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Northwestern Consortium TTAC
This newsletter is a collaborative effort by the Northwestern Consortium of the TTACs, which includes James Madison University, co-directed by Cheryl Henderson and Melinda Bright, and George Mason University, directed by Lynn Wiley.
Coaching: It’s Not Just for Sports

Coaching has expanded into many phases of daily life. A person can hire a life coach, a business coach, a fashion coach or a nutrition coach to learn a new skill or refine a current one. Coaching in the field of education can develop or improve current and future skills, across all content and behavioral areas, for educators and administrators in schools and can develop or refine skills needed by parents. Coaching can help the learner and the coach reflect on the topic, analyze and plan for the future. Two of the leaders in the field of coaching, Dathan Rush and M’Lisa Shelden, have given permission to use three of their articles in this newsletter. They are also authors of The Early Childhood Coaching Handbook and will be presenting an interactive full-day session and two different half-day sessions at this summer’s Creating Connections to Shining Stars Conference, July 16-18 in Virginia Beach.

Please go to http://www.ttaconline.org/staff/s_events/s_event_detail.asp?cid=1982 for information and registration.

BriefCASE: Tips and Techniques for Effective Coaching Interactions

Dathan D. Rush, Ed.D. and M’Lisa L. Shelden, Ph.D.

Introduction

This BriefCASE contains strategies to assist individuals using a coaching style of interaction to refine their skills when supporting parents, care providers, and colleagues. Coaching is an adult learning strategy that is used to build the capacity of a parent or colleague to improve existing abilities, develop new skills, and gain a deeper understanding of his or her practices for use in current and future situations. Coaching has five research-based practice characteristics that lead to the intended outcomes: (1) joint planning, (2) observation, (3) action/practice, (4) reflection, and (5) feedback. Listed below are 25 tips and techniques designed to address common coaching challenges and ensure effective implementation of the five characteristics of coaching.

TIPS AND TECHNIQUES

1) Always begin a coaching conversation by reviewing the joint plan from the previous visit.

2) At the beginning of the visit, after reviewing the joint plan from the previous conversation, jointly determine the time constraints of the visit and prioritize how to best spend the time.

3) Primarily use open-ended questions rather than closed questions (i.e., questions that can be answered with a “yes” or “no” response).

4) Closed-ended questions that require only a yes/no response should be reserved for situations when you need to ask permission and/or avoid making an assumption. For example, “Would you be comfortable having me watch you feed him?”

5) Become comfortable with a few question stems from the Framework for Reflective Questioning (Rush & Shelden, 2011) that fit your style or personality. Write these question stems on a note pad that is easily visible during your coaching conversation. If you get stuck during your conversation, then you can quickly refer to your notepad for a few questions you know work. This will help avoid asking too many awareness questions and assist in moving to analysis, alternatives, and the joint plan (action questions).

6) Avoid embedding a suggestion in a question. For example, “What would happen if…? What about…? How about trying…? What do you think about trying…? How would you feel about…”

7) Avoid asking questions in order to get the person you are coaching to agree with what you are thinking. This often involves the predetermination of an answer or idea and a series of questions that lead the person being coached to this predetermined idea or answer.

8) Give the person being coached time to think and respond to the question being asked. Learn to be comfortable with silence. When faced with silence, you should not feel compelled to repeat the question, clarify the question, fill the quiet with talking, or immediately jump to making suggestions or sharing ideas.
9) Learn how to read non-verbal cues. When asking reflective questions, be aware of how the person you are coaching is reacting to the process. If you sense or perceive that the person is uncomfortable or even annoyed, reflect on your coaching skills. For example, are you drilling the person you are coaching, coaxing him/her to answer in the way you want, not allowing for thinking time, or not listening to the person’s answers?

10) When the person you are coaching says, “Just tell me what I need to do” or “Don’t coach me, just tell me,” respond by letting the person know that in order to be most helpful, you at least have to get an idea of what s/he already knows or is doing so you can match the information you will share to his/her interests, needs, lifestyle, etc. People are more likely to act on information if they have a part in developing it and it is tailored to their specific situations, which is what you are trying to do.

11) When the person you are coaching responds to a reflective question by saying, “I don’t know,” you have two options: (a) If you think the person knows the answer to the question based on previous information the person has shared or an action on his/her part that you observed, then rephrase the question to ensure the person understands or point out the example; or (b) If you do not know the person’s level of knowledge related to the question being asked, share information, and then ask the person how that matches his/her current understanding, priorities, ideas, etc.

12) When coaching someone who is really quiet/shy, do not be intimidated or overly concerned by periods of silence. Individuals who are internal processors like to think about what they are going to say before responding. Learn to be quiet and allow silence for the other person to get his/her thoughts together. Be sure to ask open-ended as opposed to yes/no questions. Ask the person to give you specific examples or elaborate on his/her responses.

