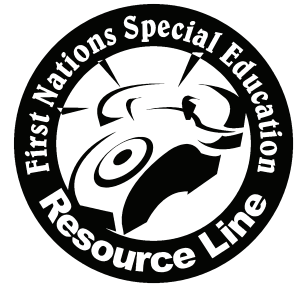


First Nations Special Education CONNECTIONS



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

Vol. 9, No. 1 Sept. 2008

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 designed 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, Holly Smith. Holly 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

hollys@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 would like to welcome everyone back and wish you all a smooth start to the new school year! My name is Holly Smith and I am very excited to be joining the FNESC Special Education Team as the Special Education Resource Person. I bring a wide variety of experience working with First Nations students with special needs as both a Special Education Teacher and an Administrator in Moricetown, BC, and northern communities in Labrador.

I am looking forward to providing support in your work with students with special needs through the Special Education Toll-free Resource Line and by traveling to some of your schools in the coming year. I welcome your calls, emails and faxes on any special education topic.

Useful Connections

First Nations schools, be sure to bookmark the First Nations Schools Association website at: www.fnsc.ca/specialed.htm to find the latest information on Special Education Program (SEP) Funding Applications and Reporting, and FNESC/FNSA SEP Services including; SET-BC, Speech Language Pathology, Psycho-Educational Assessments, Specialist Supports, Resource Lines, Lending Library and Professional Development Opportunities.

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. Call Deanne toll-free at 1-877-547-5926.

The **First Nations Special Education Resource Line**, which brings you *Connections*, also helps teachers, administrators, parents, and service providers find the information they need to support First Nations students with special education needs of all varieties. Call Holly toll-free at 1-877-547-1919.

The **FNESC Special Education Consultant**, Madeline Price, travels to First Nations schools in BC, upon request, to provide free support in many different areas according to schools' needs. Email madelinep@fnesc.ca for an outline of workshops, assessments, consults and other services to support your classroom/school needs.

STAYING CONNECTED

Have you joined the First Nations Special Needs E-Mail List yet? This is a fantastic way to keep up to date on professional development opportunities and to network with other educators who are teaching First Nations student with special needs. To join the list, or to receive *Connections* by email, contact specialedlist@fnesc.ca

HereToHelp: Information You Can Trust

www.heretohelp.bc.ca



BC Partners for Mental Health and Addictions Information is a group of seven provincial mental health and addictions agencies working together to help individuals and families better manage mental health and substance use problems. HereToHelp is their very informative website. It offers background information, tools for learning to manage addictions and mental health challenges, and ways to get support. The site provides information for youth and adults, families and professionals. As well, there are screening self tests, interactive toolkits and discussion forums. This is an excellent resource!



The National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities

www.nichcy.org

NICHCY is the American central source of information on disabilities in infants, toddlers, children, and youth. It is an excellent resource for research, guides, and training modules and it includes a website specifically for kids with disabilities.

Try the A-Z Topic Search to find an abundance of information on:

- Specific disabilities
- Early intervention services for infants and toddlers
- Special education and related services for children in school
- Research on effective educational practices
- IEPs (individualized education programs)
- Parent materials
- Transition to adult life

Enlightening Articles



Girls and ADHD: Why Teachers Miss the Signs

By Caralee Adams

Equal numbers of girls as boys have ADHD, yet far fewer girls are diagnosed. Worse, girls with ADHD are diagnosed on average five years later than boys—boys at age 7, girls at age 12. Five crucial years in which girls could be getting help are lost.

One major reason is that girls' symptoms manifest differently. For instance, girls are much less likely to display hyperactive or impulsive symptoms. Instead, they may just appear "spacey," unfocused, or inattentive. Or they may have trouble staying organized or remembering directions or homework. Socialized to please their teachers and parents, girls can be very good at compensating for the disorder, making it much harder to spot.

