

First Nations Special Education CONNECTIONS



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

Vol. 7, No. 5 Jan. 2007

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.fnsc.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.

I hope your holiday was restful, refreshing and fun! Did you know that the Toll-free Resource Line is available to parents with students with special needs? Consider sharing my phone number or email with families in your community. I can help parents work successfully with their children's school, develop parent advocacy skills, learn about community resources, and provide information on many other topics. This service is available to families of First Nations students in First Nation, school district and independent schools.

Happy New Year!
Lisa Ellis

BC SEP Evaluation

An external evaluation of the Special Education Program is being conducted January and February 2007 to ensure that the benefits of the Intervention-based Approach are documented and will be included in the 2008 SEP Authority Renewal. Schools will be receiving a package of information by fax and mail. In addition, all information is posted on www.fnsc.ca. Thanks in advance for the continued support in ensuring that the positive impact the SEP funding is having is well documented! Please feel free to contact Kelly Kitchen at 1-877-422-3672 or 604-925-6087 should you have any questions.

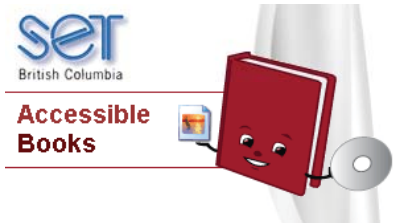
Online Resources & Links

www.setbc.org

SET-BC is a Ministry of Education Provincial Resource Program established to assist schools in educating students whose access to the curriculum is restricted due to disabilities. While many of their services are currently limited to school district schools and independent schools (such as the assistive technology lending program), SET-BC has many services which are available to First Nations schools. These programs include: **Accessible Books**, **PictureSET**, **CurriculumSET**, **SET-BC Learning Centre** and **SETInstitute**:

www.setbc.org/setbc/accessiblebooks

SET-BC Accessible Book Collection is now available to FNSA schools. SET-BC's Accessible Books Collection contains over 300 titles. FNSA teachers and staff can now order Accessible Books for use with their special needs students. Copyright conditions do apply – to order from the Accessible Books Collection, you must own a hard copy of the book. Accessible Books are free.



The Accessible Books Collection makes electronic, alternate format books available to students with special needs in BC. The SET-BC Accessible Book collection includes over 300 Accessible Book titles. These books, with their rich graphic content and human-voice narration, provide access to reading materials so children can read and reread their favorite books independently!

Books are chosen for the accessible books collection, based on the following criteria:

- Comprehension of text enhanced through pictures
- Good children's literature
- Curriculum content at early reading levels
- Locally relevant content

www.setbc.org/setbc/communication/frame_pictureset.html

PictureSET is a collection of downloadable visual supports that can be used by students for both receptive and expressive communication in the classroom, at home, and in the community. Many of these graphics are in Boardmaker format. This searchable database allows you to find a wide range of useful visual supports for different curriculum areas, activities and events. PictureSET resources are created and updated by dedicated professionals working with students in British Columbia.

www.setbc.org/setbc/topics/frame_curriculumset.html

CurriculumSET is a collection of resources that facilitate the sharing of customized technology-based content among educators working with students who use assistive technology. This searchable database enables educators to find, download, and customize activities, templates and public domain accessible books based on the ten areas of the curriculum as set out by the BC Ministry of Education. CurriculumSET resources are created and updated by dedicated professionals working with students in British Columbia.

www.setbc.org/setbc/default.html

SET-BC Learning Centre provides a wealth of classroom resources and training modules on assistive technology. Visit the Main Library to view the complete collection, or look for resources that are organized by technology topics: alternate access; augmentative communication; vision; and general implementation.

www.setinstitute.org

SETinstitute is committed to meeting the educational needs of educators interested in learning about all aspects of assistive technology from concentrated technology specific training modules to broader topic based courses. Three levels of courses are offered and course costs vary. A Certificate of Completion is awarded upon successful completion of any SETinstitute course. Some instructor led courses will be offered as University credit courses. Courses may be used toward the Assistive Technology Certificate Program. Upcoming courses include:

- Augmentative and Alternative Communication: A Way of Thinking (January 8 - February 19)
- Alternate Access: An Overview of Access Technologies (January 22 - March 5)
- Technologies to Support Students Who Are Visually Impaired (Feb 19 - April 16)
- Assistive Technology: Creating Opportunities for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (April 2 - May 7)

Articles Online

Anger Overload in Children: Diagnostic and Treatment Issues

By: David Gottlieb

www.idonline.org/article/6029?theme

Anger reactions in some children are quite frequent and troubling to parents and teachers who witness them. The term "anger overload" is used to refer to the anger response involving an intense and quick reaction by the child to a perceived insult or rejection. With anger overload, the child becomes totally consumed by his angry thoughts and feelings. He or she is unable to stop screaming, or in some cases, acting out physically, even when adults try to distract the child or try to enforce limits and consequences.

Although these children are sometimes risk takers, they can be unsure of themselves and avoid engaging in other situations where they lack confidence. A number of these children have mild learning disabilities, and feel uncomfortable about their performance in class when their learning disability is involved.

There may be a tendency to think that adults must learn to ignore these children's tantrums, but their angry outbursts will not be extinguished this way. The first strategy is for the adult to recognize when the child is about to experience anger. If it is caught in time, the child is much more likely to achieve self-control than if the adult tries to intervene once the child is overflowing with emotion.

One technique to use before reaching this point is distraction. It is important that the distraction be interesting to the

child and that involves some action such as going outside to play catch. To help motivate the child, some behavior modification mechanism should be in place. A colorful chart or poster can be used to track two or three behaviors which the child needs to demonstrate during the day in order to earn a reward. Provide and teach an alternative behavior that is more socially acceptable than an angry reaction. Eliminate discussion at the moment the child is raging. Giving the child attention, even talking, is a reward for negative behavior. Plus, the child who is raging is not rational at the moment, and the rage is likely to escalate further if consequences are mentioned while he is having a meltdown.

One important point which affects how a child responds to a provocation is the way he or she perceives the problem situation. If the child feels an insult to his sense of pride, or feels as if he was treated "unfairly," he is more likely to exhibit rage. Teaching the child to respond assertively but in a controlled manner helps him not to feel humiliated or put down. This approach is similar to cognitive therapy approaches, which aim to change the way a person experiences a situation. Teaching the child one catch phrase is an effective cognitive strategy that can be used. For many children, one such phrase is, "everyone makes mistakes." Children with anger overload often have high standards for themselves without even realizing it.



Teaching Strategies for Twice-Exceptional Students

By Susan Winebrenner

www.cec.sped.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Home&CONTENTID=4184&TEMPLATE=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm

For many years, parents and teachers have been perplexed about youngsters who have dramatic learning strengths in some areas and equally dramatic learning weaknesses in others. These students appear to defy accurate labeling: Are they gifted or learning disabled? Finally, the debate has stopped, and educators are now recognizing these students as "twice-exceptional." Rather than trying to use evidence from their weak learning areas to prove they are not "truly gifted," savvy teachers are now learning how to allow these students to experience the same opportunities available for gifted students when they are learning in their strength areas. When students are learning in their areas of weakness, teachers are learning to provide the same compensation strategies used by other students with learning disabilities. This article offers specific instruction to empower teachers to effectively teach twice-exceptional students.

"Check Out" the Lending Library...

The FNEsc/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 FNEsc office at P: 1-877-422-3672, F: 604-925-6097 or email: pattiy@fnesc.ca.

Talking Tables: An Oral Language Program

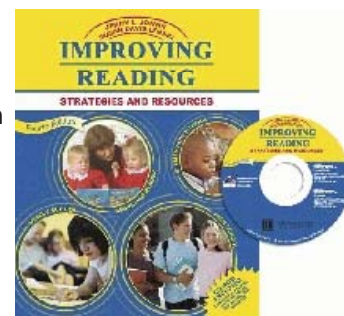
By Clifton, K.; McCubbin, C., published by the BC Ministry of Education

This 11-minute video introduces the classroom teacher to a kindergarten language/literacy intervention program. *Talking Tables* is a highly effective early success program developed in Prince Rupert to support oral language development. *Talking Tables* targets phonemic and phonological awareness while emphasizing vocabulary development. The program focuses on areas that will provide the foundation for early reading success.

