THE UTAH Special EDUCATOR

MAY, 2000
VOL. 20 NO. 5

Effective Strategies for Student Success: Social Skills

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Be related, somehow, to every one you know.

Della Deloria
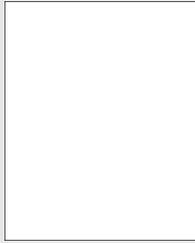
From The Editors
Teaching Skills For Life
The Real Social Security
Davalee Miller, Cheryl Hostetter,
Utah Learning Resource Center

A set of behaviors that result in a predictable social outcome (Elliot & Gresham, 1993). Identifiable, learned prosocial behaviors that people use in interpersonal situations to obtain and maintain reinforcement from other people (Kelly, 1982). Situation specific learned behaviors that contribute to an individual's overall functioning in society (Rutherford, Quinn & Mathur, 1996).

We could most likely all agree on the definitions above and even add to them. We would also be likely to agree that for students to be successful in the classroom and community these definitions must be put into action continuously and consistently. Helping students to do just that through social skill instruction and practice is a huge task for educators at all levels, but the importance and critical nature of providing instruction and support in social skills cannot be overlooked. As we see more and more students at risk for school failure and students with disabilities being served in general education classrooms, the need for comprehensive social skill instruction seems undeniable. Without such instruction we know that success is very limited for many of our students. "Children and youth who experience deficits in social skills usually demonstrate a lack of social competence, which can result in lifelong problems associated with employment, mental and physical health, relationships and overall quality of life" Melloy, Davis, Wehby, Murry and Leiber (1998).

What then are we to do? How can we make social skill instruction, both formal and informal, a part of every-day classroom and school life? To begin, we must first address what it is we want students' prosocial behavior to be. Walker, Colvin and Ramsey (1995) tell us that "a socially competent student is able to a) recruit support networks and friendships; b) meet the demands of teachers who control classrooms and peers who control playgrounds; and c) adapt to changing and difficult conditions in the social environment." The effective use of social skills contributes to peer acceptance, positive social adjustment and positive self-concept; things we would want for all students. We understand the reality, however, and know that all students do not come to school equipped with the emotional and mental tools necessary to be socially competent from the outset. Many students who don't respond to our efforts at preventative and early management need instruction in appropriate alternative behaviors and the support of those behaviors. "Social skills training and intervention is one of the most potentially effective tools available to educators for insuring some degree of success for most students who experience adjustment problems as part of schooling." (Walker, 1995)

Research literature on interventions for teaching social competence supports the notion that students can benefit from direct instruction in social skills and that these skills can be taught in much the same way as academic skills are taught. This could include teaching groups of children such as whole classes, teaching individuals and small groups, and using opportunities as they present themselves, or teaching moments. Best practices in specific social skills

training depends on the following elements; 1) the use of interventions that incorporate proper identification of the target skills to be taught; 2) selection of an approach to instruction that meets the needs of target students; 3) selection of a social skills curriculum that enhances social skills instruction; 4) inclusion of generalization training strategies; and 5) ongoing evaluation of the effects of social skills training (Melloy, et al., 1998).

There are many options for social skill instruction. Some of these options may center on peer-mediated interventions, which are based on the premise that children develop social skills through their interactions with peers. There are also interpersonal social problem-solving interventions which focus on a process by which children solve problems related to social interactions with peers, and cognitive mediation strategies which attempt to place responsibility for skill acquisition on the individual through self-instruction, self-monitoring, self- evaluation and self-reinforcement. We encourage you to search and find the "best fit" for you and your students while always keeping in mind what is best educational practice.

As you read this issue, you will find a rich array of ideas for making social skills instruction a daily part of the classroom as well as ideas to support social skill efforts schoolwide. We hope that these articles will encourage you to continue your efforts in teaching social skills as well as add a new "twist" to what you are doing that will enhance your efforts and your students' successes. ■

Guest Editorial

"Social Skills" Isn't Just for Kids: Leadership As the Adult Equivalent

Carol B. Massanari Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center

In our schools we are quick to point out the inadequacy in the behavior of our students to a prescription for teaching social skills. This is not a bad thing, and in fact, is a prescription worth supporting. But what about the adults? What are we modeling? Are we holding ourselves, i.e., teachers and administrators, to the same level of expectation that we hold for students? We do not generally think of social skills training as needed for adults, although there have been times when I have thought it would not be a bad idea. I have been at events at which the behavior of the adult learners never would have been tolerated had the learners been children. In reality, I propose that it is not social skills training per se that is needed, rather it is discussion about the meaning of leadership, I would propose that the behavior we see in adults is not driven by an individual's knowledge or lack of knowledge about appropriate social skills, rather that the behavior is driven by an internal perception of ourselves as leaders, or actually, as non-leaders. I further propose that all teachers and administrators should begin to see themselves as leaders with the responsibility of supporting others and their learning, including the learning of adult colleagues.

Before describing a leadership paradigm that supports others, it is necessary to take some time to look at the models with which most of us grew up, for it is these models that have shaped our current behavior. The leaders many of us knew as children were those who were leaders by virtue of the position they held. They were individuals to whom we looked for the right answer. We presumed that somehow there were some who were born to lead and some born to follow. Leaders were the center of power and passed down directives for others to follow. Leaders did not make mistakes, or at least not very often. Leaders were expected to make the decision and to assume the full weight of responsibility for that decision.

These are the perceptions many of us formed from our observations of those we called leaders. These perceptions, in turn, have shaped our response. When we perceive an individual, by virtue of position, as being in power, we are inclined to give our own power away, while simultaneously finding ways to gain a sense of power. This often means that we act in ways that demonstrate power over the next level, which in schools generally means power over students or the newest hired. We assume that a decision is someone else's responsibility and are willing to let someone else make it. When the decision is contrary to what we think it should be or does not work out as well as we thought it should, we are justified in complaining about it. We define our responsibility as limited to that part for which we think we have control, i.e., my classroom, my program, or the special education department. We seek certainty, control, and the best way, convincing ourselves that these things really exist. This paradigm proved to be useful in the past, perhaps, when life seemed more stable or change occurred more slowly. But in this day when change is increasing in speed and quantity and there is more demand for accountability, a new paradigm is needed.

I believe that the new paradigm for leadership that has emerged from the study of quantum physics, chaos theory, and living systems provides a framework for leadership skills essential in the classroom and throughout school districts. Consider the table below where Zohar (1997) compares our "old" model of management (or leadership) with a new model that emerges when using the concepts of quantum physics.

The new model allows that many, if not all, can be leaders and, in fact, need to be leaders. Certainly, we cannot all have the positions that we deem "leader positions" (e.g., the principalship), but we all can behave from a leadership perspective, regardless of position. To do so requires that we transform our worldview of leader. We, in effect, can change our behavior demonstrating a different

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Personal Manifesto or Philosophy
Stay open, stay curious, stay awake.

Favorite Web-sites:
I don't surf much, but.... www.angelesarrien.com, www.wisdom.com, www.reclaiming.com, www.aphids.com/quotes

Favorite Books:
Synchronicity-the Inner Path of Leadership-Joseph Jaworski
A Simple Way-Kellnor-Rogers & Wheatley
The Four Fold Way-Angeles Arrien
Paradise-Toni Morrison

Best Educational Tip:
Always ask, "Am I doing the right thing for the right reason and are my intentions child-centered?"

Newtonian Management Stresses:	Quantum Management Stresses:
Certainty	Uncertainty
Predictability	Rapid change; unpredictability
Hierarchy	Non-hierarchical networks
Division of labor or function fragmentation	Multifunctional and holistic (integrated) effort
Power emanates from top to center	Power emanates from many interacting centers
Employees are passive units of production	Employees are co-creative partners
Single viewpoint; one best way	Many viewpoints; many ways of getting things done
Competition	Cooperation
Inflexible structures; heavy on bureaucratic control	Responsive and flexible structures; hands-off supervision
Efficiency	Meaningful service and relationships
Top-down (reactive) operation	Bottom-up (experimental) operations

Zohar (1997) p. 87

and more effective set of "social skills." I propose that that new worldview is found in two words: servant leadership. Servant leadership was promoted by Robert Greenleaf as early as 1970. According to Greenleaf, effective leadership emanates from a desire to serve (Greenleaf, 1991). How different that is from leadership emanating from a desire to control, have power, or be important. It is not that leaders acquiesce to all others or do not have vision or that they are not action oriented. Servant leaders build shared vision that results in cohesive action. They realize that their influence lies in their potential to listen and support rather than dictate or tell. When necessary they do not hesitate to take responsibility and meet head-on with others about their responsibility. In fact, servant leaders have foresight, sense the unknowable, set limits, persuade, are perceptive and aware, and accept responsibility from a commitment to service, especially service to those who are the followers. Servant leaders operate from a strong internal sense of knowing that allows them to move above ego-driven needs.

In the past, we assumed that leadership required the development of certain styles or certain skills. Skills, e.g., communication, conflict resolution, time management, and running meetings, can enhance a leader's ability to manage. However, leadership really begins with an internal perception of self and a willingness to enter into personal development and exploration, Angeles Arrien (1993) has identified four areas for personal development that, if consciously developed, will enhance an individual's capacity for leadership. The first area is that of vision or purpose. What is your purpose for being? What is your dream? Are you living your dream and are your values congruent with your work? The second area is that of healing and forgiveness. Are you willing to heal old wounds? Are you willing to forgive yourself and others? The third area is that of detachment. Can you seek outcome without being attached to your own idea of what that outcome should be? Are you willing to let go of your own ideas to allow the synergistic energy and thinking emerge from the greater whole? The fourth area is that of showing up or being present. Can you bring all of you, your full array of gifts and talents, to your work? to every interaction? Can you stand with confidence in your own integrity every day? Is your self-worth at least as strong as your self-critic?

Our children do need to learn appropriate social skills, and sometimes that requires direct instruction. But even more, they need to learn from effective models. Teachers and administrators who are willing to delve into the journey of self-discovery and take on the cloak of servant leadership will be those effective models. Opportunities for personal development that lead to effective leadership are as important and necessary as training and discussion of effective instructional strategies.

References available upon request from the ULRC. ■

Is That Your Final (Only?) Answer?
Moving Beyond Packaged Social Skills Programs

Daniel Olympia, Janiece Pompa; University of Utah Psychoeducational Clinic; Lorie Coates; Davis School District Specialist

The widespread use of small-group-based social skills training (SST) as a preferred intervention for at risk students and those students with emotional and behavioral problems is well documented. (Rutherford, Quinn & Mathur, 1996). Indeed, many special educators, school psychologists and counselors are asked to provide such programs in a variety of school contexts-as a "stand alone"/pull out intervention or in the larger context of a school-wide discipline program. The training usually proceeds from identification of target students or classes to the selection of critical social skills that need to be improved. The skill is demonstrated, modeled and practiced while coaching, reinforcement and feedback is provided. Finally, a variety of situations in which the social skill(s) might be helpful are either contrived or identified in "real life". While grouping students is the preferred model for social skills training, there are some issues that need to be considered. There are unrealistic assumptions often made about the effectiveness of SST, particularly for specific student populations and when training is not supported by other types of interventions.