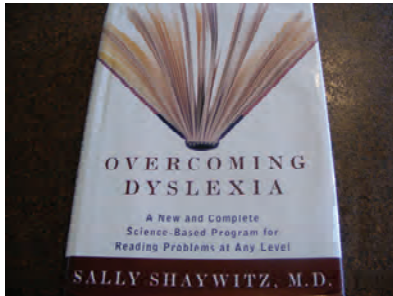
So, what are the signs of ADHD in girls? Here are some of the clues teachers can look for:

- **Nonstop Talking** - While a boy might leave his seat continually, many girls with ADD express their restlessness verbally.
- **Friendship Troubles** - Girls with ADHD may be slow to pick up on social cues and may even be verbally aggressive when they feel frustrated.
- **Difficulty Paying Attention** - Girls with ADHD may have difficulty listening and retaining multi-step directions. Sadly, they are sometimes labeled "ditzzy".

- **Exceptional Messiness** - A girl with ADHD may have a disorganized desk or backpack. She may also have issues with homework and classroom routine.
- **Unfinished Work** – Girls with ADHD often fail to finish assignments or tests in the allotted time even though they seem to know the material.
- **Emotionality** - Impulsivity might make it hard for her to control her emotions. At the same time, compensating for ADHD in the classroom and on the playground is exhausting, and may leave her depleted and vulnerable.

The full text of this article, with strategies for helping girls with each of these challenges, can be downloaded at: <http://content.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=3746286> .

Book Review



Overcoming Dyslexia *A new and complete science based program for reading problems at any level.*

By **Sally Shaywitz M.D.** JUNE 2004 ISBN # 0-375-40012-5

Reviewed by **Madeline Price, FNESC Special Education Consultant**

Blending science and education together in a meaningful way like never before Dr. Sally Shaywitz explains how Functional MRI's (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) can help teach us what the brain is doing when we are reading, and what is going wrong with struggling readers in the neural pathways of the brain.

The book discusses the impact of science and how to approach, diagnose and treat children and adults with dyslexia.

Sally explains "WHY SMART PEOPLE CAN'T READ" and why many dyslexic people are average to above average intelligence. Shaywitz is one of the world's leading experts on reading and dyslexia. Her book *Overcoming Dyslexia* is the most comprehensive, up to date, and practical book yet, to help us understand, identify, and overcome the reading problems that plague children and adults today.

Dr. Shaywitz instructs parents what they can do year-by-year, grade-by-grade, step-by-step for a dyslexic individual. She lays out a home program for enhancing reading; guides parents in working with teachers; and suggests ways of raising and preserving the child's self esteem. She provides exercises, teaching aids, information on computer, reading programs, and many other valuable resources.

This book has a clear bias: "TEACHING READING IS ROCKET SCIENCE" and that teachers need to be familiar with and using scientifically-based methods for teaching reading. The primary job of teaching a dyslexic child to read should not be left to classroom aides, peer tutors, or teachers that do not possess the necessary knowledge or experience.

Resources

Student Learning Plans

September is the month we start to work on our Student Learning Plans (a fresh new name for what we have previously called IEP's or Individual Education Plans) The term "Student Learning Plans" seems to have a more positive tone, and I have found in my travels and IEP work last year that our schools and parents seem to like the new name better. Let us know what you think! If you would like support with your "Student Learning Plans" our team members are always there to support you.

How to request a school visit

Click on '**Specialist Support**'

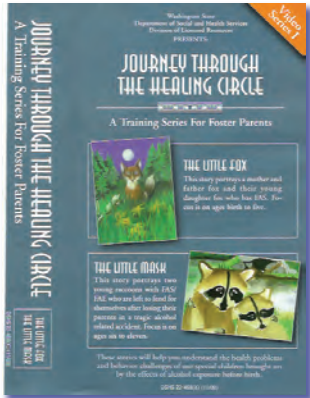
at <http://www.fnsa.ca/specialed.htm>

Or call Holly on the toll-free line-1-877-547-1919 for information

FNESC/FNSA Special Education Lending Library Spotlight

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



FAS/FAE Resource Kit for Aboriginal Community Workers

By BC Aboriginal Network on Disabilities Society

The kit includes a guide that outlines resources that are available to assist in promoting FAS/FAE awareness, prevention, intervention and support in Aboriginal communities. Also included are posters, 2 videos, brochures, colouring book, and booklets. The two videos comprise the the series **Journey Through the Healing Circle: FAS/FAE**. Originally developed as a training series for foster parents, these videos include stories to help those who live or work with children with FASD understand the health problems and behavior challenges of these young people. A corresponding paperback booklet is available for each of the stories.

