agreed to write this article for The Resource. For more information about Mike, please see his web page at www.discoveret.org/dyslexia.

Traditional educational practices used with bright students with dyslexia have devastating effects on their language development, work habits, learning, and literacy. "Dyslexia is persistent; it does not go away... Even though many dyslexics learn to read accurately, they continue to read slowly and not automatically" (Shaywitz, 1996). While the literature is clear that persons with dyslexia have a permanent condition, parents and our educational culture, however, ignore this data and follow the belief that given enough remedial training, persons with dyslexia will, someday, have "something click," enabling them to read like their peers. This unrealistic belief leads to unrealistic expectations and school programming that

focuses all the students' efforts on learning to decode print visually at the expense of developing higher-level language, problem-solving, and cognitive skills.

If we had a choice, we would have bright students with dyslexia be able to decode words automatically like all good visual readers do. However, we don't have that choice. "Longitudinal studies show that children who are reading disabled in the third grade, 74 percent remain disabled in the ninth grade" (NICH, 1994). Bright reading-disabled students need to make progress in visual reading and get as good as possible at decoding and "sounding out words". They will never get to the level of rapid, automatic decoding and

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Suspecting Your Child Has Dyslexia

Editor's Note: One of our board members recalls five years ago when her daughter was assessed as dyslexic and dysgraphic. Today, much to "Kay's" delight, "Cindy" is doing well in the classroom as a fifth grader and excels at playing softball.

The Resource: When did you first suspect that Cindy might be dyslexic?

Kay: We first thought something was wrong when Cindy was 4 ½ years old. She was going to kindergarten at a private school in Corona. The teacher

spoke with us and we decided that something wasn't quite right. The school personnel at the private school knew about Big Springs School in Riverside. They suggested we take Cindy there for an evaluation. She was about five when she was tested.

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Suspecting Your Child Has Dyslexia

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The Resource: What was the process and time frame for having Cindy tested?

Kay: First we went through medical testing to see whether there was anything medically that could explain Cindy's difficulties in the classroom. We ruled that out, so then we went for academic testing at Big Springs. It took several weeks, maybe six or so, for testing and the evaluation report to be completed.

The Resource: What accommodations has Cindy received since her diagnosis of dyslexia and dysgraphia five years ago?

Kay: When we were still living in Corona, we pulled her out of school twice a week to take her to Big Springs for special help. Once we moved to Anaheim, we went once a week. In Anaheim, we placed Cindy in a public

school where she was tested further by the school district and we went through the IEP process there. She was then placed in a special class to get the extra help she needs. Now she is in a combined special ed. class for fourth, fifth, and sixth graders at her school.

Looking back, the only regret we have is pulling her out of her regular school day to go to Big Springs. She would miss important things going on in her regular classroom when she was away. Other than that, she has had a great special education teacher in Anaheim and we still continue to go to Big Springs every Saturday morning for her educational therapy appointment. At Big Springs, she does phonics activities and uses the computer for writing. Between the help from her teacher at school and the help she gets on Saturdays at Big Springs, Cindy has made a lot of progress during the last five years.

The Resource: What advice would you give to parents who think their child may be dyslexic?

Kay: First of all, don't freak out. Ask yourself if you have a gut feeling as to whether something may not be working for your child from a learning standpoint. Go with your gut. Have your child tested. If it is dyslexia, educate yourself about it, using as many available resources as you can find. Dyslexics are not all alike. Just as there are many different kinds of cancer, there are many different forms or characteristics of dyslexia. Keep learning. Find the positives in the situation and in your child. Make sure to promote self-esteem in your child. Talk about dyslexia with your child in a positive way. Cindy and I talk a lot about dyslexia because one day, I want her to be her own advocate. ♦

INLAND EMPIRE BRANCH

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Service Providers

Are you a service provider interested in working with students and/or adults who have a learning disability? If so, and you wish to be included in our Web listing of Treatment Services, please visit our web site to obtain The Request Form, along with information on where to send it.

We now have four levels available for Service Providers.

Level 1 is free for IDA members.

Levels 2 through 4 are other opportunities.

Please refer to our web site at www.dyslexia-ca.org and click on "Info and Resources" and then "Treatment Services" for more information.



The Inland Empire Branch thanks
BLAKE ROCHETTE
for doing our taxes every year!

A Message from Your President

By Regina G. Richards

Dear Friends of IEB,

Your local IDA branch, the Inland Empire Branch, rides on the shoulders of volunteers!

We are an all volunteer branch and invite each of you to join us. You may choose to work on a committee to help in our planning of events and goals or just assist at a single event. All board meetings are open. Just contact us. The more ideas we have – the more creativity and innovation we achieve and the more we help the students in our communities.

