

# The RESOURCE

Creating Avenues of Success for Dyslexics!

Vol.26 Issue 1

Founded In Memory of Samuel T. Orton

Spring 2011

## Events

- April 9th— Fun and Exciting  
2nd Annual DYSLEXIA DASH  
Health and Education Fair  
at Fairmont Park  
(see page 9)
- May 12 th— Webinar  
Fun and Engaging Ways to Learn  
(see page 7)
- July— Orton Gillingham training  
(see page 4)
- Fall— Webinar  
Lovett on metacognition  
(see page 11)
- October 1 – Kids Author Event  
with Matthew Gollub  
(see page 11)
- October 22 –  
an afternoon with Jane Healy  
(see page 11)
- November -  
International Conference, Chicago  
IL  
(see page 6)
- And more... check out the web site!

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## Unmotivated or Executive Dysfunction (EDF)?

By Judy Reising, IEB Board Member

Do you have a child or student who appears lazy, unmotivated or irresponsible? Does your six year old child constantly interrupt you while you are on the phone or forgets to raise his hand in class? Do you have a student who does the homework but fails to turn it in? Does your child or student have trouble controlling her emotions when things don't work out as planned? Or a student who knows the information, but can't seem to communicate it to you in a logical sequence? At the 2010 IDA National Conference in Phoenix, Dr. Cheryl Chase-Carmichael presented a lecture on Executive Function. She explained that executive skills are the brain-based (located in the prefrontal cortex along with connections to adjacent areas) skills that are required of humans to execute or plan and direct activities and to regulate behavior. The framework for them is laid down before birth and we can't control this biological capacity, but since they develop

over time from infancy to early 30's we have many opportunities to boost the executive skills our children and students seem to lack. There are many models of Executive Function (EF). This article will present them in the order in which they develop.

**Response Inhibition:** The capacity to think before you act, control impulses and/or stop behavior. (Begins to develop as early as 5 – 12 months of age.)

**Working Memory:** The ability to hold information in memory while performing complex tasks. If this is a problem, we need to provide support at the "point of performance." Dr. Chase-Carmichael suggests that if a student forgets his homework in his locker, send him to get it now, not after class or after lunch.

**Emotional Control:** The ability to modulate emotional responses and select the most

*(Continued on page 2)*

## What does IDA Do For Us?

Membership in The International Dyslexia Association

Written by Meg Porch, as IDA Branch Council Executive Committee Vice-Chair

This was a question asked at a recent IDA branch board meeting. It surprised those who were longtime members, but seemed relevant after considering new members who might be less knowledgeable about the organization.

Members essentially receive publications, affiliation with the local branch, and discounts. According to *Finding The Answers* published by IDA, we are encouraged to make a difference; to connect with others in our communities; to

access an international network; and to continue a tradition.

In practical terms, what does all that mean? IDA's peer-reviewed journal, *The Annals of Dyslexia*, provides those interested in quality dyslexia and literacy research with a rich source of information which eventually trickles down to the day-to-day management of

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## Unmotivated or Executive Dysfunction (EDF)?

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appropriate response to a given situation. Dr. Chase-Carmichael said, "The world is not black or white. We need to grey them up." Not every pitcher pitches a strike every time. There is a reason why a batter gets 4 balls and three strikes. The world is not "all or nothing."

**Sustained attention:** The capacity to keep paying attention to a situation or task in spite of distractibility, fatigue, or boredom. Folks with this EDF can't get through the "schmutz" of life.

**Task initiation:** The ability to begin projects without undue procrastination, in an efficient or timely fashion. To show us how each child is different, Dr. Chase-Carmichael told us about one of her clients, Beth, who asked not to have breaks put in her classroom accommodations. Beth said that if she takes a break she can't get back to work and if there are mandated breaks in the plan, her teachers will make her take them.

**Planning/prioritization:** The ability to create a roadmap to reach a goal or to complete a task and/or decide what is most important to do.

**Organization:** The ability to order

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information, and extract main ideas and key concepts when learning or communicating information.

**Organization of Materials:** The ability to create and maintain systems to keep track of information or materials.

**Time management:** The capacity to estimate, allocate, and execute within time constraints.

**Goal-directed persistence:** The capacity to have a goal, to follow through to the completion of the goal, and not be put off by or distracted by competing interests.

**Flexibility or Shift:** The ability to revise plans in the face of obstacles, setback, new information, or mistakes or to transition from one activity to another. They often fall apart at this point. They're fine doing their own thing in the moment, but have trouble when they need to stop what they're doing and shift to something else.

