



NEWSLETTER

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CREATING QUALITY PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN WITH AUTISM AND PDD

Presented by Tyler Fovel, MA, BCBA
Author of *The ABA Program Companion*

November 4 & 5, 2005

Details on Page 3

These workshops offer opportunities for parents, professionals and students to learn how research-based intervention is effectively applied within school and home-based education programs for children with autism.

Registration is available for one or both days to meet the needs of participants at different levels of experience.

Day 1 is geared toward those with limited experience in ABA based intervention, or are just beginning to learn about it. Day 2 builds upon the topics covered during the previous day, and is designed as either a continuation of Day 1 or as a stand-alone workshop for those with a moderate level of experience in this area.

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BOOK REVIEW

THE ABA PROGRAM COMPANION
Organizing Quality Programs for Children with Autism and PDD

by J. Tyler Fovel, M.A., BCBA

(Reviewed by Stephanie Jacius, M.Ed.)

The ABA Program Companion, written by J.Tyler Fovel, is an excellent resource for anyone interested in effective programs for children with autism. In addition to offering essential

organizational and training tools for ABA programs, this book could assist a variety of education professionals who work with children

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PLEASE SUPPORT CT FEAT



Your contributions help to pay for costs associated with the CT FEAT web site, telephone hotline, parent meetings, presentations, and other activities designed to provide information and support.

You can be sure that your contribution will go *directly to provide resources* that will enable families and other interested persons to learn about effective autism treatment, and to help children with autism achieve their full potential.

Please support our work by sending a check to CT FEAT (address below), or by participating in any of the following:

SBC COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

If you are a SBC customer, SBC will pay CT FEAT 5% of every dollar you spend on long distance calling. You can sign up today by calling 800-635-7638.

The UNITED WAY

Even though CT FEAT is not listed on the pledge card, it is eligible to receive your donation. United Way organizations will forward your gift to us if you write the CT FEAT address (below) and telephone number (860-571-3888) on the pledge card, or write the information in on your electronic pledge (click on "Write-In" on the designation page).

Tax deductible donations should be sent to:

**CT FEAT, Inc.
P.O. Box 370352,
West Hartford, CT 06137**

Thank You!

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with behavior problems or other disabilities.

BOOK REVIEW ABA PROGRAM COMPANION **by J. Tyler Fovel.**

The book is well formatted, giving brief and easy to understand descriptions of basic behavior analysis principles followed by "real life" examples. Each chapter highlights several key components of a successful ABA program. Among those discussed are behavior change components, discrete trial teaching, language training, incidental teaching, social interactions and integration, inclusion, individualizing curriculum, and various teacher tools.

Basic principals such as antecedents, behavior, and consequences (the ABCs), as they relate to teaching and behavior management, are well defined and visually represented for easy comprehension. Other core concepts, such as reinforcement, errorless teaching, and the building blocks to success are highlighted.

Fovel discusses an extremely important and often overlooked aspect of reinforcement - *reinforcer selection*. Reinforcers are often selected by an adult based on an assumption of what is "typically" rewarding or reinforcing (i.e. ice cream, star charts). However, reinforcers are not what you choose; they are what the individual child desires and finds reinforcing. Fovel reminds us that many children with autism have unique likes and dislikes and we must be creative when identifying reinforcers.

The chapter on social interaction and integration provides clear examples of methods for improving peer interactions. Ways to select activities, such as recess games, are explained and analyzed. Examples of everyday activities from which a student with autism can learn and participate are provided.

The chapter on group instruction and inclusion highlights several key components to successful inclusion for children with autism.

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CREATING QUALITY PROGRAMS FOR SCHOOL-AGED AND PRESCHOOL CHILDREN WITH AUTISM AND PDD

Workshop Series Presented by Tyler Fovel, MA, BCBA

November 4 & 5, 2005

The University of Connecticut, Waterbury Campus

Sponsored by The Education Connection, The University of Connecticut College of Continuing Studies, and CT FEAT, members of the Northwest Connecticut Partnership for Autism Spectrum Disorders and Related Disabilities.

On Friday, November 4 and Saturday, November 5, 2005, parents and professionals will have opportunities to participate in workshops on developing and maintaining effective autism programs for school-aged and preschool children, presented by Tyler Fovel, M.A., BCBC.



Participants may choose to attend one or both days. CEUs are available for each day. The cost for each day is \$35, which includes lunch. Registration after November 2 and Walk-Ins will cost \$40 per day.

Mr. Fovel comes highly recommended by parents and school personnel who have worked with him in establishing and improving education and training programs in schools and in homes in Massachusetts and Connecticut.

Day 1

CREATING A QUALITY PROGRAM: The Vital Concepts and Components

Friday November 4, 9AM-3 PM
(Check-in and coffee at 8:30 AM)

The basics of building an effective, comprehensive teaching program will be explored on Day 1. Behavior principles will be presented within the context of teaching children to become successful learners in individual, incidental and group environments. Workshop topics will include:

Effective Use of Antecedents and Consequences; Errorless Teaching; Effective Use of Prompt and Prompt Fading Strategies; General Teaching Formats; Key Factors in Successful Inclusion; Early Play and Social Behavior

Day 2

ADVANCED CONCEPTS:

Solving Problems and Next Steps

Saturday November 5, 9 AM – 2 PM

(Check-in and coffee at 8:30 AM)

Day 2 will focus on moving beyond basic program development with an emphasis on transitions to active learning within groups. Developing prerequisite skills, and utilizing motivation and the child's strengths will be explored. A sample teaching plan will be provided. Topics include: Advanced Concepts in Discrete Trials; Getting Ready for Groups; Transitional Setting Variables; Designing Group Activities with an Active Response; Types of Groups; Increasing Opportunities for Response; A Closer Look at Stories

To Register

Registration information and directions to the UConn Waterbury Campus can be found on page 21 of this issue of CT FEAT Newsletter, and at the CT FEAT web site, www.ctfeat.org. Online registration is available by contacting Marie Czerna of Education Connection via e-mail at czerna@educationconnection.org. ✨

About Tyler Fovel

Mr. Fovel is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) and is a senior consultant for ABA programs in Massachusetts and Connecticut.

He received a M.A. in Psychology (Applied Behavior Analysis) from Northeastern University in 1979. and has been active in ABA for 30 years. He participated in a year-long supervised practicum for professionals in applied behavior

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analysis therapy with Bridget Taylor, Gina Green, and Lynn Brennen, sponsored by The Autism Partnership for Behavior Analysis.

Mr. Fovel offers program development and training services for families, schools, and agencies through his consulting company, Strategic Alternatives, which he founded in 1986. Areas of specialization include behavior analysis, ABA educational programs (home-based or otherwise), functional analysis, scenario-based program model, quality enhancement, and evaluation of psychotropic medication.

He is the author of *The ABA Program Companion: Organizing Quality Programs for Children with Autism and PDD*. This manual will be available for purchase at a discounted cost to workshop participants.

A list of Tyler's professional publications and presentations is available at www.strategic-alternatives.com.

CT FEAT is Now 8 Years Old!

It's hard to believe how much has changed.

Back in the summer of 1997, when Connecticut Families for Effective Autism Treatment (CT FEAT) was first incorporated, Connecticut was a pretty dismal place for children with autism spectrum disorders.



Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) based treatment was largely unknown, and unavailable, to most families.

Birth to Three and local school districts knew very little about ABA, and had no staff competently trained to provide it. Information about ABA, about how to find a qualified behavior analyst, or about how to design and run an individualized ABA program was extremely hard to come by.

But back in 1997, several CT families found each other via the Internet and shared the

results of their exhaustive research with each other. Aiming to help other families as well, they formed CT FEAT and set-up an Internet discussion list, a web site, a telephone hotline, parent meetings, and newsletters--all for free.