We have many exciting events planned. We kick off the school year in October –National Dyslexia Appreciation Month – with four (4) stimulating events.

- San Juan Capistrano on Tuesday October 6th at 6:30 pm - our wonderful program: *Reading Problems??* The presentation will review basic facts and warning signs, have many hands-on opportunities to explore the feelings of having a learning difference, and show a DVD narrated by Henry Winkler exploring how successful folks cope. See flyer on page 11
- Riverside at Grant Elementary School -- a joint program with the Riverside Unified Community Advisory Council will examine literacy issues, dyslexia, and strategies for success at school and in college, *What is Dyslexia?* See flyer on page 6
- Las Vegas -- a joint presentation by the IEB and the Lindamood-Bell Learning Processes will be on Tuesday October 20th at 6:30 pm. The presentation will explore, *"Dyslexia and Reading Problems: Signs, Symptoms, and Strategies"*. See flyer on page 6
- Riverside – we will begin our *Adult Literacy Training Program*. This is a low-cost small-group program to help adults gain literacy skills, to be held at the Woodcrest Public Library in Riverside. See flyer on page 15

Our branch serves the counties of Riverside, San Bernardino, and most of Orange Counties, as well as the Glendora area of LA County and Southern Nevada. This is a huge area and we are delighted to be planning our first events in San Juan Capistrano and in Las Vegas. These activities will be exciting, informative and well worth your time. Please plan on attending – they are all free!

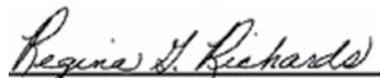
Those of you who have attended our past Annual Conferences know what a superb experience these are. Because of a generous grant from *The Jeanette C. McIntyre and Frederick (Lash) McIntyre Charitable Foundation Trust* we are able to keep the registration fees quite low plus partial scholarships are available. Registration includes the sessions, exhibitors, a social event on Friday, two breakfasts, lunch on Friday, and a very substantial and informative handout packet. Our key speaker is the wonderful nationally renowned author and DVD developer, Rick Lavoie. There are several fee categories; for example, members may attend two days for \$140 (early bird price). See flyer on page 9.

April 17th, 2010, will be our **1st Annual Dyslexia Dash**. This 5K run/walk, to be held in Fairmont Park in Riverside, is to promote awareness of dyslexia and other learning difficulties while also having a great time! Save the date and plan to come. See flyer on page 15.

More information on these events is available on our web site – check it out often!

Without the ongoing hard work and dedication of many volunteers, IEB would be hard pressed to sustain this level of service. And we have goals and dreams of doing so much more. Please let us know what we can do to help you and what you can do to help us. You may call (951/686-9837) or email (dyslexiainfo@gmail.com). In your email subject line, please put “volunteer – for Regina”.

Ask not only what your Branch can do for you, but what you can do for your Branch.



THE INLAND EMPIRE BRANCH...

Facilitating Literacy Success
in Our Communities

www.dyslexia-ca.org



Look
for us
on-line!

www.dyslexia-ca.org

THANKYOU to California Prime Line and Keyway.net of Redlands for hosting our website and their donation for our website service and pages!

IDA DISCLAIMER



The International Dyslexia Association supports efforts to provide dyslexic individuals with appropriate instruction and to identify these individuals at an early age. The Association believes that multi-sensory teaching and learning is the best approach currently available for those affected by dyslexia. The Association, however, does not endorse any specific program, speaker, or instructional materials, noting that there are a number of such which present the critical components of instruction as defined by the Task Force on instruction as defined by the Task Force on Multi-sensory Teaching which works under the guidance of the Association's Teacher Education Issues Committee.

Visit the national
office of the
IDA website

www.interdys.org

Including:

- New Kids Only web site
- Ask the Experts
- Facts about dyslexia
- Pen pals bulletin board
- A special members only section
- Resources
...and much, much more!

Matvy's Recommendations

Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFB&D), 20 Roszel Road, Princeton, NJ 08540, 1-800- 221-4792, audio textbook downloads, CDs, and book players.

The National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped Library of Congress (NLS), Washington, DC 20542, 1-888-657-7323, audio fiction and non-fiction books, downloads and tapes, book players.

BookShare, U.S. Department of Education, www.bookshare.org, digital print books for text-to-speech use, downloadable text.

Victor Reader Stream, HumanWare, 175 Mason Circle, Concord CA 94520, 1-800-722-3393, digital audio book player/recorder/text-to-speech device and other CD book players.

VoiceOver on Mac, Apple Inc., 1-800-800-2775, free built-in screen reader.

WindowEyes on PC, GW Micro, Inc., 1-260-489-3671, screen reader software.

The Mobile Reader, knfb Reading Technology, Inc., knfbreader.com/, 1-877-547-1500, handheld scanner/screen reader.