**Metacognition:** The ability to stand back and observe how you problem solve, to self-monitor and self-evaluate. (How am I doing? How did I do?)

The children mentioned in the first paragraph all appear to have brain-based weaknesses in Executive Functions or Executive Dysfunction. Dr. Chase-Carmichael emphasized that just as we can't expect a child in a wheelchair to run a 50 yard dash, we can't expect children to do things when they don't have the

neurobiology to accomplish them.

So what do we do? We need to take a compassionate look at these children through a new lens and keep a disability perspective. The students are not choosing to be disabled. We need to stop "shoulding" them – It's not when should they be able to do something, but helping them to be able to do it. We need to capitalize on their executive skill strengths to help them function effectively in daily activities.

After identifying their weaknesses, it's best to keep a balance between teaching them the skills they don't have and accommodating them as they learn the new skills.

We need to serve as their "surrogate" frontal lobes as they grow and develop skills.

So before we jump to the conclusion that they are unmotivated or willfully engaging in problematic behavior, let's give them the support they need to become independent individuals who have achieved the ability to demonstrate purposeful, goal-directed problem solving behavior.

I left Dr. Chase-Carmichael's seminar thinking, "I wish I had known about executive functions while I was raising my own children and teaching elementary school. What a difference it would have made!" Luckily, we will all have the opportunity to hear Dr. Chase-Carmichael speak on Executive Function during IEB's annual conference on March 2-3, 2012.

*Don't miss it!*

The Inland Empire Branch thanks

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*A Message from Your President*  
By Regina G. Richards

## Our New Adventures Have Been Very Exciting!

Last fall, I wrote about our new adventures involving technology. Well – we have been launched and with great success! Our Webinar Series, *Exploring Literacy's Mysteries*, last October, December, and January were very well attended and we received great comments in our new endeavor.

Therefore, we plan to continue our webinars. We have Andy Stetkevich scheduled for May 12<sup>th</sup>. He will be continuing the multisensory strategy concepts with, *Fun and Engaging Ways to Learn* (see page 7). In September, Dr. Maureen Lovett, a research partner with Dr. Maryann Wolf (our awesome February conference speaker), will be presenting a webinar on *Reading Disabilities in Childhood and Adolescence* (see page 11).

Our February conference was one of our best yet – the speakers were amazing, the food was wonderful, and our social was full of fun and great networking. We congratulate the winners of our Raffle – we gave away a \$1000 RAVE-O complete kit, a Flyleaf Level 1, 2, and 3 reading series (value almost \$900), reading games, and a 3-month subscription to Lexercise. We thank our generous donors to our Raffle as well as our Silent Auction – thank you, thank you. And also great appreciation to Intel for sponsoring the social and your wonderful demonstrations!

Please plan to join us in 2012 –March 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, again at the Marriott.

This summer we will offer training in the Orton-Gillingham method – this is the premier multisensory training program and the one on which many of the others are based. This approach to reading instruction was developed in the early 20th century. It is language-based, multisensory, structured, sequential, cumulative, cognitive, and flexible. (See page 4).

**We invite you to join us!** Our Inland Empire Branch began in 1984 and we have been going strong ever since. We currently have some openings on our Board of Directors and are seeking folks who have a *passion* for the issue of literacy. We want people who believe that all students have a right to learn to read and that there is more that we can do to help those that struggle. We seek parents, business professionals, as well as educators. As we endeavor to enhance the diversity of our board, we find we have particular needs in the areas of public relations, marketing, web site monitoring, volunteer coordinator, board relationships, and Facebook coordinator. Please let us know if you have the passion to enable us to fulfill our mission and vision!! We need you!

This will be my last president's message to you, as our President-Elect, Tedra Trimm, will be taking over the helm this summer – we welcome Tedra and I know she will lead you to many more great endeavors!

**A Reminder about Membership:** If you care as deeply as we do about advancing the promise and hope of literacy, please take the time to consider becoming one of our members. Besides, you receive great discounts on our events!

*Do you have the **passion** for literacy?*

*Regina G. Richards*

### THANK YOU to CALIFORNIA PRIME LINE AND KEYWAY.NET

of Redlands for hosting our website  
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### NEWSLETTER MAILING POLICY

We mail the Resource free to all members. It is also mailed free to nonmembers for one year from the date they attended an event or contacted us.

Nonmembers are invited to join IDA or subscribe to the Resource (see page 2).