Now, eight years later, the CT FEAT newsletter is mailed out to over 1200 families & professionals in CT. Our web site gets thousands of visitors each year. The CT FEAT Listserv serves as a discussion forum to approximately 200 CT families, with new members joining regularly.

The empowerment of parents with information about effective teaching and advocacy has been the main reason for increases in ABA based services, and their continued development, in our state.

As we all know, families still struggle far too often and at many different levels for effective educational and recreational programs.

CT FEAT's mission to improve access to effective autism treatment continues to be as crucial now as when we began, and we continue working to that end on many fronts.

We are governed by eight board members. (Please see *About CT FEAT* on page 23 of this issue of the CT FEAT Newsletter.) We also regularly consult with an advisory committee consisting of former board members and activists. Collectively, these individuals have invested thousands of hours in volunteering for CT FEAT.

All of our governing members and advisors are parents or family members. While there are many fine professionals serving our community and commanding our utmost respect, we have found it best to insulate our organization from any kind of monetary consideration or incentives.

Consistent with that policy, we also don't accept any kind of paid advertising.

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As you can well imagine, given the considerable money to be made in the autism business, we are regularly solicited to permit paid advertising at our web site, in our newsletter, etc. But the answer is always no.

Instead, we rely on financial support from private contributions by people like you; family members and professionals who wish to help children with autism reach their full potential.

Thanks to all who have supported CT FEAT through these 8 years and have helped to make a difference for so many families.

Procuring high-quality programs for our children is still a struggle. But we've come a long way in eight years. ✧



***P**lease help us to continue our mission by supporting CT FEAT during the 2005 Annual Appeal. Your gift of any amount, which you can send to CT FEAT in the pre-addressed envelope found in this newsletter, will go directly toward costs associated with the services that CT FEAT provides to our autism community.*

Thank you for your interest in CT FEAT. ✧

Visit Us on the Web

www.ctfeat.org



PRESENTATION REVIEW

VOTING WITH THEIR FEET: INCORPORATING STUDENT CHOICE

By Michael Fabrizio

(Reviewed by Danusia Pawska, BCABA)

Though offering choice to students with disabilities is a widely accepted method of reducing resistance to instruction, learners are not usually given the choice of whether or not they want to be taught.



Children are usually given a choice of their reinforcers, what activity to do next or sometimes when to take a brief break, but often they are expected to get through a teaching program whether they like it or not.

According to Michael Fabrizio, BCBA, allowing students with disabilities the choice to say no to instruction is a critical aspect of quality educational services.

In his presentation "Voting with their Feet: Incorporating Student Choice", Fabrizio offered a practical and data-based approach to increasing skills without using coercive teaching procedures.

Fabrizio, who presented his inspiring lecture at the *Going Beyond Expectations: Unique Solutions in Autism Education* conference on October 5, 2005 in Cromwell, Connecticut, is a leader in the field of applied research for teaching children with autism, and an expert in the application of fluency-based instruction.

The premise of Fabrizio's presentation was that individuals with disabilities have the right to give their consent to treatment and to withdraw that consent at any time, as stated in *Guidelines for Responsible Conduct for Behavior Analysts*.

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Children with disabilities, however, don't have the legal capacity to give informed consent, so Fabrizio used the term "assent" in his discussion to mean "to agree to something freely". While there is no ethical requirement for assent by minors involved in ABA treatment, Fabrizio believes this is implied in the professional guidelines.

Fabrizio shared the results of a study in which a student was taught specific requests to escape instructional programs. The student's "withdrawals of assent" were measured, graphed, and displayed on the same graphs as his instructional programs. In this way his teachers could correlate the child's learning behavior with adjustments to instruction. Escape-motivated behaviors decreased to 0 instances per month while the student's skills increased.

The idea that children should remain happy while we teach them is not new to ABA instruction; however, is it not shared by all behavior analysts. Some recommend that you "work through problem behavior", "establish

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NOW AT A LIBRARY NEAR YOU!

CT FEAT recently donated a selection of ABA/Autism books to several public libraries across the state in order to increase public access to these important resources. A list of these libraries follows.



The selection includes books that have been recommended by parents and reviewed in the CT FEAT Newsletter, and described in the CT FEAT ABA Resource Guide, available online at www.ctfeat.org.

As one library manager mentioned in an acknowledgement, the timing of this donation coincides with the increased interest in au-

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SOFTWARE REVIEW

SCHOOL RULES!

Teaching School Social Skills

(Reviewed by Sue Frost Bennett)



Does your child love to watch videos and use the computer? A great software program that teaches school social skills is now available. It's called "School Rules!"

The two CDs were designed by speech-language pathologists. The CDs cover all kinds of social situations at school: classroom and group work activities, PE, hallway interactions, lockers, PE locker room, personal hygiene, getting lunch, waiting in line, eating and talking to friends, and just "hanging out."

The situations, and the two CDs, can be worked on in any order. There are seven different levels of difficulty for each social situation.

In the first level, the CD shows a short video clip then explains what the right thing to do would be. The student simply watches and listens; there are no questions to answer.

For levels 2-7, the CD shows a short video clip, followed by a question. The questions and possible answers are presented in text and read out loud by a narrator. The student chooses answers by clicking on them. Some of the questions involve predicting what other people might be thinking.

There are two correct answers to each question. The questions get increasingly more difficult, but corrections are done gently: "Try again." Correct answers are rewarded with phrases like "Good job!" and then the student gets to watch the next video clip.

In levels 2-7, there are ten questions for each situation. After answering five questions, the student is rewarded with a game: traveling around the school building to take photographs for the school yearbook.

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ASPERGER SYNDROME AND MILD AUTISM: RESOURCES FOR ABA TREATMENT FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

(Graciela Zimmerman)

(The following is an excerpt from the article *Recovery From Asperger Syndrome and Other Forms of Mild Autism: A Parent's Perspective*, available in full at www.ctfeat.org.)

There are a few books I considered essential reading at the time my own children were in treatment. And there are new books and videos available now that I'm sure I would have found helpful. But what matters most is not so much *which* books you use but *how* and *what* you teach.

Teaching strategies need to be intensive and based on behavior analytic theory. *What* you teach must be very individualized and based on a careful inventory of your child's specific deficits. Try to find a knowledgeable ABA professional with experience in the more advanced levels of autism treatment. They will know the sequence in which skills should be taught for optimal progress.

I would caution you that not all ABA professionals are autism specialists. And not all autism specialists are able to treat all kids on the autism spectrum effectively. For example, many who are skilled at providing Early and Intensive Behavioral Intervention (EIBI) to three-year-olds with autistic disorder lack the appropriate experience to make treatment recommendations for older Asperger Syndrome (AS) kids.

This is also true for therapists. The same person who excels at teaching a nonverbal three-year-old how to sit in a chair or pay attention may be clueless when it comes to teaching an AS child how to make appropriate comments in a social conversation or refrain from self-stimulatory behaviors.

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BOOK REVIEW

EVIDENCE OF HARM Mercury in Vaccines and the Autism Epidemic: A Medical Controversy

By David Kirby



(Reviewed By Denise Buckenheimer)

"Evidence of Harm" is a fascinating read regardless of where you fall on the danger-of-vaccines debate. It tells a compelling story of a struggle that is all too familiar to parents of children with autism, who in their urgent quest for effective treatment, have to do battle with insurance companies, school systems and the medical establishment, only to be dismissed as over-controlling zealots.

Although a definitive answer to the question of whether a mercury-based preservative in vaccines (thimerosal) causes autism in susceptible infants has yet to be established, there is abundant research suggesting evidence of harm.