- **The Little Fox** - This story portrays a mother and father fox and their young daughter fox who has FAS. Focus is on ages birth-5.
- **The Little Mask** - This story portrays two young raccoons with FAS/E who are left to fend for themselves after losing their parents in a tragic alcohol related accident. Focus is on ages 6-11.
- **Sees No Danger/Wanders Afar** - This story portrays two young bears with FAS/FAE who meet, fall in love, and must fend for themselves after leaving home at a young age. Focus is on ages 12-17.
- **Travels in Circles** - This story portrays a young puffin with FAS/FAE who is left to fend for himself after losing his parents in a tragic alcohol related accident. Focus is on ages 18-22.

Special Education Program (SEP) Deadlines for First Nations Schools

- Psycho-educational Assessment Applications October 3, 2008
- SET-BC Application Second Round October 3, 2008
- High Cost Funding Applications October 10, 2008
- SEP Work Plan October 10, 2008

SEP documents are online at www.fnsa.ca/specialed.htm

If you need further information, contact Kelly or Barb at (604) 925-6087 or 1-877-422-3672.

Dates for your Calendar

Don't miss local special education related workshops and conferences! The **2008-2009 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:

September 23 & 24 Prince Rupert. FNEESC Regional Sessions. For the dates of other regions please check the FNEESC website <http://www.fnesc.ca/> A core component of FNEESC's activities are the Regional Sessions that are conducted annually throughout the province. These Regional Sessions are a chance to discuss First Nations education issues and provide direction for the ongoing efforts of FNEESC.

September 24 - 26, Vancouver. Health and Wellbeing in Persons with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities: Children, Youth, and Adults. Children, youth and adults with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorder experience high rates of both health and mental health concerns. These impact significantly on quality of life of the individual concerned as well as their families, caregivers and the community. This conference will provide education and informative updates on psychiatric, behavioural and complex health components specific to individuals with DD, and showcase best practices in the field. The conference will address topics such as Epilepsy; Aging in Down Syndrome; Prader Willi Syndrome; Autism Spectrum Disorders; Sexual Health; Self Injurious Behaviour (SIB) and other challenging behaviours as well as 'co-morbid health conditions' such as dysphagia, pain and mobility issues. http://www.interprofessional.ubc.ca/Developmental_Disabilities.html#

September 26, Prince George & October 6, Terrace. Move'in and Zone'in. These two programs were developed by an occupational therapist to assist in the development of attention and fine motor skills. FNEESC/FNSA will provide training in 5 locations in the province in the 2008-2009 year and will provide participants with both programs. For other dates, locations and more information refer to <http://www.fnsa.ca/specialed.htm>

September 26 & 27, Vancouver. How to Use the ABLLS-R as an Assessment and IEP Development Tool. By Suzanne Jacobsen Ed.D., BCBA, Clinical Director, ABA Learning Centre. The Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills-Revised is an assessment tool, curriculum guide, and skills-tracking system used to guide the instruction of language and critical learner skills for children with autism or other developmental disabilities. Those who have taken the Introduction to the Verbal Behavior Approach to ABA will find this workshop particularly helpful. <http://www.actcommunity.net/PDFs/WorkshopUpdate.pdf>

October 2 & 3, Prince George. FRIENDS for Life. The FRIENDS program, developed in Australia, is a school-based program demonstrated to be effective in reducing the risk of anxiety disorders and building resilience in children. Schools represent ideal settings in which to detect early symptoms of anxiety and to equip children with coping skills and other tools to cope with and manage problem situations. It is an early intervention, anxiety prevention program designed for teachers and school counselors to use with all grade 4 and 5 students. New in 2008-2009 will be the offering of the FRIENDS for Life Youth Program for grades 7-9. It is intended to be a continuation of the children's version of the program. <http://fnsa.ca/specialed.htm>

Looking to bring a special education workshop to your school? Visit these websites for ideas:

FNEESC/FNSA Special Education Resource Team
<http://www.fnsa.ca/specialed.htm>

BCTF Professional Development Resource People
<http://bctf.ca/ProfessionalDevelopment.aspx?id=15540>

University of Victoria Professional Development Bookings
<http://www.uvcs.uvic.ca/csie/faq-prod.aspx#2>

Be sure to check out the Connections Professional Development Issue on the FNSA website <http://www.fnsa.ca/specialed.htm> for more events throughout the school year.