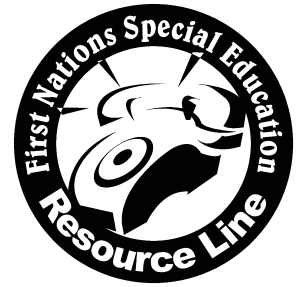


First Nations Special Education CONNECTIONS



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

Vol. 10, No. 8 April/May 2010

Working with First Nations students in BC?

Have special education questions?

Call the Resource Line!

The Resource Line is a free service for BC educators and parents.

It can help you brainstorm approaches, guide you toward helpful resources, help you to understand assessment documents, and let you know about the latest information on special education.

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

Holly also travels throughout the province offering in-school support, so if she is away when you call, she will follow-up as soon as possible upon her return.

Contact the Resource Line:

Toll-free 1-877-547-1919

hollys@fnesc.ca

Connections is the monthly 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 (FNESC) and the First Nations Schools Association (FNSA), made possible thanks to financial assistance from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

In the Connections newsletter, we are proud to feature success stories from First Nations schools across the province. This month we are sharing a story about a successful reading intervention program from Klappan Independent School in Iskut, BC.

If you are also experiencing success with an intervention program in your school and would like to share it with others, please contact me at hollys@fnesc.ca. Let's celebrate the wonderful programs in First Nations schools!

Holly Smith

First Nations Special Education Toll-Free Resource Line

Learning from Success!



Klappan Independent School's Road to Reading Success!

Klappan Independent School is a school of 41 students in the First Nations community of Iskut in northwestern BC. Klappan Independent School hired Laurie Davis as the Learning Resource Teacher in September 2008, and Davis and the school immediately put in place a plan to address a key area of the School Growth Plan - improving reading outcomes.

In the first year, the pullout reading program was implemented. Each day, the three learning assistants and Davis spent time with students listening to them read aloud for 30 minutes. The words that the students read were recorded on a chart so that students could see their daily progress. The charts worked magic – they contributed to students' self-esteem and motivated them to improve their reading scores from the previous day.

For the younger students, the school used the PM Benchmark series and for the older students, Six-Minute Solution. The school also used two school-wide reading programs: the Read Well Program (K-3) and Open Court (grades 4-9).

To measure student progress, the school used PM Benchmark assessments, anecdotal charts, and standardized testing. The WRAT 3 was the tool used to provide solid proof that this reading program works. The WRAT 3 was administered to all the students in September and again in March.

The results? The students' scores improved by as much as 4 grade score levels! There are instances of students improving from a grade 6 level to high school level, a grade 4 level to a grade 7 level, and a grade 5 level to a high school level.

This is live action research at its best! Congratulations to all students and staff of Klappan Independent School for their fantastic results!

Englightning Article

Get Ready for September! Plan Your Work & Work Your Plan

Contributor: Madeline Price, FNEC/FNSA Special Education Consultant

First Nations schools – now is the time to be working on your Third Learning Plan Review or End-of-Year Learning Plan Review. With your updated Baseline Chart, you should now be getting ready to add the end-of-year student growth data information.

The end-of-year reviews for Learning Plans are an opportunity to record student growth data, as well as to design realistic and achievable goals for next September. If you do this, then when you come back in September, Learning Plans are complete for the first reporting period. This ensures that the student does not lose any ground and the new team ensures that the student has a smooth transition to new learning opportunities.

Remember... this end of year meeting must include this year's teacher, next year's teacher, the TA's and, of course, the key to the process —the family and the student. Students should come away from this meeting feeling that they have accomplished a great deal through the Learning Plan Process. If the Learning Plan has been done well the entire team will be proud of the accomplishments and the review will be a celebration as well as a documentation of yearly progress.

For students who are transitioning to high school or a new school, now is the time to plan the May / June meeting and, if possible, ensure the teacher or someone from the school comes to your end-of-year Learning Plan meeting. This will provide a smooth transition for the student entering the new school. This kind of transition meeting will inform the new school of the prior assessment, and prior learning goals and achievements that the student has experienced. The

student will be set up for success at the new school. The conversations around the table about what will be best for the student and the information shared between all parties is invaluable for the continuing success of the student.

For any questions or clarifications on the Learning Plan Reviews and the Baseline Charts, please email madelinep@fnesc.ca or hollys@fnesc.ca or call the First Nations Special Education Resource Line at 1-877-547-1919.

Are you unsure how to get this process going in your school? Please contact the FNEC/FNSA office and request a visit from our Special Education Team. We will travel to your school and support you in getting the Learning Plan/IEP process working in your community.