13) Coaching child care providers and preschool teachers must occur “on the fly” as they are preparing for the next activity, transitioning between activities, or involved in an activity in which you can take part and help with the other children while s/he interacts with the child who is the reason for your support. Since child care providers and preschool teachers are so busy, they must see the benefit of having you in their classroom and working with them.

14) If the person being coached has a tendency to jump from topic to topic, the coach should ask the coaching partner if (a) it would be alright to develop a plan around one topic before moving to the next, (b) he or she is ready to change topics or needs to finish the previous topic before moving on, (c) the coach could write the new topic down and then promise to come back to it upon completion of the previous topic, or (d) he or she prefers to come to resolution and a plan for all topics at the conclusion of the conversation.

15) Coaching through an interpreter requires explaining the process of coaching to the interpreter preferably before the coaching conversation. The interpreter must understand that you need him/her to interpret everything you say to the parent and everything the parent says back to you.

16) Supervisors may use coaching with the people they supervise and a coach can also be the supervisor of a person s/he is coaching. When using coaching, a supervisor must be clear with the other person whether the present conversation is intended to be a coaching or supervisory conversation.

17) Observation of the parent or care provider practicing or using recently discussed ideas and strategies is a critical characteristic of the coaching process and provides an opportunity to promote further reflection and provide feedback. Some questions and comments to prompt an opportunity for observation are: “Let’s try it. Can we try that now? Would you mind showing me how you do that? How would that look/how does that look when you do it? How about you try? How about you take a turn? Let’s see the two of you do it? Would you be comfortable trying this while I watch?”

18) Modeling a behavior or activity with the child for the parent or care provider may be done to determine how a jointly developed idea or strategy might work or to show the parent or care provider how you are talking about might look. Prior to modeling, (a) explain to the parent or care provider what you are going to do and why, (b) give the parent or care provider something specific to watch for or to do, (c) debrief with the parent or care provider what you did with the child, (d) invite the parent or care provider to try what you modeled, (e) reflect on how this worked when the parent did it, and (f) develop a plan for how this can happen when you are not present.

19) Affirmative feedback is non-committal acknowledgement used to let the person you are coaching know that you hear and understand what s/he is saying without agreeing, disagreeing, or making any other type of judgment. Examples of affirmative feedback include, but are not limited to: “I see, I understand, I know what
you mean, I hear what you are saying, What I am hearing you say is, You seem really (label the emotion you are perceiving)."

20) Evaluative feedback is a judgment of what you see the person doing or hear the person saying. Examples of evaluative feedback may include, but are not limited to: “Great, Good job, That’s a good idea, You're really smart to think of that, Excellent thinking, Way to go, mom!, That’s just super, I like the way you, I would agree with that, That’s how I would do it, You are really a good dad.” Practitioners should avoid overuse of positive evaluative feedback.

21) Directive feedback involves telling the person what to do in situations where clear and present danger exists and the coach does not have time to engage the other person in a coaching conversation.

22) Informative feedback is sharing knowledge and information with the person being coached that is directly related to an observation, action, reflection, or direct question. Sharing information prior to reflection may be necessary when you know without a doubt that the person you are coaching has no prior knowledge of the content or situation, thereby has no foundation on which to be coached. In most instances, however, informative feedback follows reflection.

23) The joint plan can be developed either (a) as you proceed through the coaching conversation by noting with the person you are coaching what you each agree to do as a result of a conversation item or (b) at the end of the conversation by reviewing all of the actions, observations, and topics discussed, then determining together what could occur between coaching conversations.

24) Instead of the coach summarizing the joint plan, ask the person you are coaching: “What would you like to focus on between now and our next visit? Based upon all that we’ve discussed today, what is your plan? What would you like to accomplish between now and the next time we talk?”

25) When the joint plan from the previous session was not the priority of the person being coached, thus not completed between visits, you should first ask yourself if the plan was truly a joint plan or if it was really your suggestion or recommendation. If the former, then you may ask the person at some point during the conversation if the previous plan is still a priority and if so, when/how s/he will go about implementing it. If the joint plan never seems to be a priority for the person being coached, you may need to have an upfronting conversation similar to, “I’ve noticed that we have developed a joint plan every week for the past three weeks, but so far you haven’t been able to implement the plan. Is this still a priority for you? (If so) How can we modify the plan so that it will be useful for you?”

Reference

Authors

Not the Past or the Future, But the Present: Learning to Value Small Gifts

Justine van Engen, MFA

Two days a week, the boys from Heritage High School in Loudoun County come to my store. On Tuesdays, they drop off their teachers’ drycleaning, and they return on Thursdays to pick it up.

For each boy there is a teacher monitoring effective communication and safe public behavior. For each boy there is at least one diagnosis of a disorder on the autism spectrum.

The most common visitors are Tommy, Arjun, and Wallace. After three months of seeing me regularly, it was only today that Wallace looked me in the eyes. It was a pretty big deal.