The typical student experiencing difficulty in social relationships demonstrates one of two general problem areas: social skills problems associated with behavioral deficits and social skills problems associated with behavioral excesses. Behavioral deficits may originate in students who have difficulty initiating social interactions, who may be generally anxious or lacking in specific friendship making or friendship sustaining skills. Behavioral excesses occur in students who are unable or unwilling to regulate their emotional states in their relationships with peers, adults or parents. They often have problems with anger control, problem solving disputes or interacting with peers without dominating the group.

When structuring social skills interventions for children, the following issues should be considered:

Risk of adverse effects:
Some students may experience negative effects when grouping provides opportunities for peers to reinforce anti-social values. For example, one recent study has found that boys whose friends laughed at deviant statements were more likely to be engaging in delinquent behavior two years later (Dishion, Spracklen, Andrews & Patterson, 1996). Teachers,

U of U School Psych students Cristina McCarthy, Shane Koller and Elizabeth Christiansen provide structured social skills practice opportunities for children participating in the U's Psychoeducational Clinic.

psychologists and others must be aware of the "culture of deviance" that often operates within certain peer groups and take appropriate steps to insulate group activities from those influences. Some students should not be grouped together.

Problem severity:

Students with chronic emotional and behavior difficulties have severe and persistent difficulties that are very stable over time. Many social skills programs are relatively short in duration and typically operate over 10-12-week period (30 hours). No teacher would expect substantive changes in overall reading achievement after just 30 hours of training for students with severe and persistent reading difficulties.

One size doesn't fit all:

Using an established social skill curriculum in a particular order may not target the appropriate skills considered most crucial to the student's success by the teacher/administrator/peer group. To be most effective, social skill training needs to reflect the specific needs of each student.

Accentuate the positive:

Research shows that interventions focusing on specific social skills (i.e. cooperating, social problem solving, initiating social interactions, etc.) show better results. In fact, some of the best results for social skills training come from work with students having specific skills deficits associated with poor social initiation skills, anxiety and social problem solving (Quinn, Kvale, Mathur, Rutherford & Forness, 1999). Disruptive behaviors are more resistant to change through social skills training alone and often need additional interventions that are more contingency driven.

At the University of Utah Psychoeducational Clinic and in Davis School District programs, social skills' training contains several best practice features which promote positive outcomes. These include attention to the following issues:

1. Appropriate grouping: Students need to be grouped within 1-2 years chronologically. Working

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Social Skills Training Packages

Fister, S., Conrad, D., & Kemp, K. (1998). Cool kids: a proactive approach to social responsibility. Longmont CO. Sopris West.

Goldstein, A.P. & McGinnis, E. (1997). The skillstreaming curriculum for adolescents: new strategies and perspectives for teaching prosocial skills (rev.). Champaign, Ill; Research Press.

McGinnis, E. & Goldstein, A.P. (1997). The skillstreaming curriculum for elementary students: new strategies and perspectives for teaching prosocial skills (rev.). Champaign, Ill; Research Press.

Sheridan, Susan (1998). Why don't they like me: Helping your child make and keep friends. Longmont CO. Sopris West.

Sheridan, Susan (1995). The tough kid social skills book. Longmont CO. Sopris West.

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numbers should never go above 7 students at any one time. Special care should be taken to include students with differing needs. They should not be all externalizing behavior disordered students.

2. Behavior management: Programs should have measurable and observable rules tied to a reinforcement program. Early sessions need to address ground rules for the activity and information on how to achieve reinforcement. Group contingencies can have a significant effect on how the group operates. A Yes/No program tied to a "Mystery Motivator" can provide an excellent general format to promote motivation and positive behaviors.

3. Curricula: Keep in mind no one program will address all the needs encountered by children in a school setting. Good social skills instructors need to collect information from a wide variety of programs (see insert).

4. Skills taught are linked to an initial assessment. There can be several approaches to the assessment of social skills, but identifying target behaviors after reviewing data from both formal and informal assessments is critical.

5. Seating: Participants should be seated around a table when possible. This seems to help with an expectation of learning and the need to observe rules consistent with expectations in the class.

6. Co-teaching model: Partnering with a classroom teacher or aide increases opportunities for students to be monitored, receive feedback and get reinforced for practicing/demonstrating skills during the week.

7. Generalization opportunities imbedded in the program: Effective social skills programs set up opportunities for students to demonstrate social skills in other settings. Several ways of doing this include: the use of the co-teaching model, behavior-tracking systems, self-monitoring/contracting and supervised recreational opportunities.

8. Parental communication: Parents are essential in order to follow up with social skills training. They can be instructed to prompt the behavior when appropriate and reinforce those occasions when the child uses the skill. Many programs provide handouts for parents to inform them of specific goals for the week/month and to suggest opportunities when a child might use the skill. Where possible, have parents attend informational and skill oriented sessions that parallel the student groups to promote use of the newly learned skill in other settings.

References available upon request from the ULRC. ■

Feature Article

Who Says Social Skills Training Doesn't Work?

Susan Fister, Independent Consultant BEST Project
Denise Conrad, Principal, Great Falls, MT Public Schools

"He started it!"
"No way! She's always picking on me!"
"They never let me play."
"I had the ball first!"
"This isn't over... I'll get you later!"

These scenes are replayed thousands of times throughout the school year on campuses, playgrounds, in halls, lunchrooms, and classrooms. Conflict is inevitable anytime hundreds of students are interacting six hours a day. In fact, conflict can be healthy and normal when everyone can practice appropriate problem-solving skills. Often, however, conflict doesn't get resolved and problems escalate, spilling into many areas of the students' lives. It is not surprising that the response patterns of both aggressive and nonagressive adolescents is the result of a childhood apprenticeship in maladaptive social behavior (Sylwester, 1999).

The results of the 31st Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll again said "lack of discipline" was the biggest problem facing public schools and a 1998 study by the Educational Testing Service linked discipline problems to poor academic performance (Gordon, 1999). As many as 70% of teachers rate behavior problems in their schools as at least a moderate problem, while 17% rate disruptive behavior of students as a major problem (Great Falls Public Schools Report on Community Dialogue, 1997). Another national survey found discipline issues ranked highest as the reason teachers gave for leaving the profession. Unfortunately, most social skill training has not produced changes that result in generalization in the social behavior of youth, particularly those with disabilities (Gresham, 1998).

What's the Answer?

One hope is to give youngsters skills to interact together in kind, cooperative, compassionate ways. Realistically, problems will occur. However, we can empower children to independently resolve most conflicts (without the help of adults) so that students take care of themselves, others, and their environment.

To do this we must work to build a nurturing, peaceful foundation in our schools. Every day, all day, and in many ways we need to surround students with role models, instructions and environmental cues that enable them to become independent problem-solvers, kind, compassionate children, and ultimately, socially competent citizens of the world.

One component of building this foundation both formally and informally and in ongoing ways includes teaching social skills that students can practice when they are young. Starting early is the key. An early infusion of social skills instruction will hopefully give our young children enough practice at living and learning together peacefully so that it becomes automatic in later years. Teaching children to be proactive, not reactive provides gentle personal strength and effective behavioral strategies for them in adolescence.

Cool Kids-A Proactive Approach to Social Responsibility (Fister, Conrad, & Kemp 1998) is one program that is having success in accomplishing just this mission. There are 36 overlapping skills included in Level 1 and 2 of the curriculum, which are appropriate for preschool through secondary levels. Skills can be selected from either level, based upon student needs, surveys, and/or competing inappropriate behaviors that prevent students from being successful both in and outside the classroom. Some skills are prerequisite to other skills like Looking, Listening, and Following Instructions. Others are considered cooperation and compliance skills like Accepting Feedback or Correction, which

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Personal Manifesto or Philosophy:
The way you play golf is the way you live your life.

Favorite Books:
Golf and the Spirit
Divine Secrets of the Ya Ya Sisterhood
Tuesdays with Morrie

Best Educational Tip:
If we used what we know works for all students, in terms of effective instructional strategies, we'd be far better at modifying and adapting instruction for students at risk.

allow students to get along and stay out of trouble. Other skills like Disagreeing and Making a Request are empowering in that they assist students in getting their needs met appropriately. Each skill is broken down into three to six specific steps for successful performance in order to replace less desirable social behaviors. Cool Kids focuses on teaching automatic performance of a few critical skills (with appropriate modifications for different circumstances) that can be applied to many life situations, rather than on providing superficial coverage of many skills. Skills are taught to mastery and then demonstration is required across different settings over extended periods of time.

Why Does *Cool Kids* Work?

Cool Kids has the best results when all staff are involved and use consistent procedures for teaching, acknowledging, correcting, and assisting students to generalize social behavior across all school settings. The program has been tested in a variety of classrooms and schools for over 4 years. Results such as significant reductions in office referrals and fighting,

increases in giving compliments, offers to help, accepting correction, and increases in academically engaged time have all been evident. Parent and staff survey data have also shown that the program is proving to be successful for many of the following reasons:

• Focusing on prevention by proactively teaching specific behaviors as alternatives to "un-cool" reactions.

• Teaching relevant rationales that are personal to youth and then holding students accountable for explaining the underlying reasons for the social behaviors.

• Teaching when, where and with whom it is necessary to use and/or modify the use of a specific skill in every activity throughout the school day as well as outside the school day.

• Using "preventive" prompts by different adults and in different settings that remind students to use a social skill right before the skill is needed. For example, "get ready to use your steps for getting an adult's attention."

• Providing classroom and school-wide implementation strategies and reproducible materials such as lesson planners, sample lessons, and practice activities for actively reviewing, teaching and reinforcing social responsibility skills throughout the entire school day and year.

• Teaching students how to apply self-monitoring strategies to keep track of the use of a specific skill in different settings, and allowing students to see themselves acting appropriately (i.e., photographs, videos, etc.).

• Covertly monitoring, reinforcing, and occasional use of surprise rewards for using a skill in different settings.

• Conducting regular de-briefing sessions with students to discuss how and why a skill was applied along with any necessary changes for future improvement.

• Utilizing procedures and reproducible materials for school staff and families to acknowledge appropriate social behavior so that everyone involved can encourage maintenance and generalization of skills across different settings.

• Encouraging year-to-year application of the skills supported with follow-up strategies, materials and reproducible activities.

A school-wide time commitment invested in social skill instruction pays off. Less time is spent dealing with inappropriate behavior; more time becomes available for quality instruction. Daily attention to these important life skills certainly enhances student success. Creating and living a nurturing social skill curriculum improves the instructional climate for the entire school community as evidenced in improved job performance and satisfaction, for the educational personnel, and later in life for students.

For more information on *Cool Kids* social skills training, contact Susan Fister at (801) 582-4070.

References are available upon request from the ULRC. ■

Standardized Cognitive Assessment and Social Skill Deficits: Teach School or Teach Life?

Michael Herbert, Utah Learning Resource Center

What do you do if a child comes to school but cannot read? Do you belittle them, make them think that they are stupid, tell them that they are not trying hard enough, place them in time-out, call their parents, or suspend them? Of course not! You are a teacher, and your responsibility is to teach that skill. Students come to school to learn, and your job is to organize a strategy, sequence the essential skills, model and demonstrate the task, provide ample opportunity to practice the skills, and provide corrective feedback and encouragement as needed. The concept is called TEACHING. Regardless of your teaching assignment, you teach reading because you believe that reading is an essential life skill. You are a TEACHER.