Author David Kirby, a writer for the New York Times, juxtaposes the experiences of a small group of parents determined to challenge the Great Oz triumvirate of the pharmaceutical industry, the CDC and the FDA, with research reports and professional presentations on both sides of the issue.

This book follows these parents' efforts to gather information and launch an impartial investigation into the cumulative impact of mercury in the schedule of infant and child vaccinations. To say they were stonewalled by government agencies at every turn is an understatement.

In fact, the real story of this book is how protective, secretive and user un-friendly these agencies are when asked to share their own

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research with the people they are entrusted to keep safe.

A good example of anti-consumerism noted by Kirby is the rider inserted at the last minute into the 2002 Homeland Security Bill, which bars future thimerosal litigation. No one wanted to claim authorship of the provision once parent organizations and the press cried foul. The bill passed, albeit with some consequences for vaccine maker Eli Lilly, the White House, and Senator Bill Frist, among others.

Parent-advocates and the press were ultimately able to shine a harsh spotlight on the callous and cavalier attitude of Eli Lilly and other drug companies, their lobbyists, as well as certain lawmakers, in dealing with the health and safety of our children.

The author's background as a science and health reporter is apparent in the detail and clarification with which he presents an enormous volume of medical data and studies.

Mr. Kirby is very careful to not take sides; he is clearly a proponent of *safe* vaccines, a position shared by the majority of those who now question why our infants were unnecessarily exposed to potentially unsafe levels of mercury, a potent toxin, in vaccines.

Evidence of Harm provides readers with an important first step in getting the information needed to ensure responsible vaccinations. The book is another poignant reminder of how fragile and tenuous the steps are in claiming success in finding the cause and cure for autism.

Hardcover: 480 pages Publisher: St. Martin's Press (April 1, 2005) ISBN: 0312326440 ✧

EVENT REVIEW

Autism Spectrum Resource Fair Scores High Marks



(Will Wilkin)

The CT Autism Spectrum Resource Center and the Southern Connecticut State University Department of Special Education held their 2nd annual Autism Spectrum Resource Fair at SCSU on Saturday October 1st. Dozens of vendors and agencies staffed booths with information about diverse services and resources.

Vendors included a variety of schools and camps, service providers, consultants, advocacy groups, and booksellers. Hundreds of people attended the Resource Fair, including parents, teachers and other professionals working with children and families affected by ASD.

There were also 3 free presentations given in a large lecture hall. These were 1) Federal Special Education Law (IDEA), 2) the CT Guidelines for Educating Children with Autism, and 3) Working With Local Parks and Recreation Programs to Provide Recreational Options for ASD Children and Adults. The presentation on the new state Guidelines was given by a panel of 5 persons from the committee that wrote the new Guidelines.

The presentations were well attended, especially the first 2, both of which had well over 100 people in attendance.

The annual Autism Resource Fair is an excellent opportunity to learn about a range of services and resources available in Connecticut. In a few hours you can talk to experienced and knowledgeable people about so many different therapies, strategies, service providers and facilities. The networking alone is worth the time of attending, but the relevant and informative presentations made the Resource Fair even more rewarding. See you next year! ✧

FROM ONE PARENT TO ANOTHER...

10 Things I Have Learned



(Donna Cohen)



1. Be sure to have a life other than one of autism. Everybody in your family should have some interests and other friends, totally unrelated to your child's diagnosis.

2. Find two or more babysitters who you can trust, train them to work with your child, especially around communication, safety issues and routines, then be sure you get out of the house once in a while to do grownup things!

3. Trust yourself first, then trust the professionals. You know your child best. Internet lists such as the CT FEAT Parent's Only Listserv are a great place to get all sorts of opinions, and to benefit from other people's experiences. Before you know it, you'll find yourself answering somebody's question and the circle of information and friendship builds from there.

4. Educate yourself, not just about autism intervention but also about special education law. The sooner you do this, the sooner you will know how to advocate effectively for your child in order to be sure he or she receives an appropriate and quality program. Other parents of children with autism are invaluable for this type of help.

5. Do NOT try every "cure" you hear about. Before you put your child through anything, decide if it's worth the risk, if your family can handle it, if it makes sense, if you can handle the financial demands without other family members suffering, etc. Avoid unethical people, whose main interest is to make a buck off of our situation.

6. Get out in the community and teach your child the skills he or she needs to manage some family outings. For example, to begin teaching acceptable restaurant behavior, start by going to informal family places, off peak hours. That way if there is a problem, you will be more comfortable working through it. The

earlier you do this with your child, the better chance of a "normal" family life.

7. Teach him or her a new skill that you know will be difficult, when BOTH of you are ready. If toilet training is an issue, be sure you will have the stamina to be totally consistent, otherwise you will frustrate your child and set him or her up for failure. My child did not go to sleep by herself until she was 8 years old, because I did not have the energy to do the training. Once I was ready to take it on, it took very little time; I was able to ride out the tantrums because I was ready to make this a top priority.

8. Take vacations. A change of scenery is a good thing. The key is figuring out how to make it work so that it's not MORE work than staying home. Bring along an extra adult, rent a house instead of a small cottage, buy a little TV/VCR that you can lug around. Your family should not be cheated out of family vacations!

9. Stay in touch with friends and family members who do not have children with special needs. Talk about your children, just as most parents do when the topic comes up. Be sure to ask about their children and listen with an open heart. Recognize that this might be difficult for you at first; this is normal. Be patient when others offer unsolicited advice even when it seems wrong or insensitive. Just ignore it. They mean well, and it's fairly easy to change the subject when conversations are heading into uncomfortable topics.

10. Enjoy your child for who he or she is. It seems obvious to me now, but early on I was caught up in the autism and the ABA programs, and all of the research and reading, doctor visits, etc. I almost lost appreciation for the simple essence of who my child is. Now I focus on her strengths while I continue to work toward helping her reach her full potential.✧

Available Online

Guidelines for the Identification and Education of Children and Youth with Autism

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) recently released the new ***Guidelines for the Identification and Education of Children and Youth with Autism***. The guidelines offer a comprehensive tool for assessment and development of educational programs for children with autism spectrum disorders. The current document is to be used as a working draft through the current school year. The Bureau of Special Education is accepting written comments and suggestions regarding these guidelines, which attempt to ensure appropriate public education for children with autism spectrum disorders and to improve educational outcomes for these students. It is available online in pdf format at www.state.ct.us/sde/.

Readers might also be interested in the CSDE "Guidelines for Training & Support of Paraprofessionals", available online at www.ctserc.org, about which SERC will be hosting a series of forums through March 2006. ✧

2005 ASRC Resource Guide Book

The CT Autism Spectrum Resource Center is now offering copies of the updated Resource Guide Book.

The Guide, which costs \$25 (plus shipping) is a comprehensive listing of government and non-government agencies important to families of people with autism spectrum disorders. It also includes information on many aspects of ASD, from diagnosis to creating recreational programs.

Information and order forms are available at www.ct-asrc.org. ✧

Attention Connecticut Parents, Educators and Service Providers

Take Our On-line Survey!



Professional Development Needs Assessment

We want YOUR opinions!

It only takes a few minutes of your time to help.

The Litchfield County Autism Spectrum Association, Education Connection, and the Northwest Connecticut Partnership for Autism Spectrum Disorders and Related Disabilities are interested in identifying topics for professional development activities and workshops.

Survey results will be used to assist us to improve services for individuals with autism spectrum disorders and related developmental disabilities and their families.

Please take a moment to help us.

Send an e-mail to CTAutismSurvey@aol.com for a link to a brief, online survey.

Or visit the CT FEAT web site at www.ctfeat.org

(See *CT Groups* under *Links*)

Please feel free to share this information with other people who may be interested in future workshops and training opportunities.