Arjun is far more social and once asked my husband if they could be friends. Go ahead and guess what the answer was.

Tommy also has Tourette’s Syndrome so it takes a lot of concentration for him to lift his bag of clothes to the counter and to wait for me to process them. Sometimes, his teacher will slyly move a rubber ball into his hand to give the electrified nerve endings something solid to ground them.

Preston works at our store now and is the only person who is neither me nor my husband to have worked a straight 13-hour shift.

If there is no tagging, assembly or bagging to do, Preston will ask permission to sweep the floor or clean the counters. He is the only employee who does this.

Today, after Wallace looked right at me and answered my questions and after Preston had swept the floors free of even the smallest dust mote, a customer came in and announced that she regularly comes in on Tuesdays and has been made to wait because the students from Heritage take so long.

“I only have a limited time for lunch and you might want to consider that doing business with people like those takes a long time,” she announced.

I was stunned.

“People like what?” I asked.

“Teenagers? Tall people? People who like interacting with me when they drop off clothes?”

She was appalled at me, but I was unable to shut my pie hole.

“What kind of people do you mean? People who wait patiently while I take the orders? Because I happen to enjoy those people. I employ them. My son is one...” I kept talking as she retreated from my store.

So, today I am pretty sure I lost a customer, but Wallace looked right at me today and Preston made my store look great today, so I think it was an even exchange.

And I stood up for my son, although today will not be the day he knows that. It gives me something to which I can look forward.

In addition to writing the About Town opinion column for the Reston Patch, Justine van Engen is a realtor in Reston, Virginia. She and her husband are the owners of the drycleaning store mentioned in this column. They are the parents of three children, one of whom has an autism spectrum disorder.
Parents and Families: Be Determined for Your Child for the New School Year!

The Virginia Department of Education’s I’m Determined project offers many resources and mentoring opportunities for parents and family members who wish to become more self-determined or person-centered focused.

As June approaches, it marks the end of another school year, but it provides a chance for reflection and planning. Over the summer, as families, it is a perfect time to reflect on the past school year. After that review, here is a list of resolutions that each family may like to consider to accomplish over the summer. Then, when the new 2012-2013 school year begins, you are off to a great start!

I resolve over the summer to: (pick one or all!)

- View the I’m Determined website videos and resources for parents and youths on Self-Determination. http://www.imdetermined.org/
- Talk to my child about his or her disability and how it affects him or her in the school career.
- Share with my child his/her IEP. Figure out what the next steps are in his/her school career and future needs.


For more details or if you have questions, please view the I’m Determined Contact Us website at http://www.imdetermined.org/contact/

Special Education Policy: The Current School Year and What to Look for in the 2012-2013 School Year

National

Strengthening Accountability for Students with Disabilities.

This past year, the U.S. Department of Education focused on several issues including new efforts to strengthen accountability for students with disabilities. Closing the achievement gap by offering a more compliance-focused approach for students with disabilities is being sought. Upon return to school this fall, this topic will continue to be reviewed and in the news.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

During this past school year, the ESEA was a topic of high relevance to everyone in special education, and it will continue to be an important topic in the next school year. In March 2012, the House Education and the Workforce Committee voted to approve two bills central to the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, recently known as the No Child Left Behind Act. These two bills, known as the Student Success Act (H.R. 3989) and the Encouraging Innovation and Effective Teachers Act (H.R. 3990), will now have to be considered by the full House of Representatives prior to becoming law. The Student Success Act (H.R. 3989) and the Encouraging Innovation and Effective Teachers Act (H.R. 3990) both seek to overhaul key elements of ESEA/NCLB, including the accountability and teacher quality systems, by proposing a system of state-driven accountability and teacher evaluation systems linked to student test scores.

Virginia

In Virginia, paraprofessional training in the area of autism was an item of importance during the 2012 session. In the fall, look for continued support and training opportunities, and resources that can be found from the Virginia Commonwealth University Autism Center for Excellence (www.vcuautismcenter.org).

When the new school year begins, stay current by consulting http://legis.state.va.us as the Virginia General Assembly reviews teacher evaluation and teacher training, as well as other important issues.

For questions about Virginia policies and issues, please contact: Samantha Marsh Hollins, M.T., Ph.D. Candidate | Educational Specialist for Autism and Intellectual Disabilities Office of Instructional Support and Related Services | Virginia Department of Education samantha.hollins@doe.virginia.gov
Many teachers, especially those in middle and high schools, use student information surveys at the beginning of the year. These serve several purposes. Information about personal interests provides insight into ways to connect our content to students' lives. Questions about assignment and assessment preferences remind us to vary our delivery of information and offer options for demonstrating proficiency. It’s helpful when planning to know what students perceive as personal strengths or challenges.