What do you do if a child comes to school and evidences social skill deficits? Do you belittle them, make them think that they are stupid, tell them that they are not trying hard enough, place them in time-out, call their parents or suspend them? Why are some teachers willing to teach one skill that is essential to success in life but not another?

Begin With The End In Mind

Look ahead and predict the trajectory of students with social skill deficits. Social skill related difficulties are more limiting to adults in social and vocational situations than academic deficits. Business/industry can teach young adults or adults to perform a skill with on the job training. But, that young adult will not maintain that job or will be terminated if they evidence problems getting along with co-workers or customers. Social skill deficits also contribute to a lowered quality of living, fewer social interactions, higher relationship failures, and higher rates of substance abuse and incarceration.

Why do you teach? Do you see your role as an educational professional to assist students to master academic material, to pass classes, to move from grade to grade; OR to assist students to become independent managers of their lives and lead productive and fulfilling roles after completing school? Begin with the end in sight, and teach transferable skills and appropriate social accommodations for success after school completion.

Social Skills Or Social Intelligence?

Psychologists propose that there are multiple aspects to intelligence, and that mental self-management requires competence in multiple environments for life success. Robert Sternburg believes that "Intelligence is the purposeful adaptation to and selection and shaping of real-world environments relevant to one's life" (p. 72, The Triarchic Mind). Individuals can be strong in some aspects of

intelligence but weak in others (the definition of learning disabilities?). Apply this logic to the learning of non-academic skills. Consider how strengths, weaknesses or functional limitations in intra-cognitive processing areas may affect or limit the acquisition and performance of social skills.

Conduct a complete assessment. A comprehensive educational assessment (required for qualification and appropriate academic programming) will also yield important information that may help to explain social deficits and suggest intervention strategies or

accommodations. At a minimum administer tests 1-14, and tests 20-21 of the WJR (Woodcock Johnson Revised) to obtain intra-cognitive strengths, weaknesses and functional limitations. Analyze the assessment results and brainstorm transferable strategies to teach students about their adaptive needs before placing them in transition or paid jobs. Teach students to advocate for themselves and obtain appropriate accommodations.

Skills Deficit Or Performance Deficit?
(Can't do it or won't do it, and how to tell the difference).

LONG-TERM RETRIEVAL is the ability (effectiveness) to store information and fluently retrieve it later through association over extended time periods. Employers are easily frustrated at having to constantly re-teach or monitor employee performance.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS
Information does not stick
Pairing of visual and auditory associations
Use of teacher made associations
Memorization of information
Learning and recalling information through
association, such as names/faces,
dates/events, related ideas/concepts

STRATEGIES
Limit the number of new words, tasks
Provide overlearning, review, repetition
Provide multisensory learning
Provide list of steps to help recall
Teach/provide mnemonic aids such as verbal mediation or rehearsal

SHORT-TERM MEMORY is the ability to hold information in immediate awareness and then use it within a few seconds. Job related problems include following a series of directions, taking notes or messages, recalling sequences of information, remembering information long enough to think about it, and comprehending the details of lengthy discourse.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS
May be seriously impaired by anxiety
May be seriously impaired by distractibility
or distractions
May be affected by speed of input
Following directions
Remembering information long enough to process
for comprehension

STRATEGIES
Keep oral directions short and simple
Ensure directions have been understood-have student
paraphrase and repeat back
Provide overlearning, review, repetition
Write directions/assignments on paper
Tape record for later playback and review

PROCESSING SPEED is the ability to work quickly, particularly when under pressure to maintain focused attention. It is the quantity of low level processing, not the quality of processing if given enough time. Individuals with deficient processing speed may experience frustration and failure, and may be terminated due to poor production.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS
May be seriously impaired by distractibility or distractions
Completion of tasks, work within allotted time period
Reading speed (can't process symbols fast enough to
enhance comprehension)

STRATEGIES
Reduce quantity in favor of quality of work, demonstrating mastery
Limit quantity of work or allow more time
Provide notes, outline, reader

AUDITORY PROCESSING involves the ability to analyze and synthesize sounds and sound patterns of language (phonological processing). Deficiencies can negatively impact language development and comprehension of one's native language as well as second language learning.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS
Difficulty with Phonics (decoding)
Cannot read own writing (note taking)
Difficulty Spelling (encoding)
Difficulty with Short-Term Memory

STRATEGIES
Provide reader, visual examples
Provide with checklists, simple directions
Provide word bank or spell check device
Teach visually if stronger skill

VISUAL PROCESSING involves perceiving and thinking with visual patterns, visual details, and spatial orientation. Visual Processing is also related to social perception, the ability to recognize and interpret facial cues and body language, and to gain an understanding of one's social environment.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS
Awareness of visual detail
Assembling puzzles
Sense spatial boundaries (fitting, packing)
Reading body language

STRATEGIES
Provide activities with manipulatives
Provide copying, drawing activities
Tracing, sorting shapes, block building
Teach observation, interpretation

COMPREHENSION-KNOWLEDGE includes the comprehension of communication (language); types of reasoning based on previously learned procedures and represents the person's store of declarative and procedural knowledge. Related to non-verbal language comprehension.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS	STRATEGIES
Vocabulary	Maintain word bank, learn job vocabulary
Answering factual questions	Relate new information to prior knowledge
Reading comprehension	Provide vocabulary, background and context
Listening comprehension	Teach paraphrasing, provide notes

FLUID REASONING involves the capability to reason with qualitative information, drawing inferences from relationships and comprehending implications. It is the ability to adapt to unfamiliar situations, and is important in demonstration of social behavior.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS	STRATEGIES
Abstract problem solving	Make learning meaningful, provide context
Transfer and generalization	Provide overlearning, repetition, review
Flexibility in thinking	Teach concepts in a concrete manner
Problem solving	Provide with a list of procedures to follow when problem solving

ORAL LANGUAGE Individuals with low oral language skills may misunderstand, or may misinterpret what they hear. Oral language difficulties may result in social interaction problems due to immature speech patterns, errors in verbal expression, and difficulties in sentence comprehension and formulation.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS	STRATEGIES
Verbal comprehension	Chain instruction, check for accuracy
Provide written instructions	Work in teams, provide with supportive supervisor
Difficulty verbalizing	Limit expressive verbal requirements
	Choose jobs that minimize weaknesses

Educator Idea Exchange

To Have or Not to Have: Social Skills

Christine Franco, Teacher of the Deaf, Utah School for the Deaf

Teaching social skills to hearing-impaired students is every bit as important as the teaching of academics. No matter what the child's reading and math level is-having social skills is the gauge to success in the hearing world.

I work in the oral program at the Utah School for the Deaf. Our objective is to help our students become part of the hearing world by teaching them lip-reading, developing their use of residual hearing to the maximum and working with them on learning oral language and intelligible speech skills.

Social skills must be taught. Three successful programs have helped formulate my teaching of social skills: 1) Good Talking Words-a social communication skills program for preschool and kindergarten classes by Lucy Hart Paulson; 2) Boys Town Social Skills Curriculum for upper elementary, junior high and high school from Boys Town, Nebraska; and 3) Communication Groups-which provide practice. All of these programs contain some of the same important lessons.

How to greet someone

How to listen and follow directions

How to communicate-even non-verbally

How to have a conversation

How to accept "no" for an answer

How to introduce yourself and others

How to have good manners

How to problem solve

How to express feelings

How to take turns

The teacher must decide which social skills children are lacking or, if the children are young, all must be taught. Each lesson should contain the same major components.

• Introduction of the social skill through role-playing. Be sure examples and non-examples are given.

• Written or orally told sequence of how to accomplish the social skill, step by step.

• Pictures and/or literature demonstrating the practice or non-practice of the skill.

• Ample opportunities to practice the skill and re-teach, if necessary.

• Note to parents making them aware of the skill being taught so they can follow-through at home.

• Reinforcement given when the child is observed demonstrating the behavior.

• Willingness to practice the skill on the spot when the situation presents itself.

Communication groups provide opportunities for hearing and hearing impaired individuals to work together. A small group of hearing peers join my hearing impaired children for a 20 minute session daily. Learning names and interests of each other is the first element of the group. I explain the benefit to all participants, how the group will be conducted, and we also talk about communication guidelines (how to talk to someone who is hearing impaired). One or two social skills lessons are then taught monthly. Each lesson has rules to follow. I model and demonstrate with a student and then break the students into groups of two or three. In their group, they discuss and role-play the skill using different scenarios.

Social skills can be taught and need to be teamed. Hearing impaired students need acceptance in the world. Good social skills pave the way for that acceptance. ∎

Educator Idea Exchange

S.O.S. Solutions on Socialization

Jane DeByle, Mountain Crest High School, Cache School District

T*hese kids are under credited in our society and I think as kids ourselves, we are raised to believe that. It is incredible how much can be learned from associating and working with people with disabilities". (Heidi Maddern 12th grade)*

As a teacher of students with disabilities, one of the most difficult areas of training for students with disabilities is social skills. I can teach time telling, money, reading and writing without too much distress, but social skills such as looking at people when they are talking to you, keeping others personal space, and answering questions seem to be the hardest. Teaching social skills is the most important aspect of our curriculum for students with disabilities because it opens more doors in their future.

One of the main problems for students with disabilities lies within the community in general. There is such a mixed reaction. Some feel people with disabilities should not be seen in public while others are happy to interact with them. There are people who want to do everything for people with disabilities while others just stare and are afraid to help if the individual needs it. With such confused messages, it is often difficult for teachers to teach appropriate social skills.

In spite of this difficulty our classroom expectations are high in social etiquette. Students are to talk politely to each other, respect is required toward others, and students are to work as a team. Students are asked to greet others and give eye contact when speaking or being spoken to, and are requested to follow instructions quickly and accurately. Students are also taught to ask for assistance before the staff member offers it.

Teaching social skills is the most important aspect of our curriculum for students with disabilities because it opens more doors in their future.

"I have learned these kids can do a lot more without help than everyone, including me, gave them credit for." (Gloria Peterson 12th grade)

At the high school level, we have been fortunate to have peer tutors. They are high school students who choose to work with my students with disabilities as one of their elective credits. Some of our peer tutors have a sibling with a disability or have had some community involvement with students with disabilties, as well as students who have little or no experience. We have 1 - 10 peer tutors in the class at one time. Each student is responsible for running a variety of programs as well as collecting data, but the main reason for the peer tutor program is to help the students with disabilities with social skills. It's through this interaction that the student with disabilities will hopefully experience appropriate modeling of social skills and encouragement by peer tutors. A peer tutor stated, "Being a peer tutor has helped me realize that special needs students are not as different from me, as I thought." (Areel Nye 12th grade)

Prerequisites for becoming a peer tutor are filling out an application which is signed by the teacher and the student's counselor, checking the applicant's attendance, and having the applicant answer questions such as, "Why do you want to take the class?" "What is your experience, if any, with working with people with disabilities?" It is important to have responsible students since they implement the programs. Once the student is cleared to join the classroom he/she is briefed on the expectations for the students with disabilities. After the student is accepted, the peer tutor is expected to write a feelings report focusing on what the tutor expects to learn or their perception of individuals with disabilities. This occurs on the first and last day of the trimester. Tutors are also required to read and answer questions about students with disabilities and do 2-4 lessons. These lessons range from art projects to learning the school cheers. Peer tutors earn most of their points through participation. Ten points are given each day. Five points are taken off per tardy. All of the assignments and daily participation effect how the peer tutor is graded.