Aural Reading for Bright Students with Dyslexia

Continued from page 1

without "...automaticity... reading remains effortful, even for the brightest people with childhood histories of dyslexia" (Shaywitz 1996). These students are, inadvertently, trapped without adequate access to print.

Our culture's well-meaning attempts to help bright students with dyslexia predominantly place them with students who need content presented at a slower rate, in simplified language. Whether in the 3rd, 5th, or 11th grade, placing these bright students in class work based on their low visual decoding ability gives them little or no access to the literature, science, and other rich text material that is commensurate with their high intellectual ability.

How can we change this so bright students with dyslexia can meet the reading and writing demands of a college preparatory curriculum? Aural reading. "Unless would-be-readers learn to decode and recognize single words rapidly, accurately, and fluently, information will not be easily available to them through print" (Lyon 1996). Therefore, students need a way to do "speed reading" if they are to get the preparation needed for success in a demanding college program. "Keep in mind that a dyslexic child's ability to understand what he hears is often years ahead of his ability to read" (Shaywitz 2003). My work with students over the past 18 years and my research at Knox County Schools shows that students who decode print visually at rates of 35 to 75 words per minute can use aural decoding of print at rates of 250 to 350 words per minute.

Students "read" audio textbooks (RFB&D), novels and magazines (NLS), audio recorded class notes, etc., on an ipod like device and will "read" at fast or slow speeds, bookmark points of interest with voice notes, move forward and back by section, paragraph, sentence, and word. Victor Reader Stream can hold many textbooks, text files that can be "read" using text-to-speech, class lectures that it has recorded, etc. Students can, using one SD card, load 8 or 9 textbooks, 3 or

4 novels, podcasts, and many text files, i.e., teachers printed notes and handouts, HTML files, instruction manuals for a digital camera, articles from a favorite blog, or any text that the student wants to "read" aurally, putting 35 pounds of reading material in a shirt pocket device.

Students also use screen readers (VoiceOver on Mac, WindowEyes on PC) for reading their writing while typing, doing trial-and-error spelling, reading for editing, reading emails -- tests, newspapers, and any other text on the Web or on the computer.

Teachers can expect that bright students can excel with higher order thinking skills like their intellectual peers when they learn to use aural reading. This does not mean avoiding use of print; it means learning to "read" print aurally. It means "...to decode and recognize single words rapidly, accurately, and fluently" (Lyon 1996) using auditory perception rather than visual perception.

Bright students with dyslexia learn ways of quickly and effortlessly "reading" grade level textbooks. They are completing high school CP classes having "read" all the assignments and "written" all the papers before going on to complete college programs. These successes were possible because parents and teachers stopped requiring that reading and writing only be done one way (the visual/paper-pencil way), started teaching students to do reading and writing using their aural skills with assistive technologies, and expected the same high level of academic performance demanded of other bright students. ♦

Sources

Lyon, G. Reid. *The Current State of Science and the Future of Specific Reading Disability*, 1996.

Lyon, G. Reid. *Research in Learning Disabilities at the NICHD*. 1996

Shaywitz, Sally E. "Dyslexia," *Scientific American*, November, 1996.

Shaywitz, Sally E. "Dyslexia," *The New England Journal of Medicine*, January, 1998.

Notice - Newsletter Mailing Policy

Due to increasing postage cost, IEB will mail The Resource free to nonmembers for one year from the date they contacted us if they do not attend any of our events.

If a nonmember wishes to be on or regular mailing list, s/he may join IDA (see page 6), attend one of our events this year, or subscribe to The Resource (see page 2).

We will continue to post all newsletters online at:
www.dyslexia-ca.org

WHO WE ARE...

In 1984, several Inland Empire professionals and parents determined our area had a need for an organization to disseminate accurate & current information on dyslexia and we contacted the International Dyslexia Association. Now, a variety of professionals, parents and adults with dyslexia comprise the all volunteer Board of Directors representing Riverside, San Bernardino and portions of Orange County here in So. California.

We actively promote effective teaching practices and related educational intervention strategies for any individual with a language-based learning disability. We are committed to the dissemination of research-based knowledge that supports multi-sensory structured language teaching.

We invite you to join our mailing list: receive Newsletters & Email announcements on new research. To join, send us your name, address, phone, email or see "Contact Us" form on our web site.