### 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 multisensory 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 Multisensory Teaching which works under the guidance of the Association's Teacher Education Issues Committee. Refer to IDA's Comparison Matrix of Multisensory, Structured Language Programs on our website.



## What Does IDA Do For Us?

(Continued from page 1)

persons with reading disabilities. To more effectively provide services to these individuals, it is important to study the remediation process, educational intervention, as well as the neurocognitive basis of the problem.

A second publication, *Perspectives*, provides members with four theme-based issues each year. The information here is practical, meaningful, and specific to a particular topic, e.g., Study and Organization Skills; Improving Comprehension and Comprehension Instruction; Challenges in Learning and Teaching Mathematics; or Fluency: No Longer a Forgotten: Reading Instruction.

Through these publications, we are networking with people around the world to study, understand, and treat persons with dyslexia and related learning abilities. IDA representatives use this knowledge to

affect changes in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and to assure fair educational opportunities through the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Membership in a local branch accompanies your IDA membership.

The branch's excellent conferences, publications, newsletters, presentations and trainings support IDA's goal to inform. There are 47 branches, which make up IDA's Branch Council. Each branch president attends a meeting twice a year to network and to participate in leadership training. This includes everything from learning about audits to learning how to do a PowerPoint presentation with the provided outreach kit on multisensory structured language education. As an IDA affiliate, every branch is eligible to receive mini-grants.

These special projects, funded by the Branch Council, might be to provide in-

services and workshops throughout the branch's regions, to donate books on dyslexia and learning disabilities to libraries throughout the branch areas; to begin a project to arm Head Start children with pre-reading skills; or to adopt a kindergarten class and provide screening for reading problems.

Most branches receive grants from private and public sources to fund scholarships for members to attend conferences and workshops.

At the root of all of these IDA branch activities which impact thousands of people annually (conferences, publications, projects, scholarships, and trainings), are funds received through membership dues.

**There is strength in numbers.  
The more members we have,  
the more we can do!**

## The International Dyslexia Association Convention 2010

*A Speech-Language Pathologist's Perspective*  
By Molly B Cote, M.S., CCC-SLP

Attending the International Dyslexia Association (IDA) Annual Conference in Phoenix, Arizona was a fantastic experience both personally and professionally. From the moment I realized that I would be able to attend the conference through generous scholarships from IDA and the Inland Empire Branch of IDA (IEB-IDA), I began plotting out which speakers and sessions to attend. This proved to be a daunting task due to the great choices of topics and amazing speakers offered. It was like being in an ice cream shop with fifty of my favorite flavors and being able to sample just a few! After much deliberation, my choices were made, my ticket was booked and I was on my way to the Valley of the Sun to listen, learn, collaborate and ultimately define my role as a therapist regarding written language (reading and writing) disabilities.

The big "take away" concept for me was the important contributions that a Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP) can and should make to literacy. In fact, the 2001 American Speech-Hearing Association Position Statement *Roles and Responsibilities With Respect to*

*Reading and Writing in Children and Adolescents* states:

*"The rationale for SLPs to play a critical and direct role in the development of literacy for children and adolescents is based on established connections between spoken and written language, including that (a) spoken language provides the foundation for the development of reading and writing; (b) spoken and*

*written language have a reciprocal relationship, such that each builds on the other to result in general language and literacy competence, starting early and continuing through childhood into adulthood; (c) children with spoken language problems fre-*

*quently have difficulty learning to read and write, and children with reading and writing problems frequently have difficulty with spoken language; and that (d) instruction in spoken language can result in growth in written language, and instruction in written language can result in growth in spoken language."* (ASHA, 2001)

(Continued on page 5)

### Gillingham Classes



Multi-sensory Phonic Classes using the Orton-Gillingham Method

- Instructor: Dr. Joan Stoner, Fellow of the Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners and Educators; President Nebraska Branch IDA
- Teachers may register for level 1, level 2, or level 3 or the Orton-Gillingham Training Method. Certificates of completion will be given - university units are a possibility
- For teachers and therapists who wish to develop a fantastic tool kit of multisensory strategies, increase professional skills in literacy, and develop more efficient diagnostic skills
- Dates: July 18th to 29th from 8:30 am to 3:30 pm - includes practicum: one-on-one with a student, with help from Joan as needed
- Classes held at Riverside Christian Day School, 3612 Arlington Avenue, Riverside 92506
- Fees for IDA members: \$1500, plus materials, scholarship of \$250 available - fees may be lower with more students

# The International Dyslexia Association Convention 2010

(Continued from page 4)

As trained language experts, it is the obligation of SLPs to incorporate the written language needs of struggling readers and writers into treatment plans. Oral and written language are inexorably intertwined and should be viewed and treated in conjunction with one another. We must collaborate with teachers, special educators, literacy coaches, tutors, parents and all others involved to support those with

language based learning disabilities.