Hopefully the experience of being a peer tutor will enable students to help educate the community now and in the future. Through their involvement, the peer tutor will be able to interact with people with disabilities, with less fear and greater respect. *"You have to realize that you and society are the ones categorizing people as retarded, handicapped or special, when in reality they are not that way, they are just as normal as everyone else and are unique in their own way. They can do anything they set their mind to and the people who say 'I can't' are the ones who are retarded." (Micah Bates 12th grade)*

Another advantage to the peer tutor program is that many of the students with disabilities get opportunities to go to dances, ball games and other school activities, because peer tutors take them. Many times a peer tutor will even take a student beyond a school activity. They may go to a movie or go skiing. They help them in other community organizations such as Scouting, blood drives, car washes and more community projects. By having the peer tutor experience, the peer tutors know the student's abilities and are likely to encourage the student to participate. They have seen their capabilities in the classroom and know they can be positive contributors. *"Working as a peer tutor has helped me see that when you work with the students and get to know them they react to you even when you're not in the classroom. Seeing the students outside of the classroom has helped me realize that what they learn in the classroom, they take with them in social situations.". (Leslie Bybee 11th grade)*

The peer tutor program profits both the disabled as well as non-disabled peers. *"From my experience in the classroom so far, I have learned you should not judge people before you know them. The more I work with these kids, the better friends I become with them. It is fun to watch them figure out an answer that they have trouble with." (Jon Rowey 12th grade)*

Using peer tutors in the classroom makes the class more age-appropriate and more socially acceptable. ■

Hopefully the experience of being a peer tutor will enable students to help educate the community now and in the future.

Educator Idea Exchange

Reader's Choice Tutor Program

Wendy Whittle, Emery High School, Emery School District

Two years ago the Emery High School English department realized that we needed to teach a reading class. The students, mostly sophomores, were selected on the basis of low reading scores. I was "stuck" with the class and spent the summer taking classes and trying to develop a curriculum for a subject I knew nothing about. I knew how to teach writing and literature classes, but always viewed reading as some sort of magic that elementary teachers worked when students were in first grade.

Many schools are involved in tutor programs. My elementary age son had been a participant in cross age tutoring at Ferron Elementary where an older class tutors a younger class. We added a new twist by pairing up low level high school readers with low level elementary readers and just hoped that it would work.

The first year the class consisted of mainstream students with low reading scores. During the first quarter we worked on improving high school reading skills like fluency, speed, and comprehension. In the process of tutor training, they learned about decoding, reading in context and other "good reader" strategies that they would use in tutoring the children. Because they knew that they would have to teach these skills, they tried harder to learn and practice them. During the second quarter they tutored elementary and Head Start children. It was an amazing success. Most educators can attest to the fact that kids with low skills get bad grades which in turn leads to low self esteem and "at risk" behaviors. When these high school students realized that they would be teaching little children how to read, they gained a purpose for reading. Most improved by at least one or two grade levels, some by as much as four grade levels. The most inspiring improvement was the change in attitude. These students are now taking regular English classes and most are successfully earning A's and B's.

As I talk to high school students, most admit that they quit reading in second or third grade when it became difficult. It seems that by having them go

back to read at this level they fill in the gaps that were missed in elementary school and then are able to make progress. They read more "kid's books" in high school than they ever did in elementary and as a result become more competent high school readers.

This year the resource teachers started filtering in their students. Some of these students were reading at a pre kindergarten level and had accepted the fact that they would never read. Again, by placing them with an elementary student who could not read as well as they, the high school students had a chance for success. For the first time in their lives, they were reading. High school students told me that they could actually feel their brains doing things they had never done before. Imagine the excitement of the girl who said, "My little friend can read now, and so can I."

Consider the comments of other students: "I am getting better grades than I have ever gotten in my English classes. Now I am getting A's! My parents were so proud of me I couldn't believe it!! When we were studying about how to study better I took what I learned and used it in my American Government and Law class. I did better on the test than I've ever done before." And, "I asked my mom for a book for Christmas. It will be the first one I have ever wanted." "My reading has improved. I feel that when you learn about why other people have trouble reading and you help them that you become better at reading yourself." "I wish someone had done this for me when I was little."

Parents comment on the change in attitude and confidence in their teenagers. Some have said that their teen talks to them more about the tutor program than they have talked for years. Other people who are involved with them have said that they now dare to read aloud in public, participating in speech and drama competitions, and interacting more with family members.

In many ways it sounds too good to be true and it is. This combination of students is marvelous. The success rate is astounding. Both groups of students learn to read. The bonding and caring are touching. It is fun to watch a high school boy blush when a child hugs him around the knees or hugs him goodbye each day as we leave.

As an educator, this is the most rewarding experience I have had. I see how education truly changes lives. ■

Educator Idea Exchange

Success With Social Skills

Stephanie Grangroth & David Henderson,
Eisenhower Junior High School, Granite School District

Social skills are what allow us to pass as normal. Whether one can pass as normal depends not so much on whether one can read or write but rather on one's level of social skill development." Dr. Stephen Greenspan, director for Boys' Town in Nebraska defined social skills this way. While this definition places great emphasis on the importance of social skills and the development of students' skills, many questions still remain. Questions commonly asked by educators are: What and how should different skills be taught? What is normal? What type of student should be in a social skills class? How do we teach students who are not special education?

As educators, part of our responsibility is to help students acquire the various social skills that will allow them to be successful adults. By approaching this issue from a team perspective, more students can benefit from a variety of programs sponsored by caring adults. At Eisenhower Jr. High, we approach all students as "our" kids and view their problems as individual rather than separating them into special education and general education issues. At one time or another, most students have needs regardless of possible special education labels, which can at times be detrimental. Two different programs at Eisenhower Jr. High which are currently being implemented have been found to be successful.

Teen Support

Teen Support is a class for at-risk students who are struggling academically and/or socially. Teachers or counselors refer students to the program based on socially unacceptable behaviors such as not completing their work or acting out. The focus of the program is to build a strong relationship with the students who otherwise may not have positive adult/child interactions. The Teen Support teacher and aide make a daily contact with these students' parents either through phone contact or home visits. The frequent communication with parents and students helps improve the success many students have as a result of participation in this program.

The curriculum focuses on teaching the students positive life skills. These life skills include working with teams, making choices and accepting consequences. These are taught through activities, mock trials, moral dilemmas, role playing peer interactions and proper communication skills. The atmosphere in this classroom is warm and inviting. These students know the teacher cares about them and the choices they make in school.

Through a level system, the students earn certain privileges and activities. There are four levels and students know exactly what they need to do to make it to the next level. This teaches them to be more responsible for themselves. The progress of the students is checked on a daily basis so the students receive immediate feedback about how they are doing. For some students, progress reports have been found to help them be more responsible with their work and behavior.

This program has been found to improve the academic and social success of these students. Students who were at risk for having more serious problems have a caring adult who monitors their progress and teaches them how to be more responsible. Many students who would have automatically been referred for special education testing are given instruction and services first.

Social Skills

Social skills can be a challenging class to teach. Also challenging is developing a system that will encourage students to generalize the behaviors they learn in other classrooms. When teaching social skills, the teacher must clearly define the rules and explain the expectations so that students can be held responsible. The students in the class are those previously qualified to receive special education services.

There are four things to keep in mind when developing social skills curriculum for the students. First, make it relevant to their needs. Teach skills that pertain directly to the students. Second, develop a positive rapport with them and model appropriate social skills. Students are more receptive to what you teach when they know you care. Third, be positive. Reinforce the appropriate behaviors you want to continue. Negative attention breeds a negative atmosphere. All students are affected in

the end. Fourth, have two or three activities that change every ten to fifteen minutes during the class period. These students often have a difficult time sitting still and paying attention (as you are already aware). Find information and topics that interest them. If it is interesting to them, you will know if you can continue for an extended period of time.

One way we attempt to help students generalize the appropriate behaviors is with a school-wide behavior program. We call it the ABCD program. Teachers and staff members in the school are told which students are on this program so they can reinforce appropriate behavior when they see it. Good Idea Tickets are provided for the adults to sign and give to the students. These tickets are then used at the end of the week for a drawing. Businesses in the community have donated coupons for free food or movies in support of this program and these donations are the drawing prizes. Points are also calculated at the end of the week and posted so the students can see a running total. Participation at monthly activities is determined by the number of points students earn. Of course, if the students have inappropriate behavior, they can loose points based on severity of the behavior. This has been one way for teachers to remember to reinforce students in an effort to shape their behavior. The students are always curious to know when the next party is or who won the drawing.

Skills taught include Boys Town Social Skills, anger management skills, problem solving skills, making choices, and various other life skills. Students also write their thoughts on various topics in a daily journal. This encourages discussions and further activities on the topics.

Teaching social skills to adolescents can be a challenging experience. However, by modeling appropriate behavior, letting them know you care, remaining positive with them, and developing interesting activities you can make the experience more enjoyable. ■

Educator Idea Exchange

Viking of the Week Program at Valley View

Cindy Maw, Principal,
Valley View Elementary School, Weber School District

One of the advantages I have had as the now principal at Valley View Elementary in Weber School District is that I have had the privilege of following an awesome principal, Maurine Newton. Part of the legacy she left is the "Viking of the Week " program, based on the "Circle of Courage " Medicine Wheel referred to in the book Reclaiming Youth at Risk by Brentro, Brokenleg, and Van Sockem. The Circle of Courage is divided into four "Spirits"-Belonging, Mastery, Independence, and Generosity. Each staff member is familiar with the concepts in this book, and as new teachers join the faculty, they are trained in how to identify the spirits or traits in their students.

The Spirit of Belonging refers to treating others as related. According to traditional Native society, treating others in this manner is a powerful social value that transforms human relationships. Drawing others into one's circle motivates the showing of respect and concern and enables people to live with a minimum of friction and maximum of goodwill. Also, Dr. Karl Menniger observes that "living with and loving other human beings who return that love is the most strengthening salubrious emotional experience in the world."

The Spirit of Mastery is referred to as competence motivation. When a child's need to be competent is satisfied, motivation for further achievement is enhanced. The goal of Native education is to develop cognitive, physical, social, and spiritual competence. Striving is for attainment of a personal goal, not being superior to one's opponents. Just as one feels ownership in the success of others, one also learns to share personal achievements with others. Success therefore becomes a possession of the many, not of the privileged few.

The philosophy of the Spirit of Independence is grounded in a respect for the right of all persons to control their own destiny and the belief that children will respond to positive nurturance but cannot be made responsible by imposing one's own will on them. Native elders teach that if children are to be taught responsibility, they must be approached with maturity and dignity. This is affirmed by Glasser's premise that discipline never really succeeds if it does not recognize the universal need for all persons to be free, to be in control of themselves, and to be able to influence others.