BIG SPRINGS EDUCATIONAL THERAPY CENTER & SCHOOL

- ☑ Evaluations
- ☑ Educational Therapy
- ☑ Speech/Language Therapy
- ☑ Language Enrichment
- ☑ Occupational Therapy
- ☑ Private elementary school for children with learning disabilities



1189 Iowa Avenue, Riverside, CA 92507 951/787-0408
Educational Therapy also available in Murrieta: call 951/304-9656

www.dyslexia-ca.org

DEFINITION

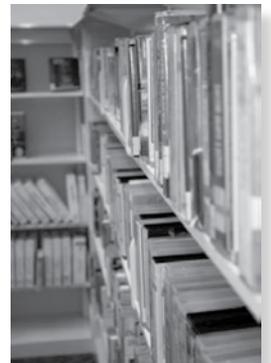
Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.



Adopted by the
International Dyslexia
Association
Board of Directors,
November 2002

LOCAL RESOURCES

Look for books & videos on dyslexia and learning issues at your local public library! Our branch has donated a large number of items to local libraries in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties four times, over the last few years. Check it out the libraries have interlibrary sharing programs.



You're invited to a

Special Presentation

"Dyslexia and Reading Problems - Signs, Symptoms, and Strategies"

A joint presentation by the International Dyslexia Association, Inland Empire Branch and Lindamood-Bell Learning Processes

Regina Richards, Educational Therapist and President of the Inland Empire branch of the IDA, will present a discussion of reading problems and dyslexia symptoms, including a demonstration of what a dyslexic individual experiences on a daily basis.

Monica Daggs, Center Director for Lindamood-Bell's Las Vegas Learning Center, will present an overview of Lindamood-Bell instruction, including examples of work we do with students diagnosed with dyslexia.

Tuesday, October 20th at 6:30pm

Lindamood-Bell® Las Vegas Learning Center
10655 Park Run Drive, Suite 180 in Las Vegas

This free presentation is open to the public.
For more information and to RSVP:

(702) 228-6942 or lblplv@lblp.com



Join us for a joint presentation, presented by
Riverside Unified School District,
Community Advisory Committee
&
The Inland Empire Branch of IDA

What is Dyslexia?

A discussion with hands-on activities to explore reading struggles and strategies for getting into and succeeding in college

Location: Grant Elementary School

4011 14th Street, Riverside

Time: 5:30 pm to 7 pm

Date: Tuesday, October 13



PHONE: 1-800-ABCD123
FAX: 1-410-321-5069
ONLINE: www.interdys.org
MAIL: 40 York Road Suite 400
Baltimore, MD 21204



THE INTERNATIONAL DYSLEXIA ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP

FIRST Name _____ MI _____ LAST Name _____ BIRTHDATE ____/____/____

ORGANIZATION (if applicable) _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE/PROVINCE _____ ZIP/POSTAL CODE _____

E-MAIL _____ WORK PHONE () _____ - _____ HOME PHONE () _____ - _____

INDIVIDUAL WITH DYSLEXIA? Spouse Self Child Sibling Parent Friend IDA MEMBER # (if renewal) _____

1 SELECT YOUR MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY

- PARENT/ADVOCATE \$ 80
○ Individual Dyslexic ○ General Supporter ○ Parent/Family Member
- PROFESSIONAL \$ 95
○ Professional/Educational ○ Professional/Allied
- 2-MEMBER HOUSEHOLD/FAMILY \$135
- SENIOR/RETIRED (age 65) \$ 60
- STUDENT \$ 60
- EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION \$395
- CORPORATE/BUSINESS \$495

2 PROFESSIONAL INTEREST (please choose ONE)

- Academic Language Therapist
- Advocate
- Attorney
- College Student
- Corporation/Organization
- Education/Administrator
- Education/Teacher—K-12
- Education/Teacher—Special Ed.
- Education/Teacher—Post Sec.
- Educational Diagnostician
- Parent
- Physician
- Psychiatrist
- Reading Specialist
- Researcher/Education
- Researcher/Medical
- Speech-Language Pathologist
- Tutor/Certified or Trainee
- Other: _____

3 ANNUAL DUES PAYMENT

You can join or renew ONLINE at www.interdys.org TOTAL Amount from your Membership Category 1

CHECK enclosed (payable to IDA) PURCHASE ORDER enclosed: P.O. # _____

CREDIT CARD ○ American Express ○ Master Card ○ VISA ○ Discover

Cardholder Name: _____ Account Number: _____

Expiration Date: ____/____/____ Signature of Cardholder: _____



070108

Why Should I Join A Professional Organization?

By Michael F. Shaughnessy, Professor of Special Education at Eastern New Mexico University, Portales, New Mexico

Teachers are typically inundated with many duties, obligations and responsibilities. They have to prepare lesson plans, organize their classrooms, deal with meetings, meet parents, and establish relationships with fellow teachers and principals. They should also, somehow, find time to grow and develop as a professional.