Thank you in advance for participating. We look forward to hearing from you! ✧

CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS AND LECTURES

This conference listing focuses on effective autism treatment practices primarily in and around Connecticut. The information also appears at the CT FEAT web site (www.ctfeat.org). It is periodically updated and circulated on the "parents only" CT FEAT listserv. Details about joining the listserv are available at the CT FEAT web site or by calling the CT FEAT Information Hotline at 860-571-3888..

Please verify registration deadlines with event sponsors.

November 4 & 5, 2005

(Register for one *or* both days.)

Waterbury, CT

University of Connecticut Waterbury Campus

CREATING QUALITY PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

Presenter: Tyler Fovel

Sponsored by Education Connection, The University of Connecticut College of Continuing Studies, and CT FEAT, members of the Northwest Connecticut Partnership for Autism Spectrum Disorders and Related Disabilities

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(Check-in and coffee at 8:30 AM)

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signing Group Activities with an Active Response; Types of Groups; Increasing Opportunities for Response; A Closer Look at Stories

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November 10, 2005

Sarasota Springs, NY

TEACHING COMMUNICATION SKILLS TO CHILDREN WITH AUTISM OR OTHER DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

NYSABA Pre-conference Workshop

USING B.F. SKINNER'S ANALYSIS OF VERBAL BEHAVIOR AS A CONCEPTUAL TOOL FOR TEACHING LANGUAGE

Presenter: Vincent Carbone Ed.D, BCBA

The workshop will provide an overview of BF Skinner's analysis of verbal behavior with emphasis upon those topics which have particular relevance to the teaching of language to children with autism.

Demonstrations of teaching methods that can be implemented to support the development of language training and other skill areas will be highlighted. The workshop is planned as an introduction to the topic but will also benefit parents, speech pathologists, behavior analysts and educators with experience with this subject matter.

Registration, brochure, and more information available at www.nysaba.org.

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November 11 and 12, 2005

Sarasota Springs, NY

APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS: PROMOTING QUALITY OUTCOMES

New York State Association for Behavior Analysts (NYSABA) Annual Conference offers an exciting collection of workshops and lectures on effective, evidence-based intervention for children and adults with autism and other developmental disabilities.

Presenters are among the most noted experts in the field and include Vincent Carbone, Bobby Newman, Peter Gerhardt, Joanne Gerenser, Gina Green, Rick Kubina, Bridget Taylor, Randi Horowitz, and others. Topics focus on the application of behavior analysis across a multitude of relevant areas of learning for people of all ages, and on the management of effective programs. For a complete listing and brochure, visit the NYSABA web site at www.nysaba.org. Topics include:

IMPROVING SOCIAL BEHAVIOR OF CHILDREN WITH AUTISM: A FOCUS ON ACQUISITION AND MOTIVATION

DESIGNING EFFECTIVE PROGRAMMING TO IMPROVE EYE CONTACT, REFERENCING, AND JOINT ATTENTION SKILLS IN CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

SELECTING EFFECTIVE INTERVENTION: PROMOTING QUALITY OUTCOMES IN SCHOOL SETTINGS

INCORPORATING APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES INTO VARIOUS DISCIPLINES INCLUDING; SPECIAL EDUCATION, SPEECH THERAPY, PHYSICAL THERAPY AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

THE USE OF COMPUTER AND VIDEO TECHNOLOGY WITH CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

STRIVING FOR INDEPENDENCE: TEACHING SELF-HELP SKILLS TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (Part 1)

ALTERNATIVE/AUGMENTATIVE COMMUNICATION AND INDIVIDUALS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS: ASSESSMENT THROUGH IMPLEMENTATION

DESIGNING AN ABA CLASSROOM FOR SECONDARY (Middle School and High School) STUDENTS WITH AUTISM

MAKE IT FUN AND I'LL SHOW UP: MOVING TOWARDS NATURALLY OCCURRING REINFORCEMENT

STRIVING FOR INDEPENDENCE: TEACHING SELF-HELP SKILLS TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

USING VIDEO MODELING TO TEACH CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

LET'S PLAY: INCORPORATING PEERS IN THE TREATMENT OF CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

ISSUES WITH SEXUALITY ACROSS THE LIFESPAN FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH AUTISM

December 9, 2005

Hartford, CT

Rensselaer at Hartford, Seminar Hall

IMPROVING COMMUNICATION SKILLS

FOR CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS

Presenter: Anne Holmes, MS, CCC, BCBA

This session will explore the various communication deficits of children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD), PreK-grade 5, and provide strategies and treatment options for both verbal and non-verbal children. The nature of communication and language impairments of children with ASD will be reviewed. Specific strategies will be presented for planning program activities to promote and enhance communication. Participants will have opportunities to dialogue and problem-solve current issues pertaining to the speech and language needs of their students, PreK-grade 5. In addition, participants will learn ways to incorporate assistive technology and augmentative alternative communication in programs for children with autism.

Fee: \$30. Register by November 22, 2005

Registration form and more information about this and other training opportunities can be found at the Special Education Resource Center (SERC) web site www.ctserc.org, or by contacting Carol Hotz at (860) 632-1485, ext. 232

January 18 and 19, 2006

(Two-day conference)

Cromwell, CT

Crowne Plaza

APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS (ABA) CURRICULUM AND METHODOLOGIES FOR YOUNG CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

Presenter: Barbara Metzger, Ph.D., BCBA

The first day will focus on beginning programs and the second day will focus on more advanced programs. This curriculum employs a variety of behavioral teaching strategies such as discrete trial training, verbal behavior, natural environment training, *Picture Exchange Communication System* (PECS), and fluency training. All teaching methods are science-based and individually tailored to the needs of the child. The curriculum emphasizes teaching play and functional communication in the context of everyday activities, going beyond "at the table" work. The curriculum also emphasizes creating an environment that motivates children to talk and play with their teachers/tutors and transferring these skills as soon as possible to peers, siblings, and other adults. Dr. Metzger will provide each participant with a copy of the ABA curriculum, which includes a flow chart that depicts the sequence of teaching programs, written notes consisting of teaching tips and solutions to common teaching

problems, and a list of current targets for each program. The presentation includes video of the programs and methodologies. Dr. Metzger will also present research on the correlation between therapy activities and the development of spontaneous social skills such as eye contact and joint attention.

Fee: \$75. Register by December 29, 2005
Registration form and more information about this and other training opportunities can be found at the Special Education Resource Center (SERC) web site www.ctserc.org, or by contacting Carol Hotz at (860) 632-1485, ext. 232

April 8, 2005

SAVE THE DATE!

Wonderful News! The River Street Autism Program and CT FEAT will sponsor a Spring Conference featuring Drs. Andrew Bondy and Beth Sulzer-Azaroff, authors of *The Pyramid Approach to Education*, and Dr. Kathleen Dyer, clinical director of The River Street Autism Program at Coltsville.

This promises to be an exciting learning opportunity for anyone interested in the latest developments on effective autism intervention. Details will be available at the CT FEAT web site, www.ctfeat.org.

Association for Behavior Analysis International Conference

Atlanta - May 2006

The annual ABA conference has people attending from over 50 nations and 6 continents. Presentations are made on every conceivable topic related to behavior analysis by some of the most notable behavior analysts working today. Workshops and tutorials are available as well as meetings focusing on specific topics of interest like Autism. There is even a Special Interest Group for Parents that focuses on helping parents navigate the conference and get the most out of their experience at ABA possible. Further information is available on the ABA web site at www.abainternational.org.

