

First Nations Special Education CONNECTIONS



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

Vol. 8, No. 4 Dec. 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.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.

It was wonderful to see so many of you at the recent Provincial Conference on Aboriginal Education, at the regional workshops, and at the second level of FASD training. I continue to be impressed by the thoughtful, caring, skilled and passionate people we have working in First Nations education around the province. Together, we are part of something amazing.

Best wishes for a happy holiday season! The Resource Line will be closed from December 22, 2007-January 6, 2008 for the Christmas holidays.

Lisa Ellis



FNESC Special Education News

First Nations Speech and Language Resource Line

The First Nations Speech and Language Resource Line is a free service connecting teachers, administrators, parents, and service providers to the information they need to support First Nations students with speech language needs.

Contact the Speech and Language Resource Line for information about...

- Speech-language pathologists/therapists:
 - ✧ Who are they and what do they do?
 - ✧ How can I become a speech-language pathologist?
- Prevention and strategies:
 - ✧ Is there anything I can do to prevent speech and language difficulties?
 - ✧ What can I do to help my child/student develop communication skills?
- Assessments and referrals for assessments
- Understanding reports and recommendations provided by therapists
- Speech and language resources and materials
- Advocating for service and accessing/connecting to therapy services

Feel free to give Deanne a call! Call toll-free 1-877-547-5926 Hours: Wednesday 8pm - 4:30, Thursday 3pm - 4 (24-hour voice mail) Email: deannez@fnesc.ca

First Nations Speech Language Assistant Certificate

The First Nations Education Steering Committee and the First Nations Schools Association are pleased to announce the development of a First Nations Speech Language Certificate through Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (NVIT).

The program will be offered in three locations in BC, to be determined by the regions with the most participants. Tentatively, the sites being considered are Kamloops, Terrace and Nanaimo. Each course will consist of three weekends, and each weekend will consist of Friday evening, Saturday – full day, and Sunday morning classes. The first course begins in January 2008. Former Speech Language Assistant and Language and Learning Certificate students are eligible to receive credit for the coursework already successfully completed.

Please contact at FNEESC 1-877-422-3672 or 604-925-6087 to speak with Barb O'Neill for an Expression of Interest Form or contact Kelly Kitchen if you have any questions.

SET-BC / FNEESC Project

Submitted by Carol Graham, FNEESC/SET-BC Project cgraham@setbc.org

This fall saw the launch of an exciting new pilot project to provide assistive technology services to First Nations schools in BC for this school year. SET-BC (Special Education Technology - British Columbia) and FNEESC collaborated to create this project, and our first students received technology in recent weeks.

SET-BC loans technology and provides technical support, training and resources to meet the educational needs of students with physical disabilities, visual impairments, moderate to profound cognitive challenges, and autism spectrum disorders.

Some students are receiving software and sometimes computers to help with reading and writing in their school programs and others are receiving communication devices that will help them better express their needs, knowledge and ideas. Some teams who already support their students with technology are requesting training to use software they already have in their school, such as Boardmaker, Kurzweil 3000 and Clicker 5.

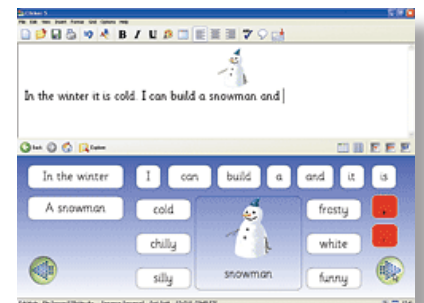
To submit a request for consideration of service for your students, please visit the Special Education link on the FNEESC website where you can download and complete the 'First Nations School Screening Checklist for SET-BC Services' and send it to the FNEESC/FNSA office. Further information about SET-BC can be found at www.setbc.org. While you are visiting the site, be sure to check out the great resources, including curriculumSET and pictureSET, which feature downloads of programs to use with Boardmaker, Clicker 5 and IntelliTools software. They feature great ideas and activities you can use right away with your students!

Window on Technology:

Submitted by Wendy Young, Bridges Western Training and Pro-D Specialist

Greetings Everyone! It's December! A short month, but a jam-packed activities time! Here are a few suggestions for the holiday month to support communication, and academics, with a little fun added in:

1. Holiday pic-syms for your students - update those communication devices!
2. Vocab picture walls for the various types of celebrations: Hanukah, Christmas, Yule.
3. Christmas carols? Add picture symbols so everybody can sing!
4. Find favorite Christmas stories and import them into Kurzweil.
5. What about using Clicker 5 for a body parts of a snowman activity?
6. Favorite holiday recipes? Make some clicker grids for creating a treat for the class. Write about it, talk about it, then make it and write about it again!
7. How about creating a progressive silly winter story using the Symbolate in Boardmaker? Then print it and have the class read it in turns.
8. Boardmaker is also great for creating parts and labels - how about reindeer or sleigh parts??
9. What about Clicker 5 for the steps of the creation of a snowflake? Have the older students do the research and create the activity for the younger students.