The end of the school year offers us a time to review, analyze and reflect. An end of year student survey can provide valuable information that will spur reflection and sometimes revision. Not many new or novel variety of rationales and samples are readily available online. Several sites will be noted at the end of this article. This article will share common themes and sample questions.

**Purpose of End of the Year Surveys**

The content of an end of the year survey most often asks about the teacher’s instruction and the course content. Broader surveys may include questions about the school addressing the bigger picture of disciplinary policies, schedules, lunch room and so on (Aguilar, 2009). The purpose of the teacher survey is to elicit student feedback. In addition to prompting students to consider their learning experiences as more or less beneficial, the feedback should expedite reflection and perhaps revision/improvement for the surveyor. With this purpose in mind, we must begin to think about the questions.

**Content and Format**

Graduate students were asked to describe the characteristics of the “best” or “worst” teacher. “Best” teachers were lauded for building relationships, organization, in depth content knowledge, sense of humor, enthusiasm, fairness, clear expectations, creativity and ability to challenge their students (Fontana, 2012).

Student comfort level is evidenced in the desire for a teacher who builds relationships or connections, is perceived as fair, enthusiastic and has a sense of humor. Student awareness of instructional practice is seen in the desire for a teacher with a depth of content knowledge, creativity, organization and clear expectations as well as having the ability to challenge students. Consider a survey with two components: environment, or student comfort level, and instruction. Environmental questions could be geared to find out if students perceive your classroom as a comfortable or safe place. Questions about instruction would seek to find out what student perceive as the techniques, strategies, and procedures you used that helped them learn.

Likert scales are user-friendly and familiar to most students. Using a 5-point scale allows for some nuance. Be clear in the value of the scale. In our culture # 1 often designates the best or the winner. You may wish to make # 1 the “agree strongly” choice, followed by 2 = agree, 3 = neutral, 4 = disagree and finally, 5 = strongly disagree. You may want to add visuals such as a thumbs up or down or smile/ frowning face at either end. Repeat the scale and its designations after each question (Mertens, 1997).

Statements to consider relative to classroom environment:

- I could see the board (or wherever notes, examples…were demonstrated) clearly
- I felt safe in your classroom.
- I knew it was OK to make a mistake.
- Rules were fairly and consistently enforced.

Statements to consider relative to instructional practice:

- I felt you had content and materials organized.
- I felt that you gave prompt and positive feedback.
- I felt that I knew what you expected me to do on assignments.
- I felt that you really know and understand _________________.

If you begin with a Likert Scale, and leave space, students may be prompted to add comments to their ratings. A combination of question types may reveal more valuable information.

Open-ended questions require students to write descriptions or explanations. This may be
intimidating or time consuming thus impacting the quality of the responses. But, open-ended responses may provide richer data for reflection. Be sure to allow time for students to respond thoughtfully.

Consider asking:

- What did you like best about this class?
- Tell me about a time you felt frustrated.
- Tell me what I could change to make this class better next year.
- Tell me some things that I should not change.
- What learning strategy used in class helped you the most/least. Try to tell me why?

Administration

Surveys should be anonymous and voluntary. You will want to be candid with your students. Let them know that their comments and perceptions are important, that their feedback like yours on their work will help you learn. Caution them to use of appropriate language. Note that spelling is important and helpful, but misspelled comments will not be ignored. You may take advantage of online survey systems. Allow ample time for students to complete the surveys.

What to Do?

Once you have collected student feedback you need to see what they have said. Likert responses require a simple frequency analysis. You can use a copy of the survey and tally the 1’s, 2’s… Open-ended responses will require more time.

WARNING: Leave your ego at the door. Do not perceive suggestions as attacks. Remember you asked for feedback, not a nomination for teacher of the year. Look at the big picture. If one student says you were not organized, it is not an issue. If the majority of them indicate that organization is an issue, you should take it as a prompt to review your structure.

Before you lock up the classroom for the summer, list no more than 6 survey prompted goals or things to do (or not do) for the next school year. Store the list where you will find it in August. When you meet your new students you may want to tell them what you have changed based on suggestions from last year’s students.

References and Resources:

Aguilar, E. (2009), *How to foster student feedback*. Retrieved 2/13/2012 from www.edutopia.org/student-feedback  (Note: Elena Aguilar, a former teacher and instructional coach, is now a transformational leadership coach in the Oakland (California) Unified School District.)