Some teachers decide to pursue a master's degree and this is a laudable ambition. This opportunity will afford them resources in terms of the university and fellow graduate students. This degree may help them as they move from Level One to Level Two and on to Level Three. Certainly, this will take some time, but will benefit the teacher in the long run. Relationships will be formed that may lead to advancement or to professional growth as an educator.

Ultimately, teachers should become members and active participants in their professional organization. Teachers who are members of their professional organizations will want to read the professional journals, magazines and newsletters and attend conferences organized by their national organization. For special education teachers, this could be the Council for Exceptional Children. For reading teachers, this may be the International Reading Association, whether it is at the state, regional or national level. For Teachers who are interested in or have students with dyslexia, this would be the International Dyslexia Association.

There is an organization for every teaching discipline. The organizational conferences provide opportunities to learn from peers, find out about "cutting edge" research and hear how other teachers are coping with the demands and expectations of their local schools.

Some teachers may decide to get involved more extensively with their local organization and become a member or become involved in a leadership role. This may provide them with an opportunity to associate with other equally or more knowledgeable professionals. These organizations provide emotional support, often fiscal support and help represent teachers in the legislative process.

Probably at no time in the past have teachers needed more support. To paraphrase Winston Churchill, "never, in the course of human events, have so many teachers, been asked to do so much, with so few resources, with such unrealistic expectations, with such a diverse student body". Never have teachers needed more support and never have teachers needed to belong to a supportive organization that would provide them with professional growth and development and some assistance with the challenges that are faced today by teachers.

Every teacher probably needs to take some time to reflect on where they are as a professional and where they are going as a professional and what they need to assist them in their careers. There are many organizations and conferences that can assist teachers in this endeavor. Schools and principals should also recognize this need and allow teachers professional growth and development days for their learning and enrichment. In the end, this will ultimately benefit the students and the teachers alike as well as their respective

school systems. As time passes and teachers become more knowledgeable and skilled, it is imperative that they share their "tricks of the trade" and insights with younger, less experienced teachers. This can be done through informal discussions or through actual presentations at conferences or perhaps even action research endeavors. In every school there are superlative teachers who have those kids eating out of the palms of their hands. They are eager to learn, turn assignments in on time and manifest a positive attitude.

Perhaps those teachers have read Bill Cecil's book *Best Year Ever*. Perhaps these older teachers know more about human nature and human growth and development. Maybe they simply have good classroom management skills or good human relationships. It is at this point that some teachers need to practice the age-old art of mentoring and what better place to do it than at a professional conference or within a professional organization.

Perhaps these excellent and experienced teachers have just read an exceptional book by some outstanding authors about education and are ready to share and discuss these books. Keeping up with the professional literature can revive the enthusiasm of all concerned. Let me mention four books that might encourage some very vigorous discussion at some conference or in the teachers' lounge. 1) Harvard's Daniel Koretz has just written a book *Measuring Up: What Educational Testing Really Tells Us*; 2) Charles Murray has just penned *Real Education: Four Simple Truths for Bringing America's Schools Back to Reality*; 3) A book about lengthening the school day and year, *Time to Learn: How a New School Schedule is Making Smarter Kids, Happier Parents, and Safer Neighborhoods* by

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Why Should I Join A Professional Organization?

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Christopher Gabrieli and Warren Goldstein, would bring about some discussion; and 4) *Disrupting Class: How Disruptive Innovation will Change the Way the World Learns* by Clayton Christensen, Michael Horn and Curtis Johnson will prompt some debate.

Sharing what you have learned is part of professional development both for the teachers you are sharing with and for you personally. Professional organizations offer the opportunity to share, encourage, prompt and assist in the professional growth and development of all teachers, as well as to share pedagogical principles, materials and current events in the field.

Another issue is the one of mentoring. Like it or not, many of us are mentors

to younger protégés who are ever alert to what the more experienced teachers are doing, saying, and accomplishing. These new teachers will notice if you are involved in your professional organizations. Some teachers may be pursuing National Board Teacher Certification, others may be moving from Level II to Level III and others may be serving as an officer or board member in a professional organization. A very strong compelling case can be made for such movement in terms of one's involvement in state and regional organizations and one's participation in leadership roles.

The support and camaraderie of involvement in state and regional organizations can be a major factor in one's success. Having colleagues to bounce ideas off, vent and very simply

complain can be beneficial and even therapeutic. Ultimately, it is pride in oneself and pride in one's personal, as well as professional, accomplishments that leads to successful experiences in the classroom. ♦

This article from *Teaching Excellence*, December 2008, is reprinted with permission from the Center for Teaching Excellence, Eastern New Mexico University, Portales, NM.



Donate Your Car To IDA

Is it time for you to get rid of that older car? Now your used vehicle can help support IDA's vital work and outreach to remediate dyslexia!