One of the highest virtues, according to Native Cultures is to be generous and unselfish. The Circle of Generosity teaches that one should always share generously without holding back. Prestige was accorded in Native culture to those who gave unreservedly, while those with nothing to give were pitied. According to Hans Selye, altruism is the ultimate resource for coping with life's conflicts, for in reaching out to help another, one breaks free from preoccupation with the self.

With the above information in mind, the teachers choose a "Viking of the Week" candidate each Tuesday. The student receives a certificate recognizing which spirit he/she has demonstrated (belonging, mastery, independence, or generosity). The PTA then assists the students in putting their hand print (with tempera paint) on the large picture windows in the school foyer. The student's name, date, and spirit category is listed. It is the goal to make sure that each student in the entire school is recognized during the school year. Our "Viking of the Week" window is a source of pride for the entire staff, student body, and community. It gives us a chance to recognize the value of each individual student while teaching them important core social attributes.

Effective Strategies for Student Success

Barbara Penrod, South Sanpete School District, Manti Elementary Second Grade Teacher

As the decision maker in the class-room, the teacher chooses strategies that enhance the students learning styles. Teaching strategies are a way to lead a group to achieve a goal or an objective. They are a set of procedures for both students and teachers to fol-low. Following are a few strategies for each of the learning styles identified by Karl Yung:

Confucius said, "Learning without thought is labor lost. Teaching without thought is perilous."

The goal of Manti Elementary School is to "increase the power of thought" in our faculty and students making school "a home for the mind." The process of thoughtful education helps both educators and students increase their knowledge base to become better decision makers and critical thinkers. Thinking and problem solving strategies are essential for teachers and students. A thinking school depends on continuous improvement in creating a learning community. For students to learn differently, we must teach differently.

Manti Elementary School works on the premise of Karl Jung's four learning styles. All are equally valu-able and students need to be aware of each of these learning styles that work in a circular motion as opposed to a hierarchy of skills. A good baseball coach knows that you have to touch all four bases to score a run. Thoughtful teachers know that students' minds need to experience activities in different styles of think-ing to achieve in-depth learning. The more comfortable we feel about how we learn best enables us to learn from others. Recognizing different teaching strategies will help students understand the diversity of the people with whom they interact. Educators and learners should always be assessing and asking: "What can we learn from what we are doing?"

Educators can assist students in discovering their unique style profiles. Learning styles are not fixed. They develop throughout a student's lifetime. Students should never be labeled by their prominent learning style, as most people's styles adapt with various subject areas. The teacher's responsibility is to guide the stu-dent to work toward balance and wholeness and be actively involved in their own learning.

MASTERY style strategies teach remembering. This task oriented sequential method assures competence and success.
- Write an article
- Put together a magazine
- Develop a plan
- Describe a complex procedure/object
- Develop a newscast

UNDERSTANDING style strategies teach analysis, reasoning and the why of things. Teachers encourage curiosity and investigation.
- Make a case
- Advance a theory
- Interpret a text
- Explain an artifact
- Make/defend a decision

INTERPERSONAL style strategies provide an envi-ronment that is supportive and cooperative in nature.
- Write a letter
- Make a pitch
- Conduct an interview
- Counsel a fictional character or friend

SELF EXPRESSION style strategies reorganize information into other possibilities.
- Write a play
- Develop a plan to direct
- Spin a tale
- Develop an advertising campaign

Identifying ways each individual student learns will build self-esteem. The more students are conscious of how they learn best, the more meaningful their own education will seem to them. As educators, our role is to give them viable options remembering: "Human nature is not a machine to be built after a model, and set to do exactly the work prescribed for it; but a tree, which requires to grow and develop itself on all sides, according to the tendency of the inward forces which make it a living thing." *-John Stuart Mill* ∎

Jordan School District Celebrated Occupational Therapy Month

April is Occupational Therapy Month! Occupational Therapy personnel on the Motor Development Team celebrated this occasion with many activities to increase the awareness of school staff district wide. One of these was the Occupational Therapy Quiz. Please have fun in finding the most correct answer for each question. You may want to check answers below upon your completion of this quiz. If you need further assistance, please call us at 565-7189.

1. O.T. stands for:
a) Over Time b) Over Tired c) Occupational Therapy d) Over Taxed.

2. O.T. in the school system usually deals with concerns in
a) handwriting b) fine motor skills c) walking d) self care skills e) all of the above f) a, b, and d.

3. When an O.T. asks you to give a small piece of crayon to a child to color with, it is
a) to save $ for the school district b) to better match the child's finger c) to facilitate the development of proper pencil grasps.

4. The net swing is used for some children, with the main therapeutic reason being
a) to have fun b) to provide stimulation to the vestibular system which plays a vital role in coordinating all of the senses in one's body c) to stimulate seizures.

5. O.T. works with students to develop fine motor skills by
a) providing prehension development activities b) designing finger strengthening exercises
c) enhancing manipulative abilities d) finding the student a job e) all except d.

6. Which one of the following contributing factors may create poor handwriting in students, but is not an appropriate reason for an O.T. referral? a) visual motor perceptual problem b) laziness
c) poor shoulder joint stability d) inadequate sensory system feedback.

7. Which of the following may not be an appropriate accommodation for a student with visual perceptual difficulties? a) having a peer copy notes b) allowing additional time or modifying the amount of work required
c) having work to be copied from the blackboard on the desk top d) penalizing the student by having him/her miss recess and make up unfinished work.

8. Once it has been determined by the team that it is no longer beneficial nor realistic to continue with strategies to improve a student's handwriting, what may be a logical recommendation from the team for this student? a) explore the use of technology such as keyboarding and recording b) discontinue any handwriting opportunities and responsibilities c) have a full time aide for all written requirements
d) none of the above sounds right.

9. The adaptive equipment of a foot riser is commonly seen in the classroom when a student's legs are too short to touch the ground. Why is it so important for the student's feet to be able to touch the floor?
a) to improve the student's attention b) to provide better stability for the student during desk work
c) to improve the cosmetic look of the seating arrangement and the student's ability to use a new gadget d) a & b

Answers: 1-c, 2-f, 3-c, 4-b, 5-e, 6-b, 7-d, 8-a, 9-d.

Fostering Development of Social Skills, a Principal's Perspective

Sharon Neyme, Career/Professional Development Team Leader,
Utah SIGNAL Project

Each day hundreds of IEP teams convene to chart a plan for success for students with disabilities. Chances are that many of those IEP's will include at least one goal addressing social skills development. Hopefully, the adults involved in following through with that IEP will have the knowledge and skills necessary to help the student achieve success in that goal. As a building administrator I have attended many such IEP meetings. As the LEA, I may leave an IEP meeting patting myself on the back and saying "Good job, another meeting out of the way. My role in this process is now over." But is it really? What is the role of the building administrator in making sure that not only each individual student with an IEP develops positive social skills, but that all students in the learning community are assisted in becoming more confident, skilled citizens? Several strategies that may prove effective for the building administrator include the following:

Train all faculty on how to actively participate in the IEP process. IDEA 97 requires that a representative from the general education faculty participate in each IEP meeting. It also requires that all teachers of a given student assist in helping the student achieve the goals developed. Many general educators are still unsure of their role in this process. It is the responsibility of the building administrator to make sure that all faculty members have received adequate training to comfortably implement IEP requirements.

Provide professional development opportunities for all staff in teaching and reinforcing appropriate social skills. Many students who are not identified also need training in appropriate behavior. It has been my experience that all teachers want to provide positive experiences for students. More students seem to be entering our school system without the needed social skills, however, some faculty may not have the training necessary to be able to address student deficits. Skilled, confident teachers can provide timely assistance for all students. By proactively training faculty in social skills development, we equip them with the tools necessary to address the social skill needs of all students. We also create a confident, competent professional community.

Train faculty to be sensitive to the social skill needs of culturally diverse students. New immigrant children who are learning English language skills, must also learn new cultural skills. This may be an overwhelming task. Patterns of thinking, styles of social interaction, interpersonal relationships, and family roles may vary dramatically with what the student was previously familiar. Train faculty to be empathetic and understanding in assisting culturally diverse students to adapt and develop social skills appropriate to their new environment.

Model appropriate social skills. This may sound

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simplistic, but in fact is critical in fostering improved social skills schoolwide. As a member of the school community, do I stop and pick up trash in the halls? Do I assist students in keeping the lunchroom clean? Do I model patience and courtesy and maintain an acceptable level of voice control (and appropriate language) even when angry? Do I say "please" and "thank you" and look students and parents in the eye, even in the midst of difficult situations? A building administrator who consistently models appropriate social skills, can have a significant impact on the development of skills in students and teachers.

Set up training procedures to foster schoolwide social skills development. Some school situations lend themselves to confusion and inappropriate behavior. If there is a situation that habitually encourages inappropriate behavior, the building administrator may wish to develop a procedure to

address the situation, then allow students the opportunity to practice. For example, assemblies may be promoting rowdy behavior. Setting up clear guidelines and sponsoring "practice" assemblies will help all students understand and be able to demonstrate correct assembly behavior. It will also help students feel more comfortable in diverse social settings such as attending a symphony or dance performance. Just as individual students need opportunities for practice when developing appropriate social skills, groups of students do also.

Social skills, like academic skills, must be taught, allowing students adequate opportunities to practice and achieve mastery.

Develop programs to address the specific needs of at risk students. As a principal of a junior high, I found that each year increasing numbers of new seventh graders were having difficulty adapting to junior high. Much of the transition difficulty seemed to stem from a lack of social skills. Through an experimental developmental grant we were able to start a summer "camp" that gave us a chance to teach skills necessary for success to sixth grade students identified as being at risk. Students had a chance to interact with positive peer role models, learn important skills such as how to talk with a teacher in an appropriate manner, how to keep track of homework and assignments, and even tips for good hygiene. Students who participated in the program were more likely to successfully navigate their first year of junior high.

The role of the building administrator in helping students learn appropriate social skills goes far beyond simply attending individual IEP meetings. It goes to the heart of what being an "instructional leader" is all about. Social skills, like academic skills, must be taught, allowing students adequate opportunities to practice and achieve mastery. The strategies listed above are just a few that principals may wish to consider in helping all students develop social competence.

In a few weeks, the Utah SIGNAL Project will be disseminating a Request for Proposals for pilot projects to address schoolwide programs for positive behavioral supports and interventions. Schoolwide social skills improvement is one goal of the project. Letters announcing this project have already been sent to all building principals and district representatives. SIGNAL is also looking into the pre-service training of all educators to identify and strengthen pre-service training in this critical area. For further information contact the Utah SIGNAL Project. ■

Ask Mae

Mae Taylor, Director, At Risk & Special Education Services

Utah State Office of Education

Special Education Rules

The past two months have been busy ones for USOE staff. The most significant activity was issuing the DRAFT USOE Special Education Rules! Copies have been distributed to parents, organizations, school districts, universities, and others. Four public hearings have been held, in Ogden, Salt Lake City, Provo, and St. George. The input period ended April 30, after which we will synthesize the information, determine appropriate changes, and make a final copy for State Board of Education approval. It is anticipated that the final "Rules 2000" will be printed and available for distribution prior to the beginning of the 2000-01 school year (July).