Angry Youth: Learning to Control Aggressive Behaviour

Published March 24, 2010 by the Canadian Council on Learning

***This article has been condensed for Connections, for the full report: <http://bit.ly/cHeqAi>*

Most people agree that aggression is a predictable—and even acceptable—part of childhood. But children who do not learn to control their aggressive tendencies as they mature are at risk for a number of problems, including poor educational and occupational outcomes and participation in violent crime.

Genetic and environmental factors have been shown to play a role in aggression, but effective interventions can prevent—and correct—negative outcomes.

The trajectory of aggression

While adolescence is often considered to be the most aggressive stage in an individual's life,[1] aggression actually begins much earlier in life. Research shows that most children first exhibit aggressive tendencies around the time they learn to control their limbs.

Aggression levels rise over the toddler and preschool years, peaking around the age of three-and-a-half years, after which they drop off.[2], [3] Aggression appears to be a normal part of childhood that is moderated through the process of socialization.

Even extreme aggression can be eliminated by socialization or adult interventions. When teachers respond appropriately to disruptive preschoolers and encourage children to understand the rewards of less aggressive, more acceptable behaviour, the aggression can be curtailed with few lasting effects.

The impact of aggression

Aggression can become problematic when children do

not learn to curb their aggressive tendencies. Children who do not learn to moderate their aggression once they start school can present a number of challenges in the educational context. Students with aggression problems often struggle with learning and academic achievement[8] and are less likely to participate in class and complete high school.[9] Aggressive outbursts can be disruptive to other students' learning in the classroom and detrimental to student safety.[10] Integrating aggressive students who exhibit complex forms of behaviour into the school can also be a challenge.

The roots of aggression

Both genetic and environmental factors contribute to persistent aggression in young children. Environmental factors which are often associated with aggressive behaviour among children and youth include:

- low family income
- drug or alcohol abuse (by parents)
- large families
- young mothers
- hostility in the parent-child relationship (or hostility between parents)
- parental stress
- parental depression

According to research, half of the children who are subject to four or more of these factors go on to develop aggression problems.[15]

Another factor that contributes to aggression problems is a child's relationship with his or her peers.

Lessons in Learning: Solutions to Persistent Aggression

Family-based solutions

Research has shown that problem aggressive behaviour can be greatly reduced by teaching good parenting practices. Parent Management Training (PMT) is one of the most common family-based therapies used to help manage behavioural problems at home and at school.[21]

The Incredible Years is one well-known PMT program. The program incorporates numerous approaches to training that involve all aspects of a child's life (parent, child and teacher) and is founded on developmental theory that sees all aspects as interacting in the development of aggression and conduct problems.

Cognitive-based solutions

To reduce cognitive deficits that are predictive of aggression, a wide variety of learning interventions have been developed. These interventions focus on teaching children to solve interpersonal problems and help them develop stronger social and coping skills. Social cognitive approaches teach problem-solving and anger management skills to foster social competence and adjustment in aggressive children. They have been

tested on young children with positive improvements in problem-solving and peer relationships.[24]

School-based solutions

I Can Problem Solve (ICPS) is a school-based program for children ages 4 to 12 that has been shown to be particularly effective with under-privileged urban students. Through games and exercises, children learn to: identify a problem; recognize thoughts, feelings and motives that generate interpersonal problem situations; generate alternative solutions to problems; and consider the consequences of these solutions.

The program teaches students to think for themselves and find their own way of solving interpersonal problems. As a way of promoting pro-social behaviour, children are encouraged to develop awareness of the emotions and thoughts that lead to conflict with peers.

Although aggression is a typical occurrence during early childhood, children must learn more appropriate ways of addressing conflict and frustration. If they do not, aggression will become part of their behavioural repertoire, impeding their educational attainment, occupational success and social relations. A number of interventions available to parents and schools show promise in helping children learn to moderate aggression.

Parenting programs

- Behavioural approaches: Teach parents to alter the factors that predict problem behaviour through social learning techniques such as positive reinforcement, negotiation, and finding alternatives to punishment. Group sessions allow parents to practice these techniques.
- Relationship approaches: Provide parents with listening and communication skills to understand how their children relate to other children and adults.

Parenting programs can also help parents to...

- engage with their children when problems arise
- help their children to manage their emotions
- listen to their children
- praise their children
- find means of negotiating when conflicts arise
- develop alternatives to punishment
- encourage their children to be independent and take responsibility for their actions.