Fontana, J. (2012). *George Mason University, Class discussions.*
To date, 45 states have passed anti-bullying laws prohibiting bullying and mandating significant, immediate responses from schools and communities (Bully Police USA, 2011). The detrimental impacts of bullying on victims, bystanders, and bullies have been well documented, including academic/behavioral problems (Espelage & Swearer, 2003; Schwartz & Gorman, 2003), school drop-out (Berthold & Hoover, 2000), employability issues (Carney & Merrell, 2001; National School Safety Center, 1995), and depression/suicide (Baldry & Farrington, 1998). Over the last two decades, an absolute onslaught of interventions has been developed to address these frightening outcomes, including everything from zero-tolerance policies to school-wide social skills curricula to “mean girls” groups to ambassador programs to restorative justice interventions between victims and their transgressors. Regrettably, these strategies have not proven as effective as hoped, and none have yet been proved to be evidence-based. In fact, in several cases bullying interventions have actually produced negative effects, increasing the amount of observed or reported incidents (Merrell, Gueldner, Ross, & Isava, 2008). This is especially problematic considering that many states and districts are requiring schools to implement the programs, and in many cases the resources expended to do so are substantial.

Clearly, it is not enough to simply purchase and implement the next big program. Instead, educators must approach the problem systematically, building from the universal to the individual and matching the level of support to the level of problem intensity. Specifically, three intervention components can have a powerful impact on bullying if implemented with fidelity: (a) universal strategies that promote a culture of competence, (b) specific skill development for bystanders, and (c) function-based, individualized support for students (victims as well as perpetrators) who are not responding to initial efforts.

**Universal Strategies**

The creation of safe, caring communities where both students and adults feel supported is the first step in effective/efficient bully prevention. Many currently available programs employ school-wide strategies such as bully-proofing pledges, increased staff training, social skills training for all students, standardized adult responses to incidents, reinforcement for appropriate behavior, and support for the parent community. While each of these strategies can improve school culture and student outcomes, two issues in particular keep them from having an ideal impact. First, available bully prevention programs often prescribe a significant amount of intervention but rarely provide sufficient strategies for data-based decision making to inform modifications and the additional support needed for all students to succeed. Second, many pre-packaged universal programs require a significant amount of time and resources (especially for programs involving large, school-wide social skills curricula). Schools have had a difficult time implementing them without additional funding or personnel, and follow-up studies have indicated that few beneficial effects have been maintained even 2 years after initial implementation (Limber et al., 2004; Roland, 1993).

The one exception is School-wide Positive Behavior and Intervention Supports (SWPBIS). While not a pre-packaged program, 20+ years of research has demonstrated SWPBIS’s ability to reduce problem behavior and improve school climate through a focus on data, systems, and practices (Horner, Sugai, Todd, & Lewis-Palmer, 2005). SWPBIS employs (a) empirically tested instructional principles to teach expected, positive behavior to all students (Colvin & Kame’enui, 1993), (b) systems of reinforcement for expected behaviors and a continuum of consequences for inappropriate behavior, (c) training/feedback to staff regarding systems implementation (Crone & Horner, 2003), and (d) documentation/analysis of reinforcement and discipline data by SWPBIS teams, who use the data to modify support on a regular basis (Sprague & Horner, 2006). When implemented by typical state agents, these strategies have resulted in demonstrated effectiveness (Bradshaw, Reinke, Brown, Bevans, & Leaf, 2008; Horner et al., 2009), as well as over time (Colvin & Fernandez, 2000; Luiselli, Putnam, & Sunderland, 2002; Putnam, Luiselli, & Sunderland, 2002; Taylor-Greene & Kartub, 2000).

**Skill Development for Bystanders**

SWPBIS can create positive school environments where students feel safe
and are more likely to act according to expectations. It can also provide the data and systems necessary to recognize when students need more. This is often the case with bullying when schools implement SWPBIS with fidelity but find that a proportion of their students still exhibit bully-like behavior. Immediate responses to these outcomes would typically involve implementing secondary interventions; simple, often generic strategies that can be implemented with small groups or individuals. But herein lies a problem. Research on bullying has demonstrated that it is frequently exhibited covertly and is almost always reinforced by peer attention (Atlas & Pepler, 1998; Craig & Pepler, 1995; Salmivalli, 2002; Soutter & McKenzie, 2000). Therefore, simply implementing a secondary intervention with the bully or the victim will not be enough. Other students in the school fuel the behavior by laughing at victims when they are teased, fighting back harassing perpetrators in retaliation, or even watching the problem behavior and doing nothing about it. Instead, once effective universal systems are in place, the next level of intervention should involve teaching bystanders (all other students in the school) to remove the peer attention that maintains the problem behavior. Doing so effectively involves three aspects: (a) teaching students specific skills that can be implemented outside the classroom, (b) implementing sufficient generalization strategies, and (c) ensuring ongoing staff implementation.