Any questions? Just drop me a note by e-mail, or call: 1-250-962-8839. If you have questions, I can be reached at: wendy@bridges-canada.com, otherwise look for me here! Happy Holiday everyone and for those who do not celebrate the season, enjoy the winter break!

Websites

Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development

www.child-encyclopedia.com

The Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development is produced by the Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development in Canada. It brings together articles written by internationally renowned experts on topics having to do with the psychosocial development of young children, from 0-5. Of particular interest are the Aboriginal Perspectives articles. These are Aboriginal "Voices from the Field" commenting on many of the topics.



For each topic there is a synthesis that provides, in a simplified format, the key points. This synthesis addresses three questions: What is the importance of this topic? What are the most up-to-date and conclusive data available on this subject? And what can be done to improve services and policies? Here are some examples of the 33 topics:

- Aggression
- Autism
- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
- Importance of early childhood development
- Language development and literacy
- Learning disabilities
- Resilience
- School transition

Articles Online

Adolescent Literacy: Use Easy Nonfiction to Build Background Knowledge

By Elaine K. McEwan The full text of this article can be downloaded at:

www.adlit.org/article/19865

Help all students - struggling readers and gifted students - to let go of the idea that reading easy books is embarrassing. Where do you go when you're looking for information about an unfamiliar topic? To a 400-page textbook written by experts or to an easy-reading online encyclopedia that summarizes the key concepts? Background knowledge is essential to the comprehension of more difficult text. Research shows that students with lower general verbal and reading ability can comprehend and remember text as well as students of high general ability if they are equally familiar and knowledgeable about the material they are listening to or reading. Reading easy nonfiction that explains the critical concepts is an ideal way to expose students to the essential background knowledge they need to understand their textbooks.

An excellent alternative source of concept knowledge for students whose reading levels are too low to access textbooks is a collection of easy nonfiction. When students have been exposed to the vocabulary and concepts of academic content in easy reading material, they are more confident about making the transition to textbooks.

Promoting nonfiction picture books to struggling high school and adult readers may seem like a daunting task. Try marketing the books as the Parenting Collection, and encouraging older siblings and student parents to borrow them to help children in their lives to learn about number sense, cells, and other high-level concepts.

Selected Bibliography of Easy Content Concept Books

- *Adding and Subtracting Puzzles* by Karen Bryant-Mole (Usborne)
- *Chemistry Experiments* by Mary Johnson (Usborne)
- *A Drop of Blood* by Paul Showers (HarperCollins)
- *Energy and Power* by Richard Spurgeon (Usborne)
- *Forces and Movement* by Claire Llewellyn (Cherrytree Books)
- *The Greek Gazette* by Fergus Fleming (Usborne)
- *The Hershey's Milk Chocolate Multiplication Book* by Jerry Palotta (Cartwheel Books/Scholastic)
- *How Flowers Grow* by Emma Helbrough (Usborne)
- *How Much is a Million?* by David M. Schwartz (Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Books)
- *Less Than Zero* by Stuart J. Murphy (HarperCollins)
- *The M&Ms Brand Color Pattern Book* by Barbara Barbieri McGrath (Charlesbridge)
- *The Magic School Bus Explores the Senses* by Joanna Cole (Scholastic Press)
- *Me and the Measure of Things* by Joan Sweeney (Dell Dragonfly Books)
- *The Medieval Messenger* by Fleming, Fergus (Usborne)
- *On Beyond a Million* by David M. Schwartz (Dragonfly Books)



“Check Out” the Lending Library...