IDA's **National Car Donation Program** is a charitable contribution plan that enables you to turn in your used car, van or truck and know that the proceeds from the sale of your vehicle will support dyslexia awareness, outreach and remediation--at a national level as well as activities and outreach directly at the Branch level right in your own community.

We can accept most vehicles whether they run or not. **We'll arrange to have your vehicle picked up free of charge.** You may be eligible to receive a charitable contribution tax deduction on your 2009 itemized Federal tax return and **IDA receives up to 80%** of the proceeds toward our mission!

For more information, call 1-800-456-5517 or go to IDA's website at:
<http://www.interdys.org/AutoDonationLandingPage.htm>



**IDA 60TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE
THE WALT DISNEY WORLD RESORT
LAKE BUENA VISTA, FLORIDA**

NOVEMBER 11-14, 2009

Join the fun! Learn more about dyslexia at IDA's 60th Annual Conference in Orlando. Information about registration, lodging, and tourist services may all be found at the national IDA website: www.interdys.org. See you there!

Fighting the Good Fight



Editor's Note: The following is an excerpt from *Fighting the Good Fight: How to Advocate for Your Students Without Losing Your Job* by Rick Lavoie. Rick will be a key speaker at our February, 2010 branch conference in Riverside. This article was originally printed by www.ldonline.org (2008). Used with permission.

In order to “fight the good fight,” you must know the dragon that you are fighting.

When advocating for students, you will confront common obstacles and objections from your colleagues. This does not necessarily reflect that they are insensitive or uncaring. Rather, their objections are often rooted in the reality that available time, energy and resources are limited. Every established organization has a tendency to resist change and defend the status quo... even if the status quo is not working!

I recall a teacher once entering my office and saying, “I have kept Joshua in for recess for 15 days in a row and he STILL isn't doing his math homework!” Well, let's circle the ‘slow learner’ in this picture... IT AIN'T WORKING!!!

In their brilliant and groundbreaking book, *From Emotions to Advocacy*, Pete and Pam Wright outline the most common objections confronted by those who advocate for special needs students:

1. Insistence on adhering to longstanding policies and procedures (We've always done it this way).
2. Resistance to making exceptions (If we do this for Allison, we will have to do it for everyone).
3. Resistance to setting a precedent (This will open the floodgates and all the parents will want these services).

4. Insufficient training (Our teachers don't know how to do that...).
5. Insufficient staff (We simply don't have enough people to do this...).
6. Unavailability of services (Our school doesn't do that...we never have!).
7. Commitment to a one-size-fits-all approach (All of our students with LD use this reading system).
8. Insufficient Funds (That would cost too much... we don't have the money).

9. Overwhelmed (We've never seen a kid with such complex needs before...).
10. Lack of understanding of legal aspects (Even if the law requires it, we can't do it...).

You should prepare effective, accurate, and appropriate responses to each of these objectives BEFORE you approach the powers-that-be with your proposals.

Although these objections are understandable from the other person's perspective, all of them are contrary to the letter and spirit of current Special Education law.

Continued on page 10

Saturday: Rick Lavoie
A nationally renowned speaker, speaking on his latest book and DVD
The Motivation Breakthrough:
6 Secrets to Turning On the Tuned-Out Child

Friday: C. Wilson Anderson
Adjunct Professor, Past IDA President, and Fellow Orton-Gillingham Academy
Practical Classroom & Direct Teaching Strategies:
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Fighting the Good Fight

Continued from page 7

The Wrights cite an eye-opening 2001 study conducted by Galen Alessi. She reviewed 5,000 evaluations written by school psychologists in order to determine the factors the psychologists felt were contributing to the child's failure/frustration in school. She listed five factors (inappropriate curriculum, ineffective teaching, ineffective school management practices, inadequate family support, child-based problems/disabilities) that are widely accepted as reasons why kids fail in school.

Her review found that in 5,000 reports, the factors listed above were cited in the following manner as primary causes for the child's failure.

- Inappropriate curriculum
- Ineffective teaching practices
- Ineffective school management
- Parent/home factors
- Child based problems

When in doubt, blame the victim!

As an advocate, your key and indispensable ally is the building principal. No matter how talented or devoted the faculty is, no matter how powerful or influential the parent body is, no matter how committed the School Board is... the child will NOT get responsive, effective services unless he has the support of the person in the principal's office.

Every time I have observed a school program that is exceptional in its responsiveness (or lack of responsiveness!) to the needs of struggling children, the primary influencing factor is the PRINCIPAL.

A landmark study of management styles of principals rendered the

following profound results:

We found some BAD schools with a GOOD principal... but we found no GOOD schools with a BAD principal!