**Specific skills.** Several available programs provide curricula for teaching students to address bullying and include a plethora of instructional objectives, such as empathy, cliques, problem solving, exclusion, sexual harassment, how to take a stand, and definitions of bullying. Unfortunately, these curricula usually require substantial resources to implement (e.g., ten 50-minute lessons), and while the skills they teach are valuable for many students, they may not be necessary at the school-wide level. Bully Prevention in Positive Behavior Support (BP-PBS; Ross, Horner, & Stiller, 2008) was developed in response to this need for more efficient approaches to teaching bystander skills. Specifically, BP-PBS teaches all students a three-step response to use when students exhibit problem behavior (not just bullying), towards either them or others. It also teaches perpetrators an appropriate reply when the three-step response is directed towards them. By focusing on specific critical skills that are easy to remember and implement, the delivery of BP-PBS is reduced to only 45 minutes of initial instruction along with 10- to 15-minute data-based follow-ups in unstructured settings. In addition, by reducing the resources used for instruction, more staff time and effort can be directed towards generalization strategies and staff implementation fidelity, which are equally important but often overlooked.

**Generalization.** Generalization is an incredible challenge for educators, not just for bully prevention skills but for any skills we want students to actually use outside the classroom. Far too often, substantial effort is made to teach students effective bully prevention strategies in the classroom followed by an expectation that those skills will generalize to unstructured settings. Defined as “behavior change that proves durable over time, across settings, and across behaviors” (Baer, Wolf, & Risley, 1968, p. 96), generalization rarely happens without planned programming. First, teach the skills you want students to use in the actual settings where bullying occurs. BP-PBS does this through 10- to 15-minute data-based follow-ups conducted in school locations where bullying continues to be an issue. Second, involve adults who are normally in that environment. Teachers or counselors usually deliver the initial bully prevention instruction, but other adults (i.e., supervisors, instructional aides) are often the ones responding to reports of bullying. Therefore, these adults must be trained to (a) reinforce student attempts to use new skills at a high rate, (b) practice skills with students on a regular basis, and (c) use a universal review and resolve routine for responding to student reports of problem behavior.

**Staff implementation fidelity.** The effectiveness of bully prevention efforts is entirely contingent on adult implementation of the above generalization strategies. This is so important that simply expecting them to follow through is not enough. SWPBIS teams should lead the effort by providing ongoing collaboration and coaching with staff who supervise unstructured settings. In addition, SWPBIS teams should collect ongoing implementation data, which can be done through weekly surveys or daily checklists filled out by supervisory staff. Example questions on the forms can include how many times staff (a) practice with students, (b) deliver reinforcers for students' attempting new skills, (c) deal with reports of problem behavior, and (d) deliver office discipline referrals for continued problem behavior.

When implemented with fidelity, the combination of SWPBIS systems, simple bystander response skills, and effective generalization strategies can have an enormous impact on problem behavior in schools. In an empirical trial across three elementary schools, Ross and Horner (2009) observed a 72% reduction in physical and verbal aggression after the intervention was delivered. In addition, other students on the playground were substantially more likely to respond appropriately (less likely to reinforce) when they experienced problem behavior.
Individualized Supports
Finally, school-wide systems and effective bystander strategies may not be enough. Successful approaches to bullying prevention should also include individualized, functionally related interventions for students who have not responded to previous efforts. Many prepackaged programs provide interventions for these students, but they are often standardized and not based on the specific reasons for their lack of response. There are three common reasons why students do not respond to initial bully prevention efforts: (a) they have not acquired, mastered, or generalized the pro-social skills necessary for effective behavior change, (b) they continue to be reinforced by a small group of peers, or (c) their problem behavior is maintained by a function other than peer attention.

The first problem can be addressed through additional pro-social skills instruction for the given student. Assessment (e.g., teacher ratings, direct observation) should be conducted to evaluate externalizing as well as internalizing issues that still need to be addressed. Instructional objectives, lesson plans, generalization strategies, and progress monitoring can then be developed accordingly.

The response to the second problem can be similar to the first but with extra consideration of the specific peers involved. In many cases, certain peers fail to effectively respond to bullying and continue to reinforce it because they fear losing their friendships or popularity. For these students, pro-social skills must be practiced with the perpetrator or victim, both in the classroom and in applicable settings. It is critical to consider group size and delivery type. Instruction can be delivered one-on-one, in dyads, or in small groups, depending on the resources available and the type of typically occurring peer interactions. For example, some perpetrators or victims will benefit most from practicing pro-social skills with one preferred peer. Others may benefit more from a small group of socially appropriate peers. Just be careful to avoid grouping together deviant peers, as this may lead to increased peer attention to problem behavior (Dishion, McCord, & Poulin, 1999). Also, shorter lessons conducted on a more frequent basis—with specific objectives, assignments, practice in applicable settings, and numerous opportunities for feedback—will be ideal for many students.

The third problem, behavior maintained by a function other than peer attention, cannot be effectively addressed through peer-based interventions. For example, some students will engage in continued bullying behavior to acquire adult attention. For these students, interactions with adults due to continued bullying only serve to increase the probability of future problem behavior. Schools should consider other secondary interventions for these students, such as Check-in, Check-out (Crone, Hawken, & Horner, 2010), or Check & Connect (Christenson et al., 2008). These interventions provide strategies for pre-correction and additional adult reinforcement for appropriate behavior, and they have demonstrated effectiveness across multiple studies (Anderson, Christenson, Sinclair, & Lehr, 2004; Hawken, MacLeod, & Rawlings, 2007).