SERC Offers Workshops on Positive Behavior Support

Positive Behavior Support (PBS) is an empirically derived, function-based, data-driven approach to proactively meet challenging behaviors by providing a continuum of support that targets the behavioral needs of all students, kindergarten-grade 12.

November 22, 2005

Observation-Based Assessment: Methods for Defining, Monitoring, and Determining the Meaning of Student Behavior (Session A)

January 5, 2006

Preventing and Managing Crisis Situations for Students with Challenging Behavior (Session A)

January 18, 2006

Observation-Based Assessment: Methods for Defining, Monitoring, and Determining the Meaning of Student Behavior (Session B)

February 2, 2006

Preventing and Managing Crisis Situations for Students with Challenging Behavior (Session B)

February 8, 2006

Conducting Functional Behavior Assessments and Developing Behavior Intervention Plans (Day 1)

March 28, 2006

Conducting Functional Behavior Assessments and Developing Behavior Intervention Plans (Day 2)

April 2, 2006

Preventing and Managing Crisis Situations for Students with Challenging Behavior (Session C)

April 2, 2006

Positive Behavior Support: A Systems Approach to Effective School-wide Management

May 10, 2006

Observation-Based Assessment: Methods for Defining, Monitoring, and Determining the Meaning of Student Behavior (Session C)

Contact Information

Contact *Regina M. Oliver*, Consultant, ext. 378, for information about the content of SERC's Positive Behavior Support (PBS) Initiative. Contact *Cortney Sharpe*, Senior Project Assistant, ext. 245, for information regarding registration.

**OTHER PRESENTATIONS
OF INTEREST**

November 12, 2005

9a.m. to 1p.m.

Hamden, CT

AUTISM 101

For parents of newly diagnosed children or parents of young children (ages 2-6 years)

Presenter: Karyn Bailey, LCSW

Fee: \$30. Contact ASRC 203-248-5222 or visit the ASRC web site, www.ct-asrc.org.

November 18, 2005

9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

(Two-day conference)

Windsor, CT

AN INTRODUCTION TO AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS

Presenter: Ruth Eren, Ed.D.

Participants will be provided with an overview of diagnosis, assessment, and characteristics of autism spectrum disorders. Connecting diagnostic and assessment information to the student's IEP will be explored. The variability of student needs and learning profiles will be discussed. Information on instructional strategies, interventions, and curricular accommodations and modifications for children and youth, in PreK to grade 8, will be provided.

Fee: \$30. Register by November 4, 2005

Registration form and more information can be found at the Special Education Resource Center (SERC) web site www.ctserc.org, or by contacting Carol Hotz at (860) 632-1485, ext. 232

November 19, 2005

Hartford, CT

**NONVERBAL LEARNING DISORDERS
ASSOCIATION EAST COAST CONFERENCE**

Successful Transitions to College and the Workplace Daylong conference focusing on common sense, systematic approaches to gaining the skills that will work. Sessions will include valuable information on: Assistive Technology, The Rights and Responsibilities of People with Disabilities, Preparation for College, Post-Secondary Educational Settings, Negotiating Pathways to Productive Development, Executive Function Skills. Registration and information at www.nlda.org.

December 3, 2005

9a.m. to 1p.m.

Hamden, CT

HOW TO PARENT YOUR ASD CHILD (ages

2-8)

Presenter: Linda Grimm, Ph.D.

Fee: \$30. Contact ASRC 203-248-5222 or visit the ASRC web site, www.ct-asrc.org.

December 15 and 16, 2005

9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

(Two-day conference)

Cromwell, CT

**THE SCERTS MODEL FOR ENHANCING
COMMUNICATIVE AND
SOCIO-EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE**

Presenter: Barry Prizant, Ph.D., CCC-SLP

This two-day seminar will offer an overview of a comprehensive model, as well as examples of specific strategies for enhancing the development of young children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and for supporting their families.

Fee: \$80. Register by November 29, 2005

Registration form and more information can be found at the Special Education Resource Center (SERC) web site www.ctserc.org, or by contacting Carol Hotz at (860) 632-1485, ext. 232

January 7, 21, & February 4, 2006

**ADVOCACY TRAINING FOR FAMILIES: 3
WORKSHOPS**

Presenter: Stacey Hultgren

Fee: \$90. Contact ASRC 203-248-5222 or visit the ASRC web site, www.ct-asrc.org.

February 18, 2006

Hamden, CT

**DEVELOPING PLAY SKILLS IN ASD
CHILDREN**

FEE: \$30. Presenter: Megan MCCollough

Contact ASRC 203-248-5222 or visit the ASRC web site, www.ct-asrc.org.

April 27 & 28, 2006

9am-4pm

Meriden, CT

**GOING TO THE HEART OF AUTISM:
AN INTRODUCTION TO RELATIONSHIP
DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTION**

Presented by Steven Gutstein, Ph.D.

This two-day introductory session will provide participants with background information on the *Relationship Development Intervention (RDI) Program*. The goal of RDI is for each individual with an autism spectrum disorder to be excited about expanding his or her world, rather than afraid of it. Fee: \$100. Register by March 30, 2006.

Registration form and more information about this and other training opportunities can be found at the Special Education Resource Center (SERC) web site www.ctserc.org, or by contacting Carol Hotz at (860) 632-1485, ext. 232.

April 29, 2006

Autism Society of Connecticut's Annual State-wide Conference

Featuring Temple Grandin and Brenda Smith Myles. For more information, visit their web site, www.autismsocietyofconnecticut.org.

May 11, 2006

9am-3:30pm

Trumbull, CT

ADDRESSING THE SOCIAL SKILLS NEEDS OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH AUTISM

Presented by: Susan Izeman, Ph.D.

This session will allow participants to explore the programming and teaching of social understanding in various settings for students with ASD in kindergarten to grade 5. Participants will expand their knowledge base with respect to curriculum components, instructional strategies, and available supports and resources relating to the social skills development of elementary school students with autism spectrum disorders. Staff training, development of quality Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), assessment of social skills, and strategies and techniques for addressing social skills deficits. Fee: \$30. Register by April 11, 2006

Registration form and more information about this and other training opportunities can be found at the Special Education Resource Center (SERC) web site www.ctserc.org, or by contacting Carol Hotz at (860) 632-1485, ext. 232

May 19, 2006

9am-3:30pm

Meriden, CT

ADDRESSING THE SOCIAL SKILLS NEEDS OF MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH AUTISM

Presented by Peter Gerdhardt, Ph.D.

Children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) struggle to make sense of an overwhelming and often confusing social world. This session will allow participants to explore the programming and teaching of social understanding in various settings for students with ASD in grades 6 to 12. Participants will expand their knowledge base with respect to

curriculum components, instructional strategies, and available supports and resources relating to social skills development of middle and high school students with autism spectrum disorders. Additional issues will be explored, including staff training, development of quality Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), assessment of social skills, and strategies and techniques for addressing social skills deficits.

Fee: \$30. Register by April 18, 2006

Registration form and more information about this and other training opportunities can be found at the Special Education Resource Center (SERC) web site www.ctserc.org, or by contacting Carol Hotz at (860) 632-1485, ext. 232. ✪

SERC Technology in Education Initiative

Assistive Technology Conference

Friday, March 11, 2005

8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Radisson Hotel, Cromwell

Featuring

Creating Social Stories with “My Own Bookshelf” Presented by Anita Russell, MS, CCC-SLP, Glastonbury Public Schools

-and-

Literacy Strategies for Students with Autism Using “My Own Bookshelf”

Presented by Laura Giovanetti, MS, CCC-SLP, CES, Trumbull

The presenters will each discuss how they use “My Own Bookshelf” with students with autism. This software program allows the user to incorporate text, speech, and digital photographs and movies into a book-like format on the computer, providing visual and auditory feedback for students who require such supports.