Because of the new Rules publication, a special training session will be held the day before the Law Conference, August 1st. Registration will be through your local Director of Special Education, for public school employees. Several regional inservice training sessions will be scheduled throughout the state. In addition, special education staff members will also be available for providing inservice on the new Rules, as requested.

USOE Staff Appointments

Permanent appointments have now been made in the two sections of SARS that have been headed by acting coordinators. The coordinators of the three SARS units, therefore, are:

Patricia Bradley
At Risk Services Unit • 538-7817

Nan Gray
Special Education Services Unit • 538-7757

Sandra Johnson
Title 1 Services Unit • 538-7806

We hope you are looking forward to a rewarding summer. This fall we will unveil new and exciting plans and activities within the state's special education system. ∎

Inclusion: FAQ's

Loydene Hubbard Berg, Utah's Project for Inclusion, Utah State Office of Education

"It seems that there is so much pressure for teachers to focus on academics...how can I justify spending time on teaching social skills? Besides, I'm sure the students learn social skills incidentally as I teach other more important subjects."

I would agree that there is tremendous pressure on teachers to focus on the "basics". I also believe that the purpose behind this pressure is to ensure that students graduate from school with the skills necessary to be successful. Fortunately, a tremendous amount of researched information has become available over the past decade about what skills are most predictive of academic and life success. In light of this research, many experts now consider social and emotional skills to be one of the "basics" of education. More specifically, this research demonstrates that for students to succeed in school, family, friendships, the workplace, community life, and democratic participation, they need a full compliment of skills-social, emotional, and academic (M. Elias, L. Bruene-Butler, L. Blum & T. Schuyler. May 1997. "How to Launch a Social-Emotional Learning Program. " Educational Leadership 54:8).

For a moment let's focus on one of several areas where students will need to be successful upon graduation-employment. If you would like to better understand how important social and emotional skills currently are to organizations and employers, read Daniel Goleman's book (1998), "Working with Emotional Intelligence". Consider this little tidbit from his book: In a study of over 181 different job positions drawn from 121 companies and organizations worldwide, job competencies were analyzed and categorized into cognitive/technical abilities or emotional abilities. Overall, it was found that 2 out of every 3 abilities deemed essential for effective performance by employers were emotional competencies. With similar kinds of information about the importance of social and emotional skills for success in school, family and community environments, society will need to broaden what traditionally has been thought of as the "basics" of education.

Research also points to guidelines about instruction. While students may pick up some social skills incidentally in today's classrooms, for most students that will not be enough. Some studies indicate that students today are actually entering school with fewer developed social skills than in the past. It has become clear that educators must apply the same effective instructional strategies used in reading and other subjects to the subject of social skills. This means systematic planning and direct instruction of critical social and emotional skills (C. Cummings & K. Haggerty. May1997. "Raising Healthy Children." Education Leadership pp. 28-30).

Since I don't have enough space in this article to elaborate on effective teaching strategies I have listed a few of my favorite resources below. I hope you'll check a few of these out!

Is There Life in the Classroom? Making Learning Inclusive, Fun and Effective. This educator's manual contains the LIFE planning process which is an effective method for embedding social/emotional skills instruction into your everyday lesson plans.

Cool Kids: A Proactive Approach to Social Responsibility. This is a practical social skills program for all kids (Pre-K through middle school).

(Note: Is There Life in the Classroom & Cool Kids are available through Sopris West, http://www.sopriswest.com)

Six Seconds is a nonprofit educational service organization supporting the development of emotional intelligence for families, schools, communities & corporations. Their web site has great resources for educators. **Follow the "EQ for Teachers" link (http://www.6seconds.org).**

Educational Leadership Magazine: The May 1997 issue was titled, Social and Emotional Learning and is full of helpful articles. You can access the following article from that issue on the web: **"How to Launch a Social & Emotional Learning Program" or Web site: www.usoe.k12.ut.us/Upi/index.htm** ∎

ULRC Perspective

Jerry Christensen, Team Leader, Utah Learning Resource Center

This month's issue of the Utah Special Educator focuses on Social Skills Strategies. I was thinking about the importance of social skills training and what it means for our schools and society in general. In a recent article by Haynes and Chalker (1999) the authors compared school violence in the United States to other developed nations. Their findings reinforce the need for social skills interventions and perhaps are a call for action nationwide. Among other things, the authors found that the United States: (1) leads the developed world when it comes to violence among young people; (2) has the highest homicide rate among school-aged children; (3) has the highest suicide rate among school-aged children; and (4) has the highest rate of student violence against teachers (which is virtually unheard of in the other developed countries).

There is a connection between observed social competence (or lack of) in young children and anti-social behavior found later in life. Guralnick and Weinhouse (1984), found that preschool children with disabilities have delays in peer social competence that are in excess of those expected due to their cognitive delays alone. Strain (1983) in a study of students with disabilities in a mainstreamed setting found that a substantial number of these children had infrequent social interactions with peers and received very low peer sociometric ratings. Conduct disorder involves serious violations of behavior norms and is often a precursor of delinquency (Walker, 1995). Parker and Asher (1987) found that a child's early investment in aggressive behavior, which leads to peer rejection, is strongly associated with a host of long-term, negative developmental outcomes, including delinquency and adult criminality. We have known for a long time that a major factor in students with disabilities having difficulty in obtaining and maintaining employment was not that they lacked the skill to do the job, rather they lacked the skills to appropriately interact with their fellow employees and the public. Odem, McConnell, and Chandler (1991) in a national survey found that, on the average, teachers reported that 75% of the children with disabilities in their classes needed to learn more appropriate and positive ways of interacting with their peers. When these same teachers were asked if they had appropriate materials to help them design programs for promoting social competence, 89.9% said there was a moderate to great need for new materials. There is a clear need for teachers to keep a host of social skills strategies in their teaching repertoire or at least know where to turn when the need arises.

This issue of the Utah Special Educator will provide you with new strategies and ideas to promote social competence. Other resources would include the **Utah Learning Resource Center** (see our catalog, we have a list of books), the **Utah State Office of Education** (contact specialists in behavior, transition and inclusion) or university special education departments in your area. For online resources try the **Council for Exceptional Children** web pages (**www.cec.sped.org**), along with Division homepages and materials, **Boys Town USA (www.boystown.org/home.htm)**, **the Children's Defense Fund (www.childrensdefense.org/), LD in Depth - Social Skills (www.ldonline.org/ld_indepth/social_skills/soc-skills.html), or the National Early Childhood Technical Assistance System (www.nectas.unc.edu/).** These pages will link to many others with information on social skills strategies. ■

Jerry Christensen

Email address: jerryc@provo.k12.ut.us

Personal Manifesto or Philosophy:
If we want to make a difference with children and their families, we need to make a difference with teachers and administrators. They deserve dynamic, kick-start training that is thought provoking and creates some excitement in their lives. They also need to be treated with the same respect given to all professionals in all fields. The excitement and respect we give to teachers and administrators will be conveyed to the lives of children.

Favorite Web-sites:
Live coverage of the around the world Whitbread Race
http://whitbread.quokka.com/main.html
The web of the future is here with Eye4U
http://www.eye4u.com/
Team Oregon's walking/running fitness page
http://teamoregon.com/
Tom Peters personal web page- http://www.tompeters.com/
Web sites that truly "suck"- http://suck.com

Favorite Books:
Reinventing Work (3-books)-Tom Peters
Bruce and Jerry's Excellent Restaurant Guide-Bruce and Jerry
Your Money or Your Life-Joe Dominguez, Vicki Robin
Influence - The Psychology of Persuasion-Robert Chaldini
The Endurance: Shackleton's Legendary Antarctic Expedition-Alexander & Hurley

Best Educational Tip:
If you want to take care of the kids, take care of yourself. Sometimes we get so busy providing for others we lose the balance in our own lives.

T he March mentor train-
ing centered on reading
strategies, instruction
and initiatives. Nancy
Livingston, Associate Professor
Emeritus at Brigham Young
University, shared her vast
knowledge and years of experi-
ence in reading instruction with
the mentors. We would like to
share an article by Nancy with
you that focuses on reading
activities for the new millennium.

Educator Idea Exchange

Instructional Activities for the Second Millennium

*Nancy Livingston, Associate Professor Emeritus and Lillian Hill,
Professor Emeritus, Brigham Young University*

In Fall 1997, "The Millennium: 100 Events that
Changed the World," was published in a special issue of
Life. The article featured descriptions and photographs
of one hundred of the most important events and people
of the past one thousand years. In 1998, the book The
Life Millennium was published. An expansion of the
article, the book is a treasury of ideas and events of the
past millennium and an excellent impetus for an instruc-
tional unit in world history.

Nancy Livingston, a children's literature lover and
frequent speaker at workshops for teachers, was inspired
to create a list of children's books that align with the top
ten events cited in the article and book. The list lead to
instructional instructional activities which include the
use of trade books in a world history curriculum.

First in Livingston's list of books for young people
which corresponds to the ten most important events of
the second millennium as identified in The Life
Millennium. After the list are suggested activities for
world history instruction.

**Livingston's Reading List of the Second Millennium
Most Important Events**

Event Number 1: Gutenberg Prints the Bible in 1455.
Gutenberg's Gift: A Book Lover's Pop-Up Book
by Nancy Willard
Breaking into Print by Stephen Kremsky

Event Number 2: A Global Civilization:
Columbus's Voyage, 1492.
Westward With Columbus by John Dyson

Event Number 3: Luther Knocks Down the Door:
The Protestant Reformation, 1517.
Thunderstorm in Church by Louise Vernon

Event Number 4: The Machine Age Gears Up, 1769.
Industrial Revolution by John D. Clare

Event Number 5: Galileo Sees the Moons of Jupiter
and the Earth Moves, 1610.
*Starry Messenge*r by Peter Sis

Event Number 6: The Germ Theory of Disease, 1882.
Invisible Enemies by Jeanette Farrell

Event Number 7:
China Develops Gunpowder Weapons, 1100.
Science in Ancient China by George Beshore

Event Number 8: A Declaration to the World, 1776.
Thomas Jefferson by James Cross Giblin

Event Number 9: Hitler comes to Power, 1933.
No Pretty Pictures: A Child of War by Anita Lobel
Smoke and Ashes by Barbara Rogasky

Event Number 10: The Chinese Invent the
Navigational Compass, 1117.
Sailing Ships by Thomas Bayley

Instructional Activities

Find a copy of the article *"The Millennium: 100 Events that Changed the World"* or the book *The Life Millennium.* After reviewing the materials, decide which of the following activities would most benefit students, or adapt these suggestions as needed.

Activity One:

As an introductory activity in a world history class, ask students to individually identify what they consider to be the ten most important events, people, and discoveries of the last millennium. Discuss the events in class. Introduce the article or book and check the publication to see if the events chosen by the young people made the Life list. Use information from the article or book and from classroom discussion to generate a new list of the 100 most important events of the second millennium. Such a list could be published in the school newspaper or placed on the school's web site. At the end of the course, a revised list could be compiled and published.