In Conclusion
Schools that hope to sustainably prevent and reduce bullying despite constant demographic, administrative, and budgetary changes must learn to approach the problem systematically. They must move away from the common practice of purchasing/implementing what sounds good, looks good, or feels good, and instead approach bullying as they approach RtI: by providing high-quality interventions matched to student need. The strategies described in this article can help schools develop a positive climate, specific skills for bystanders, and effective interventions for individual students. Even with these in place, however, a few students may require even more intensive assessment and intervention. Functional behavior assessment, behavior intervention plans, and additional resources may be necessary, the details of which extend beyond the limitations of this article. However, by addressing bullying universally through SWPBIS, teaching bystanders how intervene, and, finally, providing a menu of interventions for unresponsive students, the number of students requiring the highest levels of support will be greatly reduced. Future research is warranted to expand the current knowledge base on effective bully prevention. Specifically, detailed and controlled studies are needed to both isolate essential features as well as evaluate effectiveness across diverse school populations.

References


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**Summer Reading List**

**Motivational, Morale-Boosting Reading for Educators**

"Of all people, teachers know that learning never stops, even during . . . summer vacation. And while you probably want a little personal rest and recreation during your summer break . . . you can still find ways to indulge your love of teaching.” (OnlineUniversities.com)

The following list of suggested books will do just that – indulge your love of teaching and provide you with material to help you recharge and look forward to the year ahead.

**Fish!**

By S. Lundin, H. Paul & J. Christensen (2000). New York, NY: Hyperion. *Fish!* is a fictional story of how choosing to bring energy, passion, and a positive attitude to the job every day can make the difference in the work environment. This is a quick read.

**Teaching in the Key of Life**

By M. Chenfeld (1993). Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children. This is a collection of inspiring essays that will help you remember why you became a teacher. The classrooms described in Mimi Chenfeld's book are examples of how we can enjoy children more and teach them better!

**Why We Teach**

By S. Nieto (2005). Publisher: Teachers College Press. The author has collected heartfelt and thoughtful replies to this question from K–12 teachers. The stories of both veteran and new teachers focus on how they encourage growth, direction, and purpose in the students in their classrooms and offer a true message of hope for public education.

**What Keeps Teachers Going?**

By S. Nieto (2003). Publisher: Teachers College Press. The author describes how veteran public school teachers “keep going” – and remain enthusiastic – in spite of the many challenges they and their students face in today’s world.

**The Motivation Breakthrough: 6 Secrets to Turning On the Tuned-Out Child**

By Richard Lavoie (2007). Publisher: Touchstone. Rick Lavoie, well-known educator, motivational speaker, and author, identifies six things that may help parents and teachers understand what motivates children. Using his years of experience as an educator, he offers specific advice on reaching children with learning disabilities to “unlock” their enthusiasm and inspire them to succeed in the academic environment.

Reference:

The Council for Exceptional Children’s Virginia Division on Career Development and Transition
VADCDT SUMMER INSTITUTE 2012

**WE Make the Difference!**

**Topics Include:**
- “Best of Virginia” – Community & School Collaborations
- Youth Stories
- Employment First initiative
- Learning Focus Groups – Participant engagement
- VADCDT Annual Awards presented to Employer, Practitioner, & Leader
- Rehabilitation Engineer connects to the classroom and on the job

**When:**
- **WEDNESDAY** August 1 9:00am—4:30pm
- **THURSDAY** August 2 8:45am—1:30pm

**Where:** Roslyn Center in Richmond, Virginia

**Overnight Rate**
- Lodging + 4 meals/breaks/social
  - DCDT Members $190.00
  - Non – Members $240.00

**2-Day Rate – No overnight accommodations**
- 2 meals/breaks/social
  - DCDT Members $145.00
  - Non – Members $185.00

CRC credits and certificates will be provided.

Registration will be available online beginning March 16, 2012 and remain open until July 13, 2012. Individuals may pay by credit card only, and agencies/organizations/school divisions may pay by credit card or purchase order. To register, click on the link or click ctrl and left click on mouse.

**REGISTER**
[http://www.cvent.com/d/2cql3h](http://www.cvent.com/d/2cql3h)

**SORRY, NO REFUNDS**, however substitutions will be permitted until July 13th.
For registration questions, please contact Joan Lovegren-O’Brien or 804-827-1409.

See online registration for any requests for accommodations. We will do our best to meet your needs.

