

First Nations Special Education CONNECTIONS



Newsletter of the First Nations Special Education Toll-free Resource Line

Vol. 7, No. 4 Dec. 2006

Do you work with First Nations students in British Columbia?

Do you have special education questions?

If so, you are invited to contact the First Nations Special Education Resource Line! The Resource Line is a free service for BC educators and parents.

The Resource Line is a free resource to help you brainstorm approaches, guide you toward helpful resources, help you to understand assessment documents, and share the latest information on special education.

When you call, you will reach the Resource Line Coordinator, Lisa Ellis. Lisa is available to answer your questions, Monday to Thursday, 12:30 to 4:30 during the school year.

Contact the Resource Line:
Toll-free 1-877-547-1919
lisae@fnesc.ca

Connections is the newsletter of the Resource Line. Back issues of *Connections* are available from www.fnsa.ca/resource-line.htm.

The Resource Line is a collaborative project of the First Nations Education Steering Committee and the First Nations Schools Association, made possible by financial assistance from the Department of Indian Affairs.

'Tis the season of scissor-snipped snowflakes, Christmas concerts and excited students. May your season be bright and your holiday restful. I look forward to working with you again in 2007.

Lisa Ellis

BC FASD ASSESSMENT

The following information was taken from the BC Ministry of Education Provincial Outreach Program for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (POPFASD) website at www.fasdoutreach.ca. Please read below to find out more about this site and the program it represents.

Each of the five MCFD/Health regions in the province (www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/regions/index.htm) is currently developing Assessment Networks for children and youth (ages 0 – 19) with complex developmental behaviour conditions (CDBC). Children who may have FASD will be assessed through these multi-disciplinary teams. Although each Health Region may have a different assessment process, each will follow the provincial Health guidelines. For example, in the Northern Region, referrals to CDBC will be accepted by a family physician, pediatrician or a clinical nurse specialist/practitioner. Elsewhere in the province referral is by pediatrician or psychiatrist only.

As well, the Ministry of Children and Family Development is hiring and training “keyworkers” to work with the children and families of those who are referred for assessment. For more information on assessment and CDBC see:

http://www.rcp.gov.bc.ca/guidelines/Substance_Use/Alcoholguideline.pdf
<http://www.bcpeds.ca/links.asp>
<http://www.fraserhealth.ca/HealthInfo/MentalHealth/FHAN.htm>

It is important to note that *all* BC children are eligible for CDBC assessment services, including children living on or off reserve, attending school district, independent and First Nations Band schools.

CDBC Network

Provincial Contact:
Wendy McCrea, Provincial CDBC Project Manager; 604-453-8300

Regional Contacts:

Northern Health Authority:	Sharon Davalovsky; 250-565-2640
Interior Health Authority:	Randy James; 250-860-5183
Fraser Health Authority:	Trish Salisbury; 604-587-4287
Vancouver Coastal Health Authority:	Jan Weaver; 604-244-5543
Vancouver Island Health Authority:	Phyllis Straathof; 250-721-6703

Online Resources & Links

BC Ministry of Education Provincial Outreach Program for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (POPFASD)

www.fasdoutreach.ca

The BC Ministry of Education Provincial Outreach Program for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (POPFASD) is a new Provincial Outreach Program formed in September, 2006. The aim of this website is to provide information about the effects of FASD on student learning and behaviour, and to facilitate the sharing of ideas, strategies, and resources in order to build capacity for students with FASD and their teachers. While the services offered are limited to schools in the provincial system, up-to-date information is available to everyone.

There is an online community Blog sharing news, strategies and resources, as well as a Teacher Resource section and an eLearning area with articles on learning about FASD, tips, planning information, creating a positive behaviour climate, teaching to strengths and needs, and developing an IEP. POPFASD has recently created 7 eLearning modules - to view these, you must register first, and then go to the menu bar and click on "eLearning". Modules are under "Learning about FASD", "Planning Instruction", and "Teaching to Strengths and Needs".