Activity Two:

Have students read all or part of the article or book. Both are designed so that they be read/viewed in segments. Discuss the importance of the events, why they merit inclusion, and what impact they have had on society and on each individual in the class. Challenge students to develop their own lists of most important events of the second millennium to justify their choices, and to locate books dealing with the events. In lieu of book reports, ask the class to construct a time line on craft paper around the perimeter of classroom using facts and events gathered from their readings.

Activity Three:

Compile a reading list similar to the one on the previous page using sources such as the school's library catalog, World History for Children and Young Adults: an Annotated Bibliographic Index by Vandelia Van Meter, Literature Connections to World History by Linda G. Adamson, and Children's Books in Print. Include both information books and historical fiction. Ask each student to select and read a different book. In lieu of book reports, ask the students to construct jackdaws relating to the book. A jackdaw is a collection of artifacts based on a historical event or period. According to Dodd, "jackdaws may include such items as maps, a time line, diary entries, recipes, biographical sketches, newspaper clippings, music, clothing, artwork, letters, or advertisements." Jackdaws make great individual, team, or class projects and enhance both learning and retention.

With the use of trade books and creative instructional activities, both teachers and students will gain new insights and a greater appreciation of the past. Have an exciting time visiting the second millennium in your classroom. ∎

Why They Say No: Reflections on Managing Resitance

John W. Maag

Why do they say no? We have often agonized with, and mulled over, this question when faced with a familiar yet irksome problem of many children: managing their resistance. These children often tantrum, are uncooperative, aggressive, and eventually antisocial. Sometimes, getting children to comply with our directions can lessen the risk of them developing serious antisocial behavior. Many of us, upon hearing this last statement, assume that in order to obtain compliance, children need to be punished more severely. There are many effective ways to obtain compliance-severe punishment is not one of those ways. By virtue of their challenging behaviors, noncompliant children have been repeatedly punished. If punishment worked, we would be using it less rather than more often because the effect is to reduce or eliminate unfavorable behavior. Nonaversive approaches for treating noncompliance have included providing children positive reinforcement, clear, direct, and specific instructions, and having them self-monitor and evaluate their behavior.

An essential, and often ignored, ingredient for managing resistance effectively is the ability of us to modify our behavior to create rapport. Rapport involves responding symmetrically to a child's personal model of the world. We can develop rapport with children by observing their verbal, and more importantly, nonverbal behaviors and then altering our behavior to reflect their behavior. Developing rapport makes it easier to obtain a desired outcome from a child. We can then engage in two activities to promote compliance: changing the context surrounding a child's behavior and determining the purpose a child's behavior serves so that we can teach a child a replacement behavior-an appropriate way of obtaining the same outcome as the undesirable behavior.

Context refers to the situation or circumstances that surrounds a behavior. Behavior does not occur in a void, but rather attains its meaning based on context: lifeguards have more meaning in the context of being by a swimming pool than on a ski slope;

reading has more meaning in the context of a library than in a game of soccer. All behavior is contextually defined. Therefore, when we change the context surrounding a behavior, the meaning, purpose, and desire for a child engaging in a behavior also changes. There

are four ways that we can change the context surrounding a behavior. All four ways require us to tell a child to continue performing the inappropriate behavior. Therefore, it is important that the inappropriate behavior is not dangerous to the child or others. In addition, we should be sincerely pleased-but without sarcasm-that the child has an opportunity to get really good at performing the behavior. If we appear frustrated, angry, or sarcastic, a child will not follow our direction.

We can direct a child to engage in more of the behavior.

An example of this approach would be to tell a child that is tapping his pencil to do it 300 hundred times. The idea behind this approach is that everyone has a tolerance level for performing behaviors-those

deemed both appropriate and inappropriate. When we make a child's tolerance level intolerable, he will change the behavior on his own. It is like spitting in someone's soup: She can still eat it but won't like it. The child can continue to tap, but the reinforcing value is removed because it is no longer fun to do so.

We can direct a child to engage in the behavior in a different location.

A novel application of this approach is using a "Do-Nothing Chair" for students who passively refuse to do any work. In this approach, we enthusiastically and sincerely instruct a child that the "Do-Nothing Chair" is a place where he can get really good at doing nothing. The "Do-Nothing Chair" is extremely effective when a child's passivity gains him power and control. It will not work if a child is trying to escape or avoid a task.

We can schedule the time that a child experiences the problem.

For example, a child that becomes very text anxious as she enters a classroom can be instructed to "feel anxious" 15 minutes prior to entering the room. This approach takes an uncontrollable feeling and makes it controllable. If the child brings on anxiety, then he has proof that anxiety is under his control; if he refuses to bring on anxiety, he also has proof that anxiety is under his control because he was able to avoid experiencing it.

We can change the topography-the appearance or form-of the behavior.

For example, a child that refuses to listen to our directions by looking away may be instructed to also place his hands over his ears to ensure that he does not hear one word we say. If the child follows our direction, he is being compliant. When we get compliance in one area it becomes easier to get compliance in another area. If the child refuses to place his hands over his ears, we may comment that perhaps he wants to hear some of what we are saying.

The four context changing approaches described above will only be effective when the purpose the

maladaptive behavior served is identified and a replacement behavior is provided. All behavior is performed to accomplish a goal or outcome such as power/control, attention, or escape/avoidance. For example, the child in a previous example who was tapping his pencil may have been doing so to obtain the attention of the teacher or a peer. Therefore, besides changing the context by having him tap more often, he should be taught, and reinforced for displaying an appropriate behavior for getting others' attention, such as telling a joke after the lesson is over.

There is no mystery as to why children say no-behaviors are contextually defined and serve an adaptive function. All too often, we focus solely on the form a behavior takes and ignore its function and context in which it is displayed. Furthermore, managing resistance does not have to be a massive job. Children always give us clues on how to manage resistance. Unfortunately, we often have closed minds and fail to pick up on these clues and instead respond ineffectively. If something is not working, we should try something else. We usually know what to do, but do not always know that we know. The introduction of variety and richness into children's lives by understanding and analyzing context, determining the relations between noncompliant behaviors and the functions they serve, and being comprehensive and unrestricting in our behavior will help break up rigid patterns of responding that are necessary for managing resistance effectively.

Dr. John Maag will be presenting to The Mentor Academy on May 11th. The article above is just a sample of the strategies Dr. Maag will share on effectively managing resistance of students and increasing compliance. ∎

Developing Confidence & Competence:
The Real Important Stuff

Peggi Baker, Supporting Inclusion for Preschool Children (SIPC), Utah State Office of Education

A poster hung on the door of my classroom when I taught kindergarten. You may be familiar with it; Robert Fulghum's essay, "Everything I needed to know I learned in kindergarten." It tells you "real important stuff" like share and don't hit and hold hands when you go out. In hindsight, after teaching ten years of preschool, I wish that I had a similar poster on my preschool classroom door. It could have reminded me to implement more of these social skills in my curriculum. The social domain takes a back seat to the "push down" curriculum theory too abundant in our early childhood settings. The academic emphasis in our schools continues to push the demand for next grade skill mastery to the previous grade. Too often we find (in early childhood settings) preschoolers becoming frustrated and bored with teacher led instruction and workbook or pencil and paper exercises instead of developmentally appropriate hands-on learning with a large factor of child initiation and choice based on information which is socially relevant. Greenspan (1980) stated "Social skills are what allow us to pass as normal. Whether one can pass as normal depends not so much on whether one can read or write but rather on one's level of social skill development."

As a beginning teacher, I offered a curriculum unit with an "I Am Special" theme in which the children were given the opportunity to share pictures of themselves, their homes and their families. Experience has since taught me the value of the need to encourage the social being to develop confidence and competence, not by having the child's picture up as student of the week but by giving the child continuous opportunities to take initiative, risk, experience success in performing difficult tasks, and solving problems for himself. NAEYC identifies the need for positive social relationships as an essential skill for later schooling and suggests that social and emotional development be the main goals of programs that serve children from three through five. In the preschool classroom children need to learn about human relationships, learn to work and play together, have the opportunity to make choices, and experience the consequences of those choices.

Hartup (1991) researched and compiled a social attributes checklist for young children. In his research he states, "the single best childhood predictor of adult adaptation is not IQ, NOT school grades and NOT classroom behavior but the adequacy with which the child gets along with other children." With its life long implications, preschool teachers might consider relationships as one of the four R's of curriculum.

Since best practices supports inclusion of preschoolers with disabilities into the typical classroom it makes sense that teachers of children with disabilities would do all they could to teach social skills resulting in peer acceptance in the typical classroom. Strategies to facilitate peer interaction include:

- *using toys that require two or more partners*
- *arranging materials that require sharing*
- *dividing materials among children so that they must cooperate to get all the needed parts*
- *promoting natural reinforcers in peer interaction*
- *using group activities and group responding that include peer responses at an appropriate level for each child*
- *assigning one child as the "dispenser" of materials providing sufficient opportunities for free play*
- *using the "ask three before you ask me" rule*
- *sharing books that promote acceptance of individual differences*
- *planning gross motor activities that require two or more children*
- *modeling peer problem solving*
- *requiring a child to choose a friend before entering a play area*
- *limiting teacher intrusions*
- *designing a special "space for friends" in your classroom*
- *including group painting activities such as murals*
- *providing a variety of dramatic play materials and opportunities*
- *discussing with the group why sharing is important and how to share*
- *creating an atmosphere of belonging with classroom rituals such as a greeting song*

As a proponent of inclusive settings, I am familiar with research that identifies the rewards of inclusion, especially on the acquisition of appropriate social skills. Some advocate that if inclusion of children with disabilities in regular settings was done with planning and creativity, it would be no more costly than segregated special education classrooms. However, after reading a letter from a mother of a child with severe disabilities I am inclined to think that maybe inclusion can be expensive. In her letter she states "since my son has been included in his neighborhood high school, we have had to buy tickets to football games, basketball games, school yearbooks, dances, corsages, in clothing and in haircuts...but it's the most fun we've ever had spending money." As a parent of a child with significant disabilities, I too, would welcome my child's expenses of being more social. ■

High-Maintenance Parents

Christine W. Balderas, Parent Consultant, Utah Parent Center

As special education personnel you are naturally concerned with appropriate social relationships between your students and others, but have you stopped to consider your relationship with your student's parents? Most likely your relationship revolves around working together to best meet the child's needs. Even in the best of situations the parent-teacher relationship can become strained. Usually these problems can be resolved through further discussion and negotiation. However, in some instances, some parents seem to be unreasonably difficult, demanding and require a lot of extra time. In other words, they are high maintenance.

Whatever the behavior that puts parents in the high-maintenance category, it's a good idea to be clear about your goals before creating a response. A major goal in schools is to work closely with parents in a partnership. That means you have to find out what parents think about their children and what they want for them. You have to regularly involve parents in decisions about their child's education. Besides parents participation in the IEP meeting , keep parents informed about their child's progress throughout the school year. Try to do it in a way that increases their understanding and appreciation of their child. Keeping the parent-child bond strong is an important part of the professional's job. You have to remember at all times that the parents are the most important people in their child's life. You have to make sure parents know that you are aware of that fact and value their input.