However, research indicates that many principals hold very negative feelings about Special Education and may view these students as a "drain" on a system that is already strained to the breaking point.

In order to effectively advocate for children with special needs, and in order to be a "shepherd of change" in the school, the principal must understand and embrace ten basic concepts.

1. Change is a process, not an event.
2. Change requires intense preparation.
3. In order for organizations to change, individuals must change.
4. Change generally occurs from the top down.
5. Mandates do not make change work; only a sound, supportive process makes change effective.
6. Change will be effective only if accompanied by support.
7. Under legislative guidelines, students are entitled to services. You are not "doing the family a favor" by creating and implementing responsive programs. You are just doing your job.
8. Each child is an individual and must be viewed as such. There is no one, solitary program or approach that works effectively with all kids... even if they have the same diagnosis or label. If the child can't learn the way we teach, we need to teach the way he learns.
9. Special Education is not a place or a program. Rather, it is a flexible set of services and supports.
10. Effective Special Education services do not exist in a vacuum. Neither do they exist detached from the general program. They must be an integral and important part of the school-wide culture. ♦

New IDA Members

March 2009

Debbie Harrison
Roxann Merizan
Tamra Smith

April 2009

Caslyn Huck
Laurie Lee
Jennifer Lewis

June 2009

Mary McGoon
Tedra Timm

Welcome Back to our Members who have rejoined us

March 2009

Marianne Cintron
Victoria Goodman

April 2009

Jill Stowell

May 2009

Yvonne Amsell
Rhona Halpern

Thank You

Attention-Deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD) and Dyslexia

AD/HD and dyslexia are distinct conditions that frequently overlap, thereby causing some confusion about the nature of these two conditions. AD/HD is one of the most common developmental problems, affecting 3–5% of the school population. It is characterized by inattention, distractibility, hyperactivity and impulsivity. It is estimated that 30% of those with dyslexia have coexisting AD/HD. Coexisting means the two conditions, AD/HD and dyslexia, can occur together, but they do not cause each other.

Dyslexia is a language-based learning disability characterized by difficulties with accurate and fluent word recognition, spelling, and reading decoding. People with dyslexia have problems discriminating sounds within a word or phonemes, a key factor in their reading and spelling difficulties. (See IDA fact sheets “Definition of Dyslexia” and “Dyslexia Basics.”)

How are AD/HD and dyslexia diagnosed?

AD/HD and dyslexia are diagnosed differently. An evaluation for AD/HD is carried out by a physician or a psychologist. This evaluation should include the following:

1. complete medical and family history
2. physical examination
3. interviews with parents and child
4. behavior rating scales completed by parents and teachers

5. observation of the child
6. psychological tests to measure intellectual potential, social and emotional adjustment, as well as to assess for the presence of learning disabilities, such as dyslexia.

Although AD/HD has been given numerous names since it was first identified in 1902, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, 4th Edition (DSM-IV) identified three primary subtypes. These subtypes are

1. *AD/HD predominantly inattentive type* is characterized by distractibility and difficulty sustaining mental effort and attention.

2. *AD/HD predominantly hyper active-impulsive type* is characterized by fidgeting with hands and feet, squirming in one’s chair, acting as if driven by a motor, interrupting and intruding upon others.

3. *AD/HD combined type* meets both sets of inattention and hyperactive/impulsive criteria.

Dyslexia is diagnosed through a psycho-educational evaluation. (See IDA fact sheet: “Testing and Evaluation.”)

Is AD/HD overdiagnosed?

The American Medical Association and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have concluded

Continued on page 13

Tell me, I hear
Show me, I see
Involve me,
I learn!!!

Free! ???

READING PROBLEMS???

WHAT IS DYSPLEXIA?

BASIC FACTS & WARNING SIGNS

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Dyslexia

By Teedy Holmes

It really is annoying when you can't read black on white,
You just get lost so easily because you can't tell left from right.
When words all look like pictures and letters jump around,
And mathematics baffles you because it has no sound.

I'm capable, articulate and speak with true conviction,
Yet it's written words and reading words that highlight my affliction.
Sometimes I worry silently, the fear just makes me sick,
I fear that people judge me because they think I'm "thick."

So I offer up this silent prayer to ease my troubled mind,
Let others see me as I am, intelligent and kind.
Please let me feel the struggle that I face each and everyday,
Dyslexia is not a myth, it's real and here to stay.

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Attention-Deficit/ Hyperactivity...

Continued from page 11

that AD/HD is not overdiagnosed; however, increased awareness has resulted in an increase in the number of individuals diagnosed with AD/HD. Girls and gifted children are actually underdiagnosed or may be diagnosed late. Girls often have AD/HD predominantly inattentive type where the essential feature is inattention. This subtype of AD/HD can easily be overlooked because the more obvious characteristics of hyperactivity and impulsivity are not present. Gifted children may be identified late because their strong intellectual abilities help them to compensate for these weaknesses in attention.