Direct content questions to Amy Norton, Consultant, extension 326, and registration questions to Leticia Garcia Guerra, Senior Project Assistant, extension 233, at SERC (860) 632-1485. ✪

(Continued from page 6)

CT FEAT LIBRARY DONATION PROGRAM

tism brought about by recent media coverage.

Books include: Teaching Individuals with Developmental Delays (Ivar Lovaas), A Work in Progress (Leaf & McEachin), A Work in Progress -Spanish Version, Making a Difference: Behavioral Intervention for Autism (ed. Maurice, Green & Luce), Behavioral Intervention for Young Children With Autism: A Manual for Parents and Professionals (ed Maurice et al), The ME Book (Ivar Lovaas), Let Me Hear Your Voice (Catherine Maurice), Reaching Out, Joining In: Teaching Social Skills to Young Children with Autism (Weiss & Harris), Right From the Start: Behavioral Intervention for Young Children with Autism (Harris & Weiss), Teaching Language to Children with Autism (Sundberg & Partington), The Assessment of Basic Learning and Language Skills (ABLLS) (Sundberg & Partington), Teach Me Language (Sabrina Freeman), When Everybody Cares (Bobby Newman), How to Compromise With Your School District without Compromising Your Child (Gary Meyerson, Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) Manual (Frost & Bondy).

Most of the libraries listed below accepted all the books; a few selected only certain titles. These books can also be borrowed through other CT libraries using the Interlibrary Loan Program.

Danbury Library, Torrington Library, New Milford Place, Beardsley Memorial Library (Winsted), Simsbury Public Library, Silas Bronson Library (Waterbury), Ferguson Library (Stamford), New Haven Free Public Library, Public Library of New London, Otis Library (Norwich), and Willimantic Public Library.

Phase Two of the CT FEAT Library Donation Program will target academic libraries throughout Connecticut.

(Continued from page 7) ASPERGER SYNDROME AND MILD AUTISM: RESOURCES FOR ABA TREATMENT FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

If you don't have access to an experienced consultant, there's still a great deal you can accomplish on your own, using ABA techniques (taught through books, videos, conferences, workshops, etc.) and drawing upon the various curricular materials that are available for purchase.

My own guiding mantra was to closely observe normally developing children at every opportunity – however painful that sometimes was. These observations - of infants in the supermarket, toddlers on the playground, and preschoolers at recess - helped me better understand the depth of my own children's deficits and the enormous amount of "catching-up" that they would need to do.

Time and again, I was struck by the extent to which even the youngest of these normal children would spontaneously study my face and body language or seek to engage me by exchanging smiles. What an extraordinary amount of social learning was going on! It was stressful to realize how much my own children had missed beginning as early as their infancy. But it did motivate me to press hard to catch up with that always moving target of "normal development."

Books for Teaching

My own personal favorite is **Teaching Individuals With Developmental Delays: Basic Intervention Techniques** (Ivar Lovaas, Pro-Ed, 2003). Its curriculum addresses only the earliest stages of treatment so it wasn't particularly useful for my children. But I found the book invaluable for its insights into the various behavior problems associated with autism spectrum disorders.

Lovaas doesn't concern himself with the various DSM-IV diagnostic classifications (e.g. Autistic Disorder vs. Asperger Syndrome). Instead, he views all the autism spectrum disorders as involving "developmental de-

(Continued on page 17)

lays,” the number and severity of which vary across the spectrum. He describes how behavioral excesses (e.g. self-stimulation, repetitiveness) and deficits (e.g. imitation, motivation, attention) interfere with the development of normal social and learning behaviors. I found this a very useful way to look at my children’s developmental problems.

Also essential for me were **A Work in Progress** (Leaf and McEachin, 1999) and **Teach Me Language** (Freeman and Drake, 1997). The former contains a curriculum, together with guidance on how to implement it using behavioral techniques. The latter’s most valuable feature, for us, were the instructional materials (e.g. exercises and games) for building social language skills. I’ve never found anything comparable. You’ll find all three of these books, as well as other worthwhile resources, extensively reviewed at the CT FEAT web site, www.ctfeat.org.

After you establish a behavioral foundation, there are tons of other helpful books to draw upon, both in and out of ABA world. Many helpful resources have been developed by special education teachers, speech and language pathologists (SLPs), and psychologists.

Some examples of these are: 1) the “Skill Streaming” series, especially **Skill Streaming in Early Childhood: New Strategies and Perspectives for Teaching Prosocial Skills** (McGinnis, and Goldstein, Revised edition 2003); 2) **Teaching Your Child the Language of Social Success** (Duke, Martin, and Nowicki, 1996); and 3) various of the ready-to-use language and special education books marketed by the LinguSystems company (www.linguisystems.com).

Though they didn’t exist at the time my children were in treatment, some of the materials developed by Steven Gutstein for his trademarked “Relationship Development Intervention” (RDI) program probably would be useful, especially some of the social skill exercises outlined in his book **Relationship Development Intervention With Young Children** (Gutstein and Sheely, 2002). You

don’t need to buy into Gutstein’s theories about autism, or claims for the comprehensiveness or effectiveness of his treatment model (both of which I find utterly unconvincing), in order to make use of his materials.

All of the resources I’ve mentioned can be adapted for use within a behavior analytic approach – e.g. involving task analysis, systematic teaching, prompting and generalization techniques, fluency training, and data-based decision making regarding how and what to teach.

General books on Asperger Syndrome

Most books for parents on the general topic of Asperger Syndrome tend to be very disappointing when it comes to providing treatment advice for young children. They exhaustively detail *what* your child needs to learn (e.g. “language,” or “social,” or “attending,” or “organizational” skills). But they don’t explain *how* to do it.

If they refer to ABA treatment at all, it’s only in connection with reducing “problem behaviors” like tantrumming. They fail to recognize that ABA is as powerful a tool for increasing positive behaviors as it is for decreasing negative ones. They underestimate, or misunderstand, the way ABA techniques can be used to teach most everything.

An exception to this is the wonderful **OASIS Guide to Asperger Syndrome** (Bashe and Kirby, 2nd edition, 2005) which is written by the two parents who operate the web site for Online Asperger Syndrome Information and Support (OASIS) www.aspergersyndrome.org, itself an incomparable resource for the Asperger community.

The **OASIS Guide** provides a general but comprehensive overview of diagnosis and treatment issues. I especially appreciate the book’s candid, supportive and respectful tone. From this parent’s perspective, it is the single most helpful introductory guide into the fascinating and challenging world of Asperger Syndrome.

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Another excellent overview book, written by a team of prominent psychologists, is **A Parent's Guide to Asperger Syndrome and High Functioning Autism: How to Meet the Challenges and Help Your Child Thrive** (Ozonoff, Dawson, McPartland 2002). The first section focuses on understanding AS and high functioning autism (e.g. diagnosis and treatment issues) while the second section provides ideas for living with AS at home, in school, and through the lifespan.

Though it doesn't deal with Asperger Syndrome specifically, **Overcoming Autism: Finding the Answers, Strategies and Hope That Can Transform a Child's Life** (Koegel and LaZebnik, 2004) provides helpful ideas about how to use behavioral techniques to improve the symptoms of autism. Even if you aren't interested in pursuing an intensive intervention program, you'll probably find some helpful ideas that will enhance the quality of your child's life.

Though it doesn't contain any treatment information, or at least any that I consider particularly useful, psychologist Tony Atwood's touching and insightful **Asperger's Syndrome: A Guide for Parents and Professionals** (1998) is very worth reading for its uplifting tone and insights into what it feels like to be a person with AS.