Reading Rockets Podcasts & Videos

<http://www.readingrockets.org/podcasts/classroom>

Watch and learn as Reading Rockets goes inside the classroom and captures effective techniques for all aspects of teaching reading. Podcasts and videos can be downloaded and saved on your computer, or "streamed" directly from the site. Each video has a Read More link, where you'll find related articles and techniques for teaching effectively.

- Print Awareness: *Becoming Aware of Print*
- The Sounds of Speech: *The Importance of Visual Input; Letters vs. Phonemes; Phonemic Segmentation; The Alphabetic Principle*
- Phonemic Awareness: *Looking at Phonemes; Phonemic Substitution; Letters and Sounds; Helping Struggling Readers*
- Phonics: *The Alphabetic Principle; The Sounds of the Alphabet; Phonemic Segmentation; Spelling Rules; The Importance of Alphabetic Principles; Phonics vs. Whole Language*
- Informal Assessment: *Spelling as a Diagnostic Tool; Assessment by Specialists; Assessing Reading Skills; An Assessment of a Pre-reader; An Early Elementary Assessment: Fluency; Developing Fluency*
- Vocabulary: *Letters and Sounds*
- Spelling: *Word Families; Invented Spelling; Spelling Patterns*
- Writing: *Writing*
- Text Comprehension: *Students Take Charge*

Christmas Tips and Treats from Wendy at Bridges-Canada

www.learninggrids.com

Have you thought about using Clicker 4 Electronic books to practice Christmas carols? What about to tell stories for the holiday or simply the winter season? No time to create an activity? Why not go to www.learninggrids.com and see what's already been made on the topic. You have to register, but it's free!!!

Clicker 4 resources have now been archived, but they are still accessible at on this site. Use the 'Clicker 4 Resources' link on the left of the "Find Resources" page to browse through the Clicker 4 archive. If you have any questions or comments you can contact Wendy Young, Bridges Western Training Specialist at (250) 962-8839 or wendy@bridges-canada.com.

No Internet Access?

In Connections, many of the resources we publicize require Internet access. If you need a print copy of an article or other website item, contact the Resource Line.

FrontRow Active Learning Systems
www.gofrontrow.com 1.800.263.8700

Children's auditory processing skills are not fully developed until their teen years. This makes it difficult for them to tune out noisy distractions and concentrate on the teacher's voice, which can lead to academic and behaviour issues. Classroom amplification improves learning, attention and behaviour for all children in the classroom, especially those with special needs.



FrontRow Active Learning Systems use wireless voice amplification to vastly improve a teacher's clarity so that children in the back of the classroom hear as clearly as those in the front. Choose the FrontRow setup that fits your student needs, including an easily portable speaker system or a system of speakers hard-wired into the classroom. Teachers wear a light microphone. FrontRow technology does more than improve classroom sound quality; it inspires participation. Students are more engaged, schools earn better test scores, and teachers' voices get a break. After using FrontRow Active Learning systems:

- 96% of teachers have noted improvement in student attentiveness, listening, and comprehension
- elementary school teachers surveyed rated the systems their most useful teaching technology
- 92% of teachers noted less emotional strain — and as much as 60% fewer sick days from vocal problems
- spelling scores of 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders improved by 15%, 12%, and 21% respectively
- students have been shown to be twice as likely to make high-level literacy gains

For the cost of a single computer, a FrontRow active learning system helps all students all day long.

Articles Online

Preference-Based Teaching: Helping Students with Severe Disabilities Enjoy Learning without Problem Behavior

By Reid, D.H. & Green, C.W

Published in *TEACHING Exceptional Children Plus*, Volume 2, Issue 3, January 2006

<http://escholarship.bc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1242&context=education/tecplus>

An obstacle to successful teaching with many students who have severe disabilities is problem behavior that occurs during teaching sessions. When students enjoy participating in teaching programs, there is no reason for them to use problem behavior as a means to avoid or escape teaching sessions.