Can individuals inherit AD/HD and dyslexia?

Both AD/HD and dyslexia run in families. Genetics play a role in about half of the children diagnosed with AD/HD. For the other half, research has yet to identify a cause. Regarding dyslexia, about one third of the children born to a dyslexic parent will also likely be dyslexic.

Are there characteristics that individuals with AD/HD and dyslexia have in common?

Dyslexic children and children with AD/HD have some similar characteristics. Dyslexic children, like children with AD/HD, may have difficulty paying attention because reading is so demanding that it causes them to fatigue easily, limiting the ability to sustain concentration. People with dyslexia and those with AD/HD both have difficulty with reading. The dyslexic person's reading is typically dysfluent, with major problems with accuracy, misreading both large and small words. The

person with AD/HD may also be a dysfluent reader, but his or her reading is not characterized by misreading words. The AD/HD reader may skip over punctuation, leave off endings, and lose his or her place. The dysfluency of both the ADHD person and the dyslexic reader may negatively impact comprehension. Both may avoid reading and derive little pleasure from it. Both the person with dyslexia and the person with AD/HD typically have trouble with writing. The typical dyslexic writer has significant problems with spelling, grammar, proofreading, and organization. The AD/HD writer often has difficulty with organization and proofreading. Both the dyslexic writer and the AD/HD writer may have handwriting difficulties.

Individuals with dyslexia and AD/HD may be underachieving in school even though they are often bright and motivated. The goal for

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The Resource is intended as an educational resource for professionals and families alike. We welcome your input on our newsletter. Please send us your ideas for future articles, books reviews, upcoming seminars, etc. We would also love to be able to share success stories of individuals in our area.

Attention-Deficit/ Hyperactivity...

Continued from page 13

them, as it is for all children, is to meet their potential. It is critical that children with these disorders be carefully evaluated because treatment for one disorder is different from the other. Inaccurate diagnosis can lead to inappropriate intervention and a delay in timely, effective intervention.

Have neurological studies shown functional and/or anatomical differences in the brains of people with AD/HD as compared to dyslexia?

The scientific community has been attempting to define the exact changes in the human brain that lead to AD/HD and dyslexia. There have been pathologic studies of a few brains from people with dyslexia after they died. While some changes in the brain have been found between the brains of people with dyslexia and people who do not have dyslexia, no consistent pattern has emerged that allows the exact “dyslexic center” to be determined. More promising techniques have been developed, which can be performed in living persons. These

include imaging studies, as well as physiologic studies. Once again, interesting leads have been found, but none has given us a definitive answer regarding the underlying mechanisms of these disorders. It should also be mentioned that these tests are research tools. There are currently no biologic tests routinely available that allow an objective diagnosis of dyslexia or AD/HD.

What is the outlook for children with dyslexia and AD/HD?

If dyslexia and AD/HD are identified and treated early, children with these disorders are more likely to learn to overcome their difficulties while maintaining a positive self-image. Even though children with dyslexia do not outgrow their disability, they can learn to adapt and improve their weak skills. With proper remediation and needed accommodations, students with dyslexia can go on to be very successful students in colleges and universities, as well as in professional and adult life. After puberty, about 40–50% of children with AD/HD will improve and develop enough coping skills so that their symptoms no longer have a negative impact on their quality of life; however, the other 50–60% will continue to exhibit symptoms

of AD/HD through adolescence and adulthood that will negatively affect their lives. It is important to remember that many students with AD/HD with appropriate support and accommodations can be very successful with higher level academic work and in their professional lives. It is never too late to diagnose these disorders. It is not uncommon for a gifted person in college or graduate school to be diagnosed with dyslexia or AD/HD. Such individuals can learn to develop their personal strengths and become not only successful students, but happy and productive adults, as well. ♦

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- The International Dyslexia Association (IDA) thanks Karen E. Dakin, M.Ed., and Gerald Erenberg, M.D., for their assistance in the preparation of this fact sheet.*
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Contributions to the Dovid Richards Memorial Scholarship Fund are welcome to help provide scholarships to parents and teachers to expand their knowledge of dyslexia.

The fund was established by Regina and Irv Richards in memory of their son Dovid, who was in a fatal car accident shortly after his 21st birthday.

We are a 501(c)(3) organization and donations are tax deductible. Donations are a meaningful way to remember a loved one, honor a special occasion, or show appreciation for someone. Just send a note with your donation, indicating "in memory of" or "in honor of." Include the name and address of the person you wish to receive the acknowledgment. You will also receive acknowledgment of your contribution. ♦



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