Once you have your treatment program in gear, and have the time or inclination to learn more about the neurological underpinnings of Asperger Syndrome, a good choice would be the collection of scholarly articles found in **Asperger Syndrome** (Klin, Volkmar, Sparrow, Editors, 2000). The editors are internationally renowned researchers at the Yale Child Study Center.*

(Continued from page 6)

SOFTWARE REVIEW

SCHOOL RULES! Teaching School Social Skills

The CDs have a "lesson plan" section, where the adult can tailor what each student will see. For example, any video clips that show what NOT to do can be blocked if the instructor does not want them presented within a student's program.

Naturally, students will need to generalize the skills in the real world. So, as they master each situation on the computer, they will need to practice the skill in the classroom, hallway, gym, locker room, and cafeteria.

The program does have a few drawbacks. Surprisingly, most of them involve shortcomings in data collection options that one would expect in a computer program.

For example, the program keeps data on how students do on each level. However, it doesn't keep data within each level. So, when looking at the graph, there is no way to know which situations each student has mastered in a particular level, and which ones need more work. This drawback can be overcome if someone sits with the student and manually tracks the data, but this seems unnecessarily cumbersome for this type of technology.

For each situation, the program should also require the student to master one level, before being allowed to move up to the next level. For example, once the student gives the correct answer to 80% of the questions about how to act in the locker room in Level 2, then they could have access to Level 3.

After the student answers the first five questions and plays the game, the program allows them to exit. Unfortunately, there is no way to return later and resume where they left off; they have to begin again with the first question for that level.

The video clips show kids who are probably

(Continued on page 19)

about middle school age. The CDs say that the target ages are 8-18. To use the program, students need to have some basic reading skills or the ability to understand verbal questions.

The program offers individual data tracking for multiple students. However, only one student at a time can use a CD. They are MAC & Windows compatible. The CDs are \$90 each, plus 10% shipping, and are available at www.socialskillbuilder.com.✱

(Continued from page 6) PRESENTATION REVIEW VOTING WITH THEIR FEET: INCORPORATING STUDENT CHOICE

compliance,” and “never” reinforce escape-motivated behavior because you will only make it happen more often in the future.

According to Fabrizio, we should not worry about reinforcing escape-motivated behavior because it will be reinforced, one way or another. Children will find ways to escape aversive tasks whether it's through overt rebellion, or covertly, like when they avoid us, answer carelessly, or tune us out altogether.

Fabrizio suggests that we should view these types of escape-motivated responses from our children as feedback on our teaching. When we allow children to escape from instruction, we get valuable information to help us improve our teaching and provide a more successful learning environment. When teaching is good, learners are reinforced by success and want to keep going.

Fabrizio offered ways to reduce escape behaviors in instructional settings. Adjustments to the elements of instruction should be made based on data and our moment to moment interactions with children. If a *reinforcer* isn't strong, we might have to find a better one. If the *pace of teaching* is too slow, we might speed it up. If a *task is too easy*, we might make it harder, increase the range of examples we're teaching or use all new examples.

If a *task is too hard*, we might try breaking it down into smaller steps or making it easier. However, he warns that making tasks easier is frequently used and often not effective.

As I thought about this presentation, certain mottoes about teaching came to mind: *The learner is always right; Children don't fail to learn, we fail to teach them; Behavior is a functional relationship between the individual and the environment.*

We as parents and teachers are the child's environments. Sometimes we need to change our own behavior so our children can learn what we intend to teach them. It is our responsibility to make learning appropriate and fun, and to keep our interactions with learners as efficient and positive as possible.

The presentation has already begun to change my behavior as a parent and as an educator. I'm more aware of my son's emotional reactions when I make demands of him. Like many kids with ASD, he has challenges in the area of organization and self-management. Sometimes he responds negatively when I ask him to do a particular task or chore. Now when I see those negative reactions, I ask myself, why is that task aversive to him? Did I really teach him how to do it, or have I just told him what to do and assumed that he could do it? Did I give him enough support and practice to become really good at what I expected him to do? I've resolved to do more chores with him, to teach him the steps carefully and to make it fun.

Likewise, I find myself trying to be more analytical when a student seems bored or is experiencing some stress. Giving the student a choice in whether to continue or not helps me to know I'm not causing him or her undue discomfort, or becoming aversive to the child. That assurance makes teaching more reinforcing for me.

Fabrizio's presentation also reminded me of a favorite passage in the book, "The Morningside Model of Generative Instruction", written by Drs. Kent Johnson and Elizabeth Street. Morningside Academy is a laboratory school

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(Continued from page 19)

in Seattle that specializes in fluency-based instruction, where Fabrizio was a teacher for four years

Programs are evaluated on the basis of their ability to produce happy, competent learners who are naturally reinforced by progress...[we] strive for a path through the curriculum that makes each successive task at least as easy as the one that preceded it and a path that prevents or repairs the effects of historic failure.

Michael Fabrizio performed a valuable service by bringing this message to parents of children with autism and the intervention community that serves them. We need to pay attention when students "vote with their feet"

(Editor's Note: Danusia Pawaska, is a parent of a child with autism, and a certified associate behavior analyst. She is a partner in Achieve Fluency, a private practice program and consulting service in Connecticut, specializing in fluency-based instruction and the application of principles from behavior analysis to help students with significant language delays.)✧

(Continued from page 2)

BOOK REVIEW ABA PROGRAM COMPANION by J. Tyler Fovel.

Recently, inclusion has become a driving force behind many decisions in school based ABA programs. Fovel highlights important ways to make inclusion more meaningful for children with autism. His review of basic skills that contribute to a successful inclusion experience clearly identify many that are often overlooked by educators. Sample classroom activities, which identify ways to modify curricula for children with autism, provide great examples for inclusion activities.

The final two chapters can provide parents

and educators with guidance in training staff and monitoring different parts of an ABA program.

Paraprofessional training and program maintenance can be difficult due to time constraints or lack of resources. Fovel's chapter on paraprofessional training addresses these concerns and also provides forms for evaluating performance. Included are lists of information on how to effectively support a child with autism.

In addition to training paraprofessionals, the list of competencies can also be applied to other professionals, such as speech and language therapists, occupational therapists and physical therapists.

Not only does this book provide clear, science based information, it also comes with many useful forms and documents on a CD which you can install on your computer. As an ABA program teacher, I am always looking for ways to better organize my program. This book and CD provides user-friendly ways to document programs, collect data and monitor language development for individual students.

The ABA Program Companion would be a valuable tool for any ABA program.

The book is softcover, 175 pages plus an appendix of organizational forms and a companion CD. It is available through Different Roads to Learning, www.difflearn.com. \$42.95.

*(Editor's Note: Ms. Jacius is a certified special education teacher working with children with autism. She was a recipient of the CT FEAT ABA Educator Scholarship, and is preparing for certification as a behavior analyst. **The ABA Program Companion: Organizing Quality Programs for Children with Autism and PDD** by J. Tyler Fovel will be available for purchase at a discounted cost to participants at the workshop series presented by Mr. Fovel on November 4 and 5, 2005. Please see the article on page 3 of this issue of The CT FEAT Newsletter for workshop details.)*✧



Sponsored by Members of the

NORTHWEST CONNECTICUT PARTNERSHIP
FOR AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS AND RELATED DISABILI-

CREATING QUALITY PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN WITH AUTISM AND PDD
(For Pre-school and Elementary School-Aged Children)

Presented by Tyler Fovel, MA, BCBA

Friday November 4 & Saturday November 5, 2005

University of Connecticut Waterbury Campus

(Directions on Back)

Friday November 4, 2005 9 AM- 3 PM (Check-in and coffee at 8:30 AM)

Creating a Quality Program: The Vital Concepts and Components

The basics of building an effective, comprehensive teaching program will be explored on Day 1. Behavior principles will be presented within the context of teaching children with autism and PDD to become successful learners in individual, incidental and group environments.