The 2010 International Dyslexia Association Conference showcased that there are more interventions, resources and technologies available today than ever before. We need to work as a team to provide the most effective treatments and most useful technologies for all individuals. Thank you to IEB-IDA for allowing me to explore the amazing treasure trove of information available at the IDA annual conference, it

was an invaluable experience.

Reference: American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2001). Roles and Responsibilities of Speech-Language Pathologists With Respect to Reading and Writing in Children and Adolescents [Position Statement].

Available from [www.asha.org/policy](http://www.asha.org/policy).

## Writing "SENSE"

By Sharon Mathias

Well, here we are again, at the end of our conference season for 2010 and spring 2011.

Of course both conferences were informative, pivotal, and proved that IDA is the front runner in the dyslexia field.

The Phoenix conference had such a variety of experts it was difficult to decide from which area to partake. My main interest this time around was to find ways to interest our dyslexic kids into exploring the adventures of writing. I will share a few of the ideas I took away from Phoenix.

Many of my students have wonderful, exciting ideas stored in their minds, but presenting ideas on paper is a seemingly unreachable goal for them. Both teachers and students need to follow a simple writing script, utilizing basic writing principles.

Thanks to the experts I have begun to incorporate a number of tools toward this goal. I begin with priming, getting a spark going, an exciting idea, definitely an area the child excels in or has a gift for. We then bring that topic into discussion. Moving from there into the guiding phase where those ideas may take on structure. I guide my students to orally use proper sentence structure which makes no sense to most of my students.

Now there is a word, "sense"; the facilities of sight, hearing, smell or touch to perceive stimuli from the outside - or could it be a sense of value or a motivating awareness, as in a sense of duty.

Maybe we should describe it as talking sense. Perhaps understanding the sense of a statement would better explain the meaning. We don't even want to go to the other spellings and meanings, as in "scents", the odors or "cents", a few bronze coins from our U.S. currency. OK, this guide needs to remain on the right track! Humor is always a welcome strategy when the going gets tough.

My next step is monitoring. The students have the basic sentence structure and guidelines down pat. We adjust as needed. Probing would be my next step or, as I call it, "guided discovery", meaning, asking questions to elicit more details, after all it is their masterpiece and of course they want to figure it all out on their own.

Well, the project is almost complete. We shall conclude by evaluating the whole process.

The student lived, I lived. We both feel success and have completed a process.

The next adventure may not be as difficult. We are writers; we are practicing the skills to become artists through writing, with the ability to put our thoughts and dreams on paper.

Every year I learn such valuable strategies at our conferences.

I cannot express my gratitude to IDA for all their endeavors on behalf of our children. My goal is to take something very difficult for someone to accomplish,

to simplify it to the point it will make "SENSE".

Until next year, signing off again.

Your humble tutor, *Sharon Mathias*

### 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

# CATCHING ALLIGATORS and Teaching Reading

by Joan C. Stoner

Previously printed in the Southern California Consortium *Resource Directory* for the Dimensions of Dyslexia Conference – used with permission

Several years ago I heard a story about a little girl who decided to catch an alligator. Catching an alligator is a formidable task; even if you are armed with the five pieces of equipment this little one took with her to the bayou. She had only a stick, a blanket, a pillow, a matchbox, and a pair of tweezers. Her first task was to attract the alligator's attention by stirring the water with her stick. After several minutes of stirring without success, she tired, and spread her blanket out on the edge of the bayou. She placed her pillow down and decided to take a nap. No sooner had she fallen asleep that an alligator came swimming by to see what the disturbance had been, and spying the little girl in the bank, decided a nap sounded so good, that he too crawled up on the blanket and went to sleep.

The little girl woke up and seeing the alligator, grabbed her tweezers, picked up the alligator and put him in her matchbox! You may be asking yourself how she could do that. The truth is that the sixth item she had with her was a pair of binoculars, and it takes no imagination to realize which end she was looking through.

This story reminds me of the difficulty we have all experienced when teaching some children to read prior to turning our binoculars around! If you don't know that there is another way to teach reading, and you keep looking through the wrong end of the binoculars, you'll never get the job done.

Why, when the object is so clear, do some intelligent, caring, dedicated

teacher educators, teachers, school administrators, and principals continue to disagree so strongly about the way in which reading should be taught?