KEY COMPONENTS OF PREFERENCE-BASED TEACHING

When initially considering developing a teaching program for a student:

- Spend time developing rapport with the student
- Participate with the student in activities the student enjoys
- Change the environment to remove features a student dislikes

Set a preferred time and location for the teaching session:

- Do not interrupt an ongoing, highly preferred activity
- Arrange the session after a period in which the student had limited access to preferred events to be used during the session
- Identify a preferred student location for the session

Immediately before the teaching session:

- Engage the student in a brief preferred activity
- Provide a choice to the student about some aspect of how the teaching session will proceed

During the teaching session:

- Provide brief, preferred activities between some instructional trials
- Provide a brief break and preferred activity following signs of student discontent, followed immediately with a return to the part of the instructional trial where the break occurred

Immediately after the teaching session:

- Provide a choice of a preferred activity for the student
- Make sure a highly preferred activity is available for the student

Teaching Self-Determination to Early Elementary Students: Six-Year-Olds at the Wheel

By Murawski, W.W., & Wilshinsky, N.

Published in *TEACHING Exceptional Children Plus* Volume 1, Issue 5, May 2005

<http://escholarship.bc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1136&context=education/tecplus>

This article describes a simple, concrete and engaging model for teaching self-determination skills (such as self-awareness, goal-setting, choice-making, problem solving and self-monitoring) to early elementary students. The model was designed to increase appropriate behaviors, academic performance and positive self-concept in students with and without disabilities. An awareness of student strengths and weaknesses was created through a demystification process. Self-determination skills were taught through the use of a teacher-constructed, desktop, simulated car. Specific examples are provided of how the car was created and used to increase the success of students in an inclusive classroom.

"Check Out" the Lending Library...

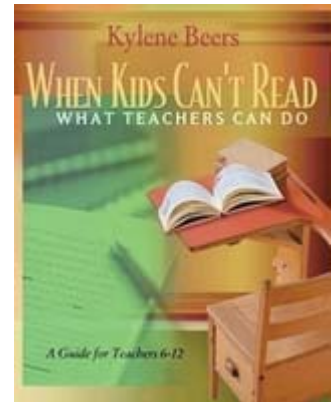
The FNEESC/FNSA Special Education Lending Library has many valuable resources for your work with First Nations students with special needs. Please note that the lending library is available to FNSA member schools only. Browse through the library's special education materials online by visiting the website <http://www.fnesc.org:88>. To request materials contact Patti Yamamoto at the FNEESC office at P: 1-877-422-3672, F: 604-925-6097 or email: pattiy@fnesc.ca.

When Kids Can't Read - What Teachers Can Do: A Guide for Teachers 6-12

By Kyleene Beers

How do we help middle and high schoolers who can't read? The author, a high school English teacher, brings her twenty-three years of teaching experience to answer that question. Beers shares what she has learned and shows teachers how to help struggling readers with:

- comprehension
- vocabulary
- fluency
- word recognition
- motivation



This practical text offers teachers the comprehensive handbook they've needed to help readers improve their skills, their attitudes, and their confidence. Filled with student transcripts, detailed strategies, reproducible material, and extensive booklists, this guide to teaching reading both instructs and inspires.

Dates for your Calendar

Don't miss local special education related workshops and conferences! The 2006-2007 Special Professional Development issue of Connections is available online at: www.fnsa.ca/resource-line.htm.

Christmas Closures - The office of FNEESC and the FNSA and the Resource Line will be closed for the holidays from December 23 to January 7. We wish everyone a safe and joyful holiday season.

January 26-27 - Vancouver. The BC Alternate Education Association's 20th annual Challenge & Change Conference.

Keynote speaker: Gary Phillips, along with many other informative, fun, and inspirational sessions, and the not-to-be-missed Schmooze. Conference details: <http://www.bctf.ca/bcaea>, (Follow Conference link.) Co-ordinator: DJ Pauls: dj_pauls@sd34.bc.ca