Even if you would prefer to just focus on children, you have to recognize that to promote support for the child, you have to give support to the parents. Sometimes that is easy, but high maintenance parents may trigger anger and resentment. It's hard to feel supportive when parents exhibit difficult behaviors that seems to get in the way of the school doing it's job. With high-maintenance parents, you may have to try harder and bite your tongue more often, but the extra effort will be worth it. Remember, rarely has there been a due process when there has been an amiable relationship between the parent and the school.

Set up some communication patterns so that you can exchange information with parents. When communicating with parents about their child, try to focus on good news. Any time you can honestly say something positive about the child, say it. Be selective about how and when you give bad news. Your job is to help the parent see the child in a positive light, even while you are dealing with concerns. When there is a problem with a child, inform the parents promptly, expressing concerns while coming across in an optimistic way that reassures them of your desire to help their child overcome negative behavior.

Sometimes professionals think right away that any difficult behavior in a child is an indication of something going on at home. Asking directly may backfire if the parents take offense and close down communication lines. Parents have different limits about how much they want to tell you. Some will tell all happily and freely, while others are much more private. You need to respect these differences and think carefully before requiring parents to say what is going on. Don't assume that some of the child's problems are a result of poor parenting.

Six Points to Consider

• Take a positive, nonjudgmental approach. Do what you can to open up communication by avoiding criticism, blame, or anger, which can make parents feel defensive. Defensiveness blocks communication.

• Try to understand the parent's point of view. If the parent is exhibiting intense emotions, assume that those feelings are valid, even if they make you uncomfortable or angry. It may help to assume that the parents have a reason behind their behavior, even if you don't know what it is. Often they are feeling great sadness at the loss of the "perfect child"; theirs is a continual grieving process. They may be just plain tired and worn out; raising a disabled child is not easy; or they may also have reached the conclusion that the "squeaky wheel gets the grease." Imagine walking in their shoes, and things may become more clear to you. Being empathetic

and trying to understand their perspective can help you work more effectively with them.

• Recognize the importance of self-esteem and do what you can to support it by focusing on the strengths of the child and the parent. Don't feel threatened by knowledgeable and assertive parents; use their help.

• Understand the critical importance of communication and negotiation skills, and the ability to compromise. Be honest with your misgivings and concerns. Don't be afraid to say you're sorry or apologize for a mistake or misunderstanding. We are all human.

• Share information! Help parents understand their rights in the IEP process; do so repeatedly! Help parents find information, resources, services and programs. That means you will have to know about those resources. Refer them to the Utah Parent Center. Parents are grateful for supportive, helpful school personnel.

• Be aware that the essential nature of respect for other humans is the foundation for constructive relationships.

In working with parents, as with their children, we need to be self-reflective. That is, we need to recognize that our definitions of high-maintenance behaviors are subjective and have to do at least in part with our own insecurities, biases, and notions of the good parent. Remembering our personal shortcomings helps us relate better to parents. We are not perfect. In fact, parents could no doubt label some school personnel as difficult and requiring high maintenance too! (Adapted from Child Care Information Exchange, High-Maintenance Parents, by Janet Godzilla and Anne Stonehouse)

At the Utah Parent Center we recognize all the hard work that you do. We constantly remind parents of your tireless efforts on children's behalf and encourage strong, caring partnerships with the school. When parents and school work together, good things can happen for kids. ■

THE PILL

You scare me even though you are small
You are candy that I don't like to eat
You speak to me in ways that I don't like
You are the voices that I hear in my head
You are the one thing that I dread
You are small and you make me small too
You taste bad so I swallow
The calmness is what follows
You are so discreet
You make it so I can't eat
You are white as snow with MD on the side
You make me feel as if I have to hide
When I take you I swallow my pride
Because I can't control myself without you
I pray for the day that I can throw you away
My candy my pill my med
Ritalin

Patrick Ottley • Age 13
Treasure Mountain Middle School, Park City, Utah

23rd Annual
Intervention Procedures Conference
for At-Risk Children and Youth

June 19-23, 2000

Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation,
Utah State University, Logan, UT

Schedule for Keynote:

Monday	**Dr. Hill Walker, University of Oregon**
	Advances in school safety and youth violence prevention
Tuesday	**Dr. Timothy Heron, Ohio State University**
	Educational leadership and best practices demands in the 21st century
Wednesday	**Dr. David Wacker, University of Iowa**
	Functional behavioral assessments and proactive interventions
Thursday	**Dr. Susan Taylor-Green, Principal, Fern Ridge Middle School, Elmira OR**
	The High Five Program: Schoolwide Positive Behavior Management
Friday	**Dr. Roger Soder, University of Washington**
	Character education

In addition to the keynote presenters, additional breakout sessions will feature a variety of presentations highlighting practical and effective intervention approaches for at-risk students. In addition, poster sessions and roundtable discussions with leaders in the field will highlight promising practices developed by students, school personnel, and university faculty from Utah, the region, and nationally. If you are interested in presenting a poster, contact **Stephanie Peck at USU's Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation (435-797-3217 or speck@cc.usu.edu).**

Housing Information:

- Dormitory housing ($15/person/night or $25 / person/night/ single occupancy) Call 435-797-0277 to make arrangements)
- For list of motels/lodging accommodations in Logan, call 1-800-538-2663 or 435797-9801)

Conference Registration:

- Fee: $285. (est) for the entire week (includes Conference materials, daily refreshment/ snack breaks, and canyon cookout and entertainment on Wednesday.
- One- and two-day registration packages are also available
- Limited number of stipends are available for Utah educators and are available on a first-come first-serve basis. Stipends will be awarded on **May 5, 2000.**
- Registration forms for all conference attendees must be received by **June 2, 2000**

For Conference information, forms, schedules, housing, stipends, contact Cam McClure, Program Administrator, USU (435-797-0425 or CamiM@ext.usu.edu)

ANNOUNCING for Summer, 2000 at the University of Utah

SPED 6960-025: Special Topics in Augmentative and Alternative Communication Technology: A practical, hands-on experience with Low and High Tech-based AAC equipment and software

Course Overview:

This 3 credit hour course is intended for students who are interested in designing and implementing augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) systems for students with disabilities. Specifically, this course will (a) provide a framework for addressing issues related to AAC, (b) discuss elements of low-tech augmentative systems, (c) provide hands-on experience using software to create communication systems, (d) discuss the range of features available in dedicated electronic communication aids, (e) provide hands-on experience programming and using select electronic communication aids, (f) provide a framework for assessing the skills and abilities of potential AAC users, (g) gain experience developing intervention plans based on assessment data, and (g) provide hands-on experience using computer based software and peripherals.

Dates:
May 17 (4 pm * 7 pm), Rm 114 MBH
May 19 (8am * 4 pm), Rm 108 MBH (Computer Lab)
May 31 (4 pm * 7 pm), Rm 114 MBH
June 2 (8 am * 4 pm), UCAT (1595 W 500 S, SLC)
June 14 (4 pm * 7 pm), Rm 114 MBH
June 16 (8 am * 4 pm) UCAT (1595 W 500 S, SLC)

Co-Instructors:

Richard Kiefer-O'Donnell, Ph.D.
Susan Johnston, Ph.D., CCC-SLP

If you have questions regarding registration please contact Patty Davis at 581-4764. If you have questions regarding course content please contact Richard Kiefer-O'Donnell or Susan Johnston at 581-8121.

REGISTER NOW * CLASS SIZE LIMITED

Announcing the Sixth Annual
Utah Paraeducator Conference

November 3-4, 2000 • Provo Marriott Hotel,
101 West 100 North, Provo Utah

On-site Registration will begin at
3:00p.m., Friday, November 3rd
and 7:30 a.m., Saturday, November 4th

Two pre-sessions will be held Friday evening
from 4:30-6:00 p.m.
Melisa Genaux "Autism"
Tom Jackson "Instructional Strategies"

Registration Fee: • Paraeducators $25.00
Paraeducator/teacher Team $35.00

If you have any questions, contact Marilyn Likins
801-273-1843 or Carol Harrington 801-625-8898

Put on your calendar now!

Utah's Statewide Inclusion Conference:

Because We Can Change The Worlu:

When: November 9-10, 2000
Where: Snowbird, Utah

For more information checkout our web site:
http://www.usoe.k12.ut.us/sars/Upi/index.htm
Or call Phyllis Meyer or Loydene Hurbbard Berg at
the Utah State Office of Education • 801-538-7906.

UTAH CSPD CONSORTIUM CALENDAR*2000

May 2000

5　　　　CSPD Consortium. Salt Lake Airport Hilton, Salt Lake City.

7-10　　21st National Institute on Legal Issues of Educating Individuals with Disabilities. Hyatt Regency New Orleans. New Orleans, LA. Contact LRP Publications 800-727-1227.

11-12　Utah Mentor Academy at the Provo Marriott, Provo, UT. Contact ULRC (801) 272-3431 or (800) 662-6624.

11-12　Troubled Youth, Snowbird, UT. Contact Patricia Bradley 538-7817.

June 2000

19-23　23rd Annual Interventions Procedures Conference, Utah State University, Logan, UT. Contact Cam McClure, 435-797-0425 or CamiM@ex.usu.edu

23-24　Alternate Assessment Forum, DoubleTree Hotel, 255 S West Temple, Salt Lake City. Contact Jennifer Davis at MPRRC, 435-752-0238x10.

August 2000

2-4　　Utah Institute on Special Education Law, Ogden Eccles Conference Center, Ogden, UT. Contact Jana Roberts, Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center, 435-752-0238 x15.

September 2000

20-22　Initial Mentor Training, Snowbird Center. Contact ULRC (801) 272-3431 or (800) 662-6624.

28-29　Statewide Preschool Conference. Provo Marriott Hotel, Provo, UT. Contact Brenda Broadbent. 801-538-7708.

October 2000

11-13　BEST/CCBD Conference at the Provo Marriott, Provo, UT. Contact Natalie Allen 801-538-7571.

19-20　Trauma Brain Injury (TBI) Conference at the Provo Marriott, Provo, UT. Contact Jocelyn Taylor 801-538-7726.

26-27　Mentor Training, Cavanaughs Olympus Hotel. Contact ULRC (801) 272-3431 or (800) 662-6624.

November 2000

3-4　　6th Annual Paraeducators Conference. Provo Marriott Hotel, Provo, UT. Contact Marilyn Likins, 801-273-1843.

3-4　　Annual LD Conference at Park City Marriott. Contact Dale Sheld, 801-538-7707.

9-10　　State-wide Inclusion Conference. Snowbird Ski Resort, Snowbird, UT. Contact Loydene Hubbard-Berg. 801-538-7567.

16-17　Mentor Training, Cavanaughs Olympus Hotel. Contact ULRC (801) 272-3431 or (800) 662-6624.

*This information is provided as a service. We believe it to be accurate, but it is important to confirm with the contact listed. To obtain additional information and to supply important upcoming dates, please contact us at the number below. Current information is also available at the ULRC web site www.ulrc.org

I am the spirit of Youth! With me, all things are possible!

Jane Adams

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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