First of all, those of us who teach were, for the most part, students who learned to read easily. We belong to a generation where reading was a family practice. We knew our alphabet before we came to school, had already memorized many nursery rhymes and children's stories because we had heard them so often. Presented with four or five new words, either every day or every other day, we delighted in our ability to "read" the simple stories of Tom, Betty, and Susan



and could hardly wait until we had learned the words in our pre-primers or first hardback reading book so we could take them home to read to our parents.

Although I've spent the last many decades teaching reading and searching for ways to improve the teaching of reading for all children, I hadn't really had reason or opportunity to relive this experience myself until my trip to Russia.

I had the opportunity to travel to Russia (thanks to my association with Dr. Rosemary Bowler, executive director of the International Dyslexia Association) and visit the Institute of Special

Education in Moscow. I then realized that in order to participate fully on a continuing basis with the professionals there, I needed to learn more than a few basic words and phrases. I searched for study materials that would permit me to speak directly with my new friends. It is surprising how many sets of tapes and study books are available. Finally, I located a set at the public library that was "multisensory".

Learning Russian was, for me, a lot like learning to read in English. I rediscovered the importance of recognizing the letters of an alphabet. Russian uses the Cyrillic alphabet, which has a number of letters from the Greek, letters that look like the English letters, and others that are uniquely different.

I also discovered that our English letter "h" makes the sound of our "n" in Russian. The English "c" makes the sound of our "s", and our letter "r" is the last letter in the Cyrillic alphabet and is pronounced "yuh" and it is printed backwards! Most, but not all, of the upper and lowercase letters are printed exactly alike, and differ only in actual size. Wouldn't it be easier to learn to print in English if **our** upper and lower case forms differed only in size! I also learned to pay close attention to every little line, curve, circle and squiggle in order to print that alphabet, as it includes unique letters that differ in tiny ways.

Some letters make two sounds that differ greatly according to their placement within words, and the beginning reader cannot figure out the rules that govern

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their sounds. We have a few letters that change sounds depending on the letters that follow them too. If an adult, who can conceptualize the principle still has trouble figuring things out rapidly or thoroughly enough to read words, it should come as no surprise to us that small children find learning to read difficult.

Further study brought me to the realization that I needed to review the few words I knew daily and in small doses, both for reading and meaning. This discovery made me remember the old basal readers we had in elementary school: how necessary it is to have multiple opportunities to review both old and new words. I cannot imagine how it would be to read or speak Russian just from having stories read to me in that language. Actually, I remember all too well being reprimanded by my first grade teacher, because I read ahead in our reader and didn't stay on the correct page. I wasn't deliberately being bad, I just couldn't wait to see how the story would end.

Learning Russian has also provided me with the opportunity to re-visit my struggles in high school learning Latin. Somehow I survived the mandatory three years. I can still recite the first paragraph of Caesar's Gallic Wars providing I don't get stopped, and I still remember what it means. But the importance of word order in Latin is very much like word order in Russian.

Word endings also change according to the usage of the word within a sentence. We change word endings in English too, but not to the same degree as in the Russian. The placement of the accent in Russian is critical for pronunciation as well as meaning. If the first syllable of *babushka* is accented, the word means grandmother; if the second syllable is accented, you're talking about a covering for the head.

Because the Russian language has changed little in the previous 70 odd

years under Soviet domination, the information about our proposed trip was listed as "the Institute of Defectology." Actually, that is not too far from our former reference to children who have difficulty learning to read as having "minimal brain dysfunction".

I can't begin to tell you how learning-disabled I felt at each visit I made to Moscow and St. Petersburg. Pointing works well when no interpreters are available, but it's pretty embarrassing to be limited to only a few words and phrases. Even with an interpreter, it takes twice as long to have any conversation when you have to say something in your native language, wait for the interpreter to translate it, hope the translation is accurate, and then say it in Russian.

Most of us survive well without knowing a foreign language. I think how really difficult and vulnerable it is not to be able to read and write one's native language. It would be a lot like having to wait for an interpreter to be present. That is not a comfortable situation.

Now that I've internalized the letters of the Russian alphabet, the sounds each letter makes, and developed a very basic sight vocabulary, it has become possible to take some meaning from both the written and spoken Russian word. I'm certain this experience parallels the work a child with a language learning disability finds learning to speak, read and write

our language.