[1] Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development (2002). Opinion Poll Regarding Aggression among Young Children in Canada. Accessed February 19, 2010.

[2] Tremblay, R.E. (2004). Decade of behaviour distinguished lecture: Development of physical aggression during infancy. *Infant Mental Health Journal*, 25, 399-407.

[3] Alink, L.R.A., Mesman, J., Van Zeijl, J., Srolk, M.N., Juffer, F., Koot, H.M., et al. (2006). The early childhood aggression curve: Development of physical aggression in 10- to 50-month-old children. *Child Development*, 77, 954-966.

[8] Campbell, S.B., Spieker, S., Burchinal, M. & Poe, M.D. (2006). Trajectories of aggression from toddlerhood to age 9 predict academic and social functioning through age 12. *Journal of*

Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 47, 791-800.

[9] Jimerson, S., Egeland, B., Sroufe, L.A. & Carlson, B. (2000). A prospective longitudinal study of high school dropouts examining multiple predictors across development. *Journal of School Psychology*, 38(6), 525-549.

[10] Frick, J. (2004). Developmental pathways to conduct disorder: implications for serving youth who show severe aggressive and antisocial behaviour. *Psychology in the schools*, 41(8): 823-833.

[15] Jenkins, J., Keating, D. (1998). Risk and resilience in 6 and 10 year old children. *Human Resources Development Canada*. Accessed February 15, 2010.

[21] Feldman, J. & Kazdin, A. (1995) Parent management training for oppositional and conduct problem children. *The Clinical Psychologist*, 48(4): 3-5.

[24] Offord, D. & Bennet, K. (1994). Conduct disorder: Long-term outcomes and intervention effectiveness. *Journal of American Academic Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 33(8), 1069-78.

Useful Websites

Blog: Free Resources from the Net for EVERY Learner

Educational and Assistive Technology to support Universal Access and Universal Design for Learning

<http://paulhami.edublogs.org/content-curriculum/>

There is a wealth of free educational resources available on the Internet, including countless stand-alone programs, websites offering quality online activities, resources for download, as well as a rapidly growing number of powerful online tools that facilitate learning. The purpose of this blog (hosted by Paul Hamilton, a SET-BC consultant from Courtenay) is to explore and share some of these free resources. In the Content-curriculum section you'll find descriptions of many useful websites for educators.

Mathematics for Children

<http://www.funnymathforkids.com/>

This completely free, downloadable program is well-designed to build numeracy skills.

The program offers a variety of activities for students to practice basic number facts and computation skills—addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Activities are accompanied by soothing music and a human voice to provide encouragement.



Specialink

..... THE NATIONAL CENTRE FOR CHILD CARE INCLUSION

Specialink: The National Centre for Child Care Inclusion

<http://www.specialinkcanada.org>

The goal of Specialink is to expand the quality and quantity of opportunities for inclusion in childcare, recreation, education, and other community settings to young children with special needs and their families.

Specialink puts researchers, policy makers, parents, early childhood educators and directors in touch with the best inclusive practices on the frontlines of Canadian child care. Check out Specialink's Resources and links!

Use Visual Strategies



<http://www.usevisualstrategies.com>

This site is for speech pathologists, educators, parents, therapists and others who are working with students with Autism Spectrum Disorders and related learning needs. Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders and many other students with behavior or communication challenges tend to be visual learners. They understand what they see better than what they hear, and therefore, they benefit significantly from the use of Visual Strategies. Deciding when and how to use pictures and other visual supports is the key . . . learn lots of great ideas here!

Mark Your Calendars

MAY 2010

May 15, Delta. PALSTTM in Aboriginal Communities Training Workshop. PALSTTM (Parents as Literacy Supporters) in Aboriginal Communities session themes will be demonstrated and an in-depth discussion about working with culturally and linguistically diverse Aboriginal communities will be facilitated. PALSTTM is a family literacy program that provides Aboriginal parents and caregivers' strategies to encourage learning in their preschool and kindergarten-aged children. For more information please contact Vijay Morancie vijayjm@shaw.ca P: 778-836-4652

JUNE 2010

June 7-11, Delta. Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorders-Practical Applications (ASD). The training program includes practical hands-on training through instructor demonstration and coaching and application exercises of critical elements in teaching students with autism and ASD. For details visit <http://www.autismoutreach.ca/training/course-calendar>

June 14-17, Delta. Introduction to Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA). Completion of this course provides the participant an overview of ABA history and theory, but the emphasis will be on practical hands-on coaching and training. For more information <http://www.autismoutreach.ca/training/course-calendar>