Improving Reading: Strategies and Resources with CD-ROM

By Jerry Johns; Susan Lenski

Improving Reading: Strategies and Resources is full of ideas for teachers who work with individual students or groups of students in reading. Strategies are included to strengthen oral reading, expand comprehension, work with parents, motivate and engage students in reading, and master a variety of word identification strategies. This easy-to-use format helps teachers in identifying students' weaknesses in reading and leads to strategies, ideas, and resources that will help students learn to read. Sections include Teaching Strategies, Practice & Reinforcement activities, and Games. A CD-ROM included with each book contains reproducibles for student activities and overhead masters.



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.

January 24 – Vancouver (Italian Cultural Centre) and January 25 - Kelowna. *Supporting Struggling Readers: Diagnosis and Instruction.* BC Literacy Council presents Dr. Barbara Walker (V.P., International Reading Association, professor of Reading Education, Oklahoma State). Information: <http://www.bclcira.org> or 604-594-8387.

January 25-26 – Vancouver. *20th Annual Challenge & Change Conference,* Presented by the Alternate Educators of BC PSA. At the Sheraton Vancouver Wall Centre. For more information, see psas.bctf.ca/BCAEA/conference.html.

February 2-3 Vancouver. Speech-Language Pathology, Vancouver General Hospital: ***New Innovations in Treatment of Adult Neurological Disorders, and Three A's in Pediatrics: Autism, Auditory Processing Disorders, and Apraxia.*** Conference open to S-LPs, OTs, PTs, physicians, nurses, teachers, and any other interested professionals. Contact Heather, 604-875-4111, local 62964 or heather.longstaffe@vch.ca for details.

February 10 – Nanaimo. *Unraveling the Mystery of Sensory Processing Difficulties - What does it mean for my child with ASD?* What is sensory processing and why is it important? What does sensory dysfunction look like? How does it feel? What can be done to help your child? Mary-Ann Fulks is an occupational therapist with almost 20 years experience in pediatric practice. www.actbc.ca/workshops_and_training/workshops/bytitle.htm

February 15-17 - San Francisco. *Learning and the Brain: An International Conference for Educators and Clinicians,* San Francisco Marriott Airport Hotel. Using brain research to enhance cognition and emotions for learning. Registration and information: <http://www.edupr.com>

February 16 - Nanaimo. Coast Bastion Hotel. Learning Assistance Teachers' Association Regional Conference. ***Teaching to Diversity: Universal Design for Learning,*** with Dr. Beth Sparks, Brigitte Sebulsky, and Wally Asher. Learn how UDL translates into more effective teaching and learning practices in elementary classrooms and learning centres. Contact Alan Peterson, lataconference@hotmail.com, or fax 250-554-9358.

February 16 – Vancouver and through videoconference in Victoria, Nanaimo, Comox, Kelowna, Nelson, Cranbrook & Prince George. SET-BC and Sunny Hill Health Centre for Children offer ***Supporting Participation in Regular Classrooms for Students who use AAC*** presented by Dr. Pat Miranda. This session will provide an overview of four components needed for successful educational inclusion of students who use alternative and augmentative communication (AAC): building supportive classroom communities; collaborative teaming; AAC system maintenance and operation; and providing access to the curriculum. Videotaped examples of students of all ages and ability levels will be used to illustrate concepts and strategies throughout. www.setbc.org/go/supportingparticipation or contact Karin Colwell at kcolwell@setbc.org or 604-261-9450 ext 378.

February 17-18 – Vancouver. *Working From the Heart.* Presented by the BC School Counsellors' Association. Target audience: counsellors, special educators, private clinicians, psychologists, administrators and classroom teachers. Register online at: psas.bctf.ca/BCSCA/Conference.htm.

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.