So, what does this have to do with teaching reading to American kids? Well, I think it shows clearly that there are certain prerequisites to learning to read in all languages, and that in order to get to a stage where one can take meaning from, and bring meaning to the spoken and printed word, the underlying skills must be in place. If a child comes to school with varying competence in those skills, appropriate instruction is required. Appropriate instruction for some children is inappropriate for others. One of my three children read fluently at four years of age, not because I forced her to learn to read, but because we had the prerequisite skills in place in an early age. My second daughter struggled with the language experience approach used in her first grade classroom, yet benefited greatly from the direct instruction in the Title I classroom.

All children, regardless of skill level or learning style benefit from being read to on a regular basis. Repeated hearing of the order of words and patterns in our language is an important step in learning to read, but this must be tempered with instruction in unlocking the code of the English language. It is finding the right balance between code and meaningful instruction for each child that is important.

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## Fun & Engaging Ways to Learn

Using Multisensory Strategies That Work!

Our speaker: **Andy Stetkevich**

Target audience: parents and teachers who want to help children learn more efficiently in ways that are fun as well as useful



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# Dyslexic Scientist Seems To Have A Stronger Peripheral Visual Field Of Vision

Sharon L. Teruya, Ph.D.,

Learning Disabilities Program, MC 75, Santa Monica College

One of the most terrifying moments in Matt's childhood was being called upon to read in front of the class. Reading was painful in itself, but then, having to demonstrate in public to your classmates that you couldn't read was a double hardship. Teachers wondered what was wrong with Matt, maybe he wasn't trying hard enough. He was obviously very intelligent. Matt distinguished himself as an outstanding problem solver and he could take any mechanical device apart and put it together. From a young age his parents would have him fix household appliances. Other children his age (as well as adults) would not have been able to do this.

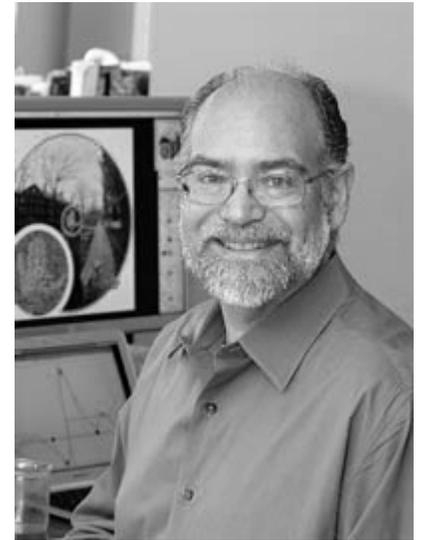
Throughout elementary and high school Matt struggled with his classes which required much reading and excelled in math and science courses which demanded relatively less reading. He did so well in the sciences and mathematics that he was admitted to a special program where he could take college classes during high school. After college Matt applied to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for graduate school. Matt was accepted into M.I.T. (which is one of the most prestigious and selective undergraduate and graduate school in the country).

He did not apply to other universities

because other schools required applicants to take the Graduate Record Exam which is like the S.A.T or A.C.T. exam for graduate school. Even though Matt was knowledgeable and intellectually capable he knew that he would score poorly on the portion of the exam which required the ability to rapidly read passages and answer questions. If only Matt had the opportunity to take his test with extended time he could have done very well. When Matt was in school there were no laws protecting people with dyslexia and other learning disabilities. There wasn't even widespread knowledge of how to diagnose people with learning disorders. People with learning problems were just assumed to be unintelligent, lazy, unmotivated, or unwilling to apply themselves. Matt's dyslexia wasn't identified until he was an adult after his children were tested for a learning disorder.

Matt received his Ph.D. in Physics from M.I.T. and so is now referred to as Dr. Matt Schneps. He specialized in the field of astrophysics. Astrophysics studies the physical and chemical properties of celestial bodies such as stars, stellar systems, and interstellar materials. Astrophysics involves solving questions such as how were planets, stars, and galaxies created.

Dr. Schneps is now a leading scientist working at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics (CfA) which was founded to advance the knowledge and understanding of the universe through research and education in astronomy and astrophysics. He is the Director of



the Lab for Visual Learning, a laboratory that is dedicated to the scientific investigation of how visual learning promotes the understanding of science.

He has diverse research interests that include astrophysics, cognition and learning, science education, learning disabilities and dyslexia, television media, eye-tracking and vision,

(Continued on page 9)

***"I am the decisive element in my classroom. It is my personal approach that creates the climate.***

***It is my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher, I possess tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration.***

***I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal.***

***In all situations it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated, a child humanized or dehumanized."***

*By Haim Ginott*

## -Dyslexic Scientist Seems To Have A Stronger Peripheral Visual Field Of Vision

(Continued from page 8)

computer image processing, and K-12 science learning. Dr. Schneps, is also the Executive Director of the **Science Media Group** which is responsible for producing over 200 hours of nationally broadcast television programming on science learning. He produced (with P. Sadler) the award-winning videos on science learning, **A PRIVATE UNIVERSE**, and **MINDS OF OUR OWN** featuring Harvard and MIT graduates who are unable to answer grade school problems in science (such as the causes of the seasons). In the earlier years of his career, Dr. Schneps was co-Director of the Wolbach Image Processing Laboratory WIPL at CfA, where he created capabilities for computer animation and was a researcher in star formation and galactic distance scales.

Dr. Schneps has accomplished many things in his career even though reading is still a difficult task. He routinely uses computer screen readers to read his emails and scientific articles. He has directed his career to focus on applied technology and education media which requires less reading than basic research and allows more opportunity for expressing his creativity. Because of being dyslexic, Dr. Schneps is conducting ground breaking research on how being dyslexic may be an advantage to scientists. His current work funded by the National Science Foundation, is investigating whether differences in neuro-anatomy help people with dyslexia perform certain types of visual processing that are important in science (but less important for reading). He has found that dyslexics have a perceptual advantage in identifying and interpreting certain forms of visual data.

Like many individuals with dyslexia Dr. Schneps is a caring person, concerned about people like himself who have encountered challenges most people never experience. In his effort to specifically help dyslexics in the field of science, his program is working to actively provide support for those who are current and future scientists. He has committed himself to mentoring students and professionals.

When asked what advice he would give to parents and dyslexic children,

Dr. Schneps recommends that a child's interests and gifts be recognized and encouraged. His parents were always supportive. They never thought less of him or criticized him because of his difficulty with reading. They were encouraging and proud of his advanced mechanical/technical abilities. His

(Continued on page 10)

## The 2011 Dyslexia Dash

Join us for the 2nd Annual 5K Run/Walk and Kids' 1K sponsored by the Inland Empire Branch of IDA.

The 5K features a scenic course around the beautiful Fairmont Park in downtown Riverside.

### Location:

**Fairmont Park**  
2601 Fairmont Blvd  
Riverside CA 92501

### When: April 9, 2011

Check-in = 6:30 a.m.  
5K = 7:30 a.m.  
Kids' 1K = 8:30 a.m.  
**PLUS – HEALTH/ Educ FAIR**

Easy pre-registration at  
active.com

(Until April 6, 2011 at midnight)



The International Dyslexia Association (IDA) is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping individuals with dyslexia, their families and the communities that support them. The Inland Empire Branch serves Riverside, San Bernardino, and Orange counties & So Nevada

### Inland Empire Branch: IDA

5225 Canyon Crest Drive - Suite 71—Box 308  
Riverside, CA 92507  
Phone: (951)686-9837  
Website: www.dyslexia-ca.org

To register: [www.active.com](http://www.active.com) – search for “Dyslexia Dash”

Groups of kids (under age 15) receive a discount of \$5 each. Regular kids price \$15.  
Adult price til Mar. 28<sup>th</sup> - \$25; then \$30



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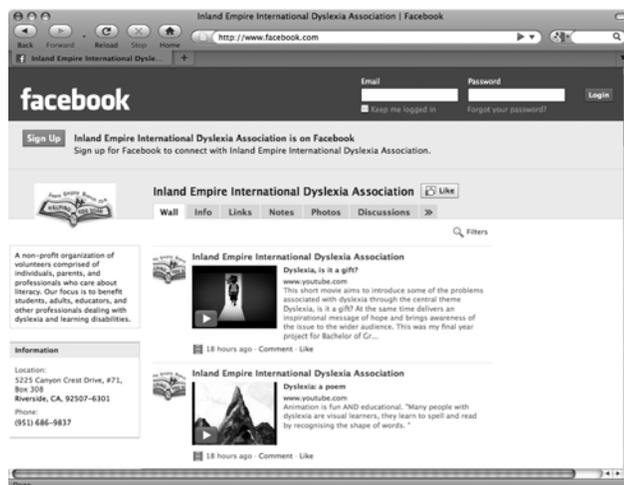
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(Continued from page 9)

uncle who worked for NASA encouraged his love of science and would send him interesting things from NASA. Dr. Schneps remembers eagerly awaiting the arrival of scientific catalogues in the mail and spent hours looking at them. One of the major contributions to Dr. Schneps' accomplishments was when growing up he immersed himself in the things which interested him, which he could excel in and it really worked for him.