- Workshop topics will include: • Effective Use of Antecedents and Consequences • Errorless Teaching • Effective Use of Prompt and Prompt Fading Strategies • General Teaching Formats • Key Factors in Successful Inclusion • Early Play and Social Behavior

Saturday November 5, 2005 9 AM- 2 PM (Check-in and coffee at 8:30 AM)

Advanced Concepts: Solving Problems and Next Steps

Day 2 will focus on moving beyond basic program development with an emphasis on transitions to active learning within groups. Developing prerequisite skills, and utilizing motivation and the child's strengths will be explored. A sample teaching plan will be provided.

- Topics include: • Advanced Concepts in Discrete Trials • Getting Ready for Groups • Transitional Setting Variables • Designing Group Activities with an Active Response • Types of Groups • Increasing Opportunities for Response • A Closer Look at Stories

Cost: \$35 per day includes lunch; CEUs available
Walk-Ins, please add \$5 per day.

Please send registration form and fee to: CT FEAT, Inc. PO Box 370352, West Hartford, CT 06137
Online registration available by contacting Marie Czerna of Education Connection at czerna@educationconnection.org.
Confirmation will be returned via E-mail. CT FEAT Information Hotline (860) 571-3888

I (we) wish to attend (please check one):

Day 1, Friday, November 4, 2005 Day 2, Saturday, November 5, 2005 Both days

Name: Telephone: E-mail:

Address: City: Zip:

School District: # of attendees: x \$35 per day = \$ check enclosed

CEUs requested

I am a (please check one of the following for each attendee registered above):

Special Educator Para-professional Regular Classroom Teacher Behavior Analyst

Parent Administrator Related Service Personnel (Speech, OT, PT, etc.) Other:

Directions to New UConn Waterbury Campus (Downtown)

From I-84 Eastbound (Danbury-Waterbury): Take exit 22; at the bottom of the ramp turn left onto South Main Street. Proceed under the highway. Continue on South Main Street to 4th traffic light (Kingsbury Street) and take a right onto Kingsbury. Take a right at the next traffic light (North Elm Street) and the entrance to the UConn Parking Facility will be on your right.

From I-84 Westbound (Hartford-Waterbury): Take exit 22 Union Street; at the bottom of the ramp turn left onto Union Street. Go straight. At the 3rd light at St. Mary's Hospital turn right onto South Elm Street. Go through 3 lights past the blue awning for Family Health Services. The entrance to the UCONN Parking Facility will be on your left.

From Route 8 North (Bridgeport-Waterbury): Take exit 31 onto 84 East. Take first exit #22; at the bottom of the ramp turn left onto South Main Street. Proceed under the highway. Continue on South Main Street to 4th traffic light (Kingsbury Street) and take a right onto Kingsbury. Take a right at the next traffic light (North Elm Street) and the entrance to the UConn Parking Facility will be on your right.

From Route 8 South (Winsted-Waterbury): Take (lefthand) exit 32, Riverside Street. Take a left at light onto Freight Street. At end take a left onto Meadow Street and your first right at the light onto West Main Street. Follow West Main Street, crossing North Main (the street then becomes East Main Street) and continue past the University (on your left). Take left at first traffic light onto North Elm

ABOUT THE NORTHWEST CT PARTNERSHIP

Participants in the Northwest CT Partnership include: EDUCATION CONNECTION; the University of Connecticut (UConn) Tri-Campus, the UConn College of Continuing Studies, the UCE; Northwestern Connecticut Community Technical College (NCCTC); the Connecticut Department of Mental Retardation; the Connecticut State Department of Education; Litchfield County Autism Spectrum Association (LACASA), Connecticut Families for Effective Autism Treatment (CT FEAT), private service providers; local public schools; and family members.

The overarching goal of the Northwest CT Partnership is to develop a seamless program of personnel preparation, from high school through graduate school, for individuals interested in working with persons with autism spectrum disorders and related developmental disabilities and their families.

During January of 2003, the Northwest CT Partnership developed a three-year plan that, among other outcomes, aimed to continue the work of the Partnership and expand learning opportunities, from high school through graduate school, for individuals interested in working with persons with ASD and other related developmental disabilities. The plan's focus is the implementation of a sustainable, seamless, regional program to provide training for families, for students interested in a career in this field, and for paraprofessionals and professionals currently working with individuals with ASD and related disabilities.

The initial efforts of the Northwest CT Partnership led to a series of successfully enrolled courses, which were offered in the spring 2003 semester; the first of their kind in the area. To date, course offerings continue, as does the progress of this collaborative effort. Of particular note is the development of a program of study that would lead to national certification in applied behavior analysis and other related programs of study--a two-year college program, a baccalaureate program, and a graduate level--that allow for concen-

CT FEAT, Inc.

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ABOUT CT FEAT

Formed in 1997 by parents and relatives, *Connecticut Families for Effective Autism Treatment (CT FEAT)* is a non-profit organization created to provide information and support to the families of children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD).

GOALS:

- To provide information and resources that enable families to evaluate and compare the effectiveness of current treatment approaches;
- To support families seeking or implementing behavioral intervention programs;
- To expand the availability of high quality professional services by supporting education and training opportunities in applied behavior analysis (ABA);
- To increase public awareness regarding the high incidence of Autism Spectrum Disorders and the availability of effective, scientifically validated treatments.

RESOURCES:

- An **"Information Hotline"** by which **Connecticut** families can learn about CT FEAT's activities and request an information packet. Parents also can request to speak in confidence with another parent about issues related to ABA-based treatment. Call (860) 571-3888.
- **Parent Support Group meetings**, which take place in Rocky Hill, CT. The only requirement for participation in the meetings is that parents agree to respect each other's privacy and confidentiality. Please call the Parent Hotline (860-571-3888) or visit the CT FEAT web site, www.ctfeat.org, for information about future meetings.
- An **Unmoderated "Parents Only" Internet Mailing List** that provides **Connecticut parents** of ASD children with a forum to discuss issues of concern. **To subscribe to the list**, send an E-mail message to ctfeat@ctfeat.org, providing your name, e-mail address, and mailing address. Also please state why you want to join the list, **and** your explicit agreement to honor the confidentiality requirement.
- The **CT FEAT Newsletter** which contains news of interest (e.g. book reviews, conference announcements, etc.). To subscribe (free) , please contact send an e-mail to ctfeat@ctfeat.org or call the Information Hotline (860-571-3888) .
- The CT FEAT web site, **www.ctfeat.org**, provides extensive information resources including book and video reviews, conference listings, an 'ABA Job Connections' employment section where prospective employees and employers can find each other, Spanish language resources, research articles, and back issues of the information-packed CT FEAT newsletter.
- **Advocacy and resources** to expand the availability of high quality professional services for children and families.

CT FEAT Bylaws provide that all members of the Board of Directors shall be parents or family members of children with Autism Spectrum Disorders. There is Board representation from throughout the state.

Connecticut Families for Effective Autism Treatment (CT FEAT) is a non-profit organization staffed by **volunteers** and funded through the generosity of caring supporters.

If you are a **Connecticut parent or professional** and would like to be a volunteer for CT FEAT activities, you can call (860) 571-3888, write to P.O. Box 370352, West Hartford, CT 06137, or e-mail ctfeat@ctfeat.org. We'd like to hear from you! ☐



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**CREATING QUALITY PROGRAMS
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Presented by Tyler Fovel, MA, BCBA

AUTHOR OF *THE ABA PROGRAM COMPANION*
Organizing Quality Programs for Children with Autism and PDD

November 4 & 5, 2005
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