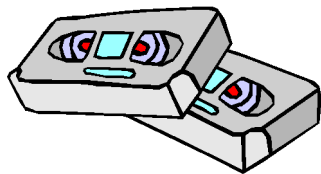
The FNEC/FNSA Special Education Lending Library has many valuable resources for your work with First Nations students with special needs. Please note that the lending library is available to FNSA member schools only. Browse through the library's special education materials online by visiting the website <http://www.fnesc.org:88/>. If you would like to see all of the Lending Library Resources, try putting “Special Education” as your search term. All of the resources will be listed. **To request materials contact Patti Yamamoto at the FNEC office at P: 1-877-422-3672, F: 604-925-6097 or email: pattiy@fnesc.ca.**

Talking Tables: An Oral Language Program – VHS Video

by Kristi Clifton, Susan Crowley and Cathy McCubbin

Talking Tables is a Kindergarten language/literacy intervention program developed in Prince Rupert. Talking Tables are organized from three to five times a week for 15 to 20 minute sessions. The teacher leads the group of 5-6 students through a sequence of highly focused activities drawn from these areas:

- Warm up chant
- Listening activity
- Vocabulary development/language patterns
- Phonological awareness
- Oral fluency



Development in each of these areas lays the foundation for early reading success. The spirit of playfulness permeates the program resulting in highly engaged and motivated learners. To purchase copies of this video, contact Anne Boyd, SD72 at anne.boyd@sd72.bc.ca.

Step Up to Writing: Effective, Multisensory Writing Strategies

Maureen Auman, Sopris West

Step Up to Writing is a collection of K-12 writing strategies that meets diverse student needs. Providing explicit, research-based instructional support, the Step Up to Writing strategies lead to increased writing proficiency across all grade levels by providing multisensory writing strategies to: provide a common language across grade levels and content areas; increase critical thinking skills; teach the writing process; and improve reading comprehension skills.



Dates for your Calendar

Don't miss local special education related workshops and conferences! The 2007-2008 Special Professional Development issue of Connections is available online at: www.fnsa.ca/resource-line.htm.

Here are a few of the Pro-D events coming up soon:

December 4, Prince George. Assessment and Literacy Strategies for "Grey Area" Students. Do you have students that don't really qualify as "special needs" but who seem to require additional support and time? How can we keep these "grey area" learners from falling through the cracks? Registration forms are at www.fnsa.ca/specialed.htm#2. Questions? Contact Kelly Kitchen or Barb O'Neill at 1-877-422-3672

December 5, Prince George. Language Development Strategies for the Classroom. This workshop will discuss how oral language develops and changes throughout the school-age years. This workshop will help teachers foster their students' language development for the purposes of social interaction, reading and writing and problem solving. Registration forms are at www.fnsa.ca/specialed.htm#2. Questions? Contact Kelly Kitchen or Barb O'Neill at 1-877-422-3672

January 4-5, Vancouver. How to use the ABLLS - R as an Assessment & IEP Development Tool. Presented by Suzanne Jacobsen. www.actbc.ca/workshops_and_training/workshops/2007/ABLLS-R_SJacobsen.htm

January 12, Nanaimo. Transitioning from High School to Work - Preparing Students with Autism for Adulthood. www.actbc.ca/workshops_and_training/workshops/bytitle.htm

January 18, Terrace. Assessment and Literacy Strategies for "Grey Area" Students. Do you have students that don't really qualify as "special needs" but who seem to require additional support and time? How can we keep these "grey area" learners from falling through the cracks? Registration forms are at www.fnsa.ca/specialed.htm#2. Questions? Contact Kelly Kitchen or Barb O'Neill at 1-877-422-3672

January 18, Smithers. Language Development Strategies for the Classroom. This workshop will discuss how oral language develops and changes throughout the school-age years. This workshop will help teachers foster their students' language development for the purposes of social interaction, reading and writing and problem solving. Registration forms are at www.fnsa.ca/specialed.htm#2. Questions? Contact Kelly Kitchen or Barb O'Neill at 1-877-422-3672

January 19, Surrey. Sensory Processing in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder - Reaching a Common Understanding with Mary-Ann Fulks, M.Sc., O.T. www.actbc.ca/workshops_and_training/workshops/2007/Sensory_Fulks.htm
January 24-25, Vancouver. The BC Alternate Education Association 21st annual Challenge & Change Conference. Sheraton Vancouver Wall Centre. For more information, contact: DJ Pauls, Conference co-coordinator at dj_pauls@sd34.bc.ca or at school at 604-859-7820, ext. 234.

January 25, Burns Lake. Strategies and Materials for Adult Literacy. This workshop will explore informal assessments, documenting abilities, materials, strategies and learning plans for Adult Learners. Registration forms are at www.fnsa.ca/specialed.htm#2. Questions? Contact Kelly Kitchen or Barb O'Neill at 1-877-422-3672

January 26, Vancouver. Including Students with Disabilities in Regular Classrooms. Presented by Pat Mirenda. www.actbc.ca/workshops_and_training/workshops/bytitle.htm

January 30, Vancouver. An Introduction to Autism Treatment - A Case Management Survival Guide for Parents & Community Professionals. www.actbc.ca/workshops_and_training/workshops/bytitle.htm