Visit: **VADCDT** to join CEC/DCDT

The mission of DCDT is to promote national and international efforts to improve the quality of and access to, career/vocational and transition services, increase the participation of education in career development and transition goals and to influence policies affecting career development and transition services for persons with disabilities.
Over the past few decades, youth participation in sports and sports-related activities has risen dramatically. Moreover, families have become aware of the recognized benefits of physical fitness which has prompted increased adolescent involvement in competitive sports (Kimbler, Murphy, Dhandapani, 2011). In addition, a growing number of youth are engaging in nontraditional activities like mountain biking, roller blading, skateboarding, or snowboarding (Moser, 2007). Thus, Virginia’s youth are increasingly involved in sports at an individual, community, and varsity level.

As summer approaches, students often participate in programs to maintain their conditioning or improve their skills for their preferred sport. Also, students engage in more recreational activities during the summer break. With this increased involvement year-round in sports and activities, youth are more susceptible to the silent epidemic of concussion (Moser, 2007). Recent studies report numbers as high as 3.8 million sports-related concussions requiring emergency room visits annually (Kimbler, Murphy, & Dhandapani, 2011). As a result, the need to systematically protect student-athletes has become more commonplace (Collins et al., 2002). Virginia passed its own state law on July 1, 2011, known as the Student-Athlete Protection Act. The law does not allow a student to return to play or practice, following a concussion, until they receive medical clearance from a designated professional. The main provisions of the law are included here:

Each school division must develop policies and procedures regarding the identification and handling of suspected concussions in student-athletes.

Student-athletes who sustain concussions must be properly diagnosed, given adequate time to heal, and are comprehensively supported until they are symptom free.

In order to participate in any extracurricular athletic activity, each student-athlete and his/her parent or guardian must review and acknowledge receipt, on an annual basis (every 12 months), information on concussions provided by the school division.

An important element of the law is the Review and Acknowledge provision. As each season starts, families should receive information regarding concussions, concussion management, and the local policies and procedures for dealing with concussion injuries. You and your child will be required to review this information carefully and to acknowledge your receipt of this important information.

In addition to managing the return to play and practice, it is important to note that subsequent to a concussion, a student-athlete needs cognitive rest and time in order for the brain to heal properly (Savage, 2007). To reduce recovery time and limit the absence from instruction and activity, the most significant element appears to be the immediacy of both physical and mental rest. The student athlete should demonstrate cognitive recovery before returning to class (Moser, 2007). Therefore, the time to return to class requires careful monitoring, as well.

For parents and guardians of student-athletes, it is imperative to become aware of the inherent safety risks associated with the sports that children play and to teach children to report any symptoms immediately. Many student-athletes are reluctant to report injuries because they feel they should “play hurt”. However, in the case of concussions, they are gambling not only with the future functioning of their brains, but with their future lives and accomplishments. A second concussion before a student-athlete recovers from an initial concussion can result in severe impairment or even death (Hobbs, 2011; Moser, 2007).

As the summer approaches, families can take time to inform themselves on how to protect their student-athletes. If your child suffers a concussion, you will be helping professionals make critical safety decisions on when he/she can return to play or practice.

For more information consult:


Brain Injury Association of Virginia: Concussion Information http://www.biav.net/index.htm
References


INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this CASEinPoint is to describe an operational definition of coaching practices based on current research in the human learning, professional development, and helping practices fields. Coaching is an adult learning strategy that is used to build the capacity of a parent or colleague to improve existing abilities, develop new skills, and gain a deeper understanding of his or her practices for use in current and future situations (Hanft, Rush, & Shelden, 2004; Rush, Shelden, & Hanft, 2003).

The use of coaching as an adult learning strategy has been described by early childhood special educators, occupational therapists, physical therapists, and speech-language pathologists as a practice to support families of children with disabilities as well as practitioners in early childhood programs. Campbell (1997) defined the role of the early intervention practitioner as that of a coach rather than a direct therapy provider. Hanft & Pilkington (2000) encouraged early childhood practitioners to reconsider their role “to move to a different position alongside a parent as a coach rather than lead player” (p. 2) since this allows for more opportunities to promote development and learning than direct intervention by the therapist or educator. Rush (2000) noted that a practitioner-as-coach approach provides the necessary parent supports to improve their child’s skills and abilities rather than work directly with the child. Dinnebeil, McInerney, Roth, & Ramasway (2001) examined the role of itinerant early childhood special education teachers and concluded that teachers “should be prepared to act not simply as consultants to early childhood teachers but as coaches” (p. 42) because this offers a more structured system for jointly planning new learning and engaging in feedback as well as modeling by a coach.

Despite the fact that there have been increased calls for use of coaching as an intervention practice, surprisingly no attempt has been made to define coaching and identify its characteristics. This article includes an operational definition of coaching and background information on the purpose and use of coaching practices. The information illustrates that coaching practices are consistent with research evidence about how people learn (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000; Donovan, Bransford, & Pellegrino, 1999) and that coaching practices are also described followed by a brief explanation of how they are used.

BACKGROUND

Findings from How People Learn

The National Research