At the recent IDA International Conference I was introduced to the research of Dr. Schneps where his pioneering study on dyslexic scientists was presented. I contacted Dr. Schneps who graciously allowed me to interview him for this article.

Dr. Schneps investigated the question of why there may be an over representation of dyslexics in his field. In his study he compared the performance of 22 astrophysicists with dyslexia to 22 matched astrophysicists without dyslexia. His study found that the dyslexic scientists seem to have a stronger peripheral visual field of vision compared to most people who have a stronger center focused visual field.

Dr. Schneps explains this difference as seeing through a wide-angle lens versus a telephoto lens. This difference was found to actually help with making visual comparisons and locating objects within an unfamiliar distracting background and thus, the dyslexic astrophysicists had an advantage in identifying particular data on computer imaging

displays. This visual preference may give dyslexics an advantage in science and math.

Science Media Group  
(<http://faculty.smc.edu/exchweb/bin/redirect.asp?URL=http://www.cfa.harvard.edu/smg/index.html>)

A PRIVATE UNIVERSE  
(<http://faculty.smc.edu/exchweb/bin/redirect.asp?URL=http://www.learner.org/resources/series28.html>),

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The perspective of children:

My five-year old students are learning to read.

Yesterday, one of them pointed at a picture in a zoo book and said, "Look at this! It's a frickin' elephant!"

I took a deep breath, then asked, "What did you call it?"

"It's a frickin' elephant! It says so on the picture!"

And so it does.....

*African Elephant*

## Dovid Richards Memorial Scholarship Fund



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 ichards 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.



### Attention United Way Contributors

You can designate your contributions through the United Way to the Inland Empire Branch of the International Dyslexia Association when you choose the category "OTHER" and include our name and address: Inland Empire Branch of the International Dyslexia Association, 5225 Canyon Crest Dr., Ste 71-308, Riverside, CA 92507

Thanks you to all who have been designating your United Way contributions to IEB-IDA!

## Janice S. Cleveland

Attorney-at-Law

Specializing in advocating  
for the rights of special  
education children

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92507

### CATCHING ALLIGATORS and Teaching Reading

*(Continued from page 7)*

Catching an alligator is a bit like teaching children with the varying needs to learn to read. It is all a matter of perspective, and depends on which end of the binoculars you are looking through!

Note: Joan Stoner will be our wonderful Orton-Gillingham instructor July 18th to 29th, 2011. See page 4

The perspective of children:

A little girl was diligently pounding away on her grandfather's word processor. She told him she was writing a story. "What's it about?" he asked. "I don't know," she replied. "I can't read."

## Upcoming Fall Events



### Fall webinar with Dr. Maureen W. Lovett

Dr. Lovett is the Senior Scientist in the Brain & Behavior Program of the Hospital for Sick Children and Professor of Pediatrics and Psychology at the University of Toronto. She often partners for research with Dr. Maryanne Wolf from Tufts

Cost: \$10 for IDA members; \$25 for non-IDA members

### October 1st - Children's Author Event

Matthew Gollub

Bay Area Author - Matthew entertains and inspires with energized, heartfelt and memorable presentations. He draws on his background as a author, publisher, musician, parent and soccer coach.

Location: Corona Historic Community Room

Cost: Free to IDA members and their children;  
\$15 for non-member adults and \$5 to their children

### October 22nd - An afternoon with Author Jane Healy

Different Learners: Identifying, Preventing & Treating Your Child's Learning Problems  
Location: Glendora Public Library

Cost: FREE --- IDA members receive a major discount on Jane's new book

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### UPCOMING EVENTS

- April 9th – Fun and exciting  
2nd Annual DYSLEXIA DASH  
and Health / Education Fair  
Riverside  
(see page 9)**
  - May 12th – Webinar –  
Fun and Engaging Ways to Learn  
(see page 7)**
  - July 18th-29th –  
Orton-Gillingham training  
(see page 4)**
  - Fall – Webinar –  
Lovett on metacognition  
(see page 11)**
  - October 1st -  
Children's Author Event with Matthew Gollub  
(see page 11)**
  - October 22nd -  
Afternoon with Jane Healy  
(see page 11)**
  - November –  
International Conference in Chicago  
(see page 4)**
- And more... check out the web site!**

### The Inland Empire Board of Directors

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We are a volunteer organization with a strong working board. The strength of our organization relies on the interest and commitment of its volunteers. Won't you help us in our goal of "Facilitating Literacy Success in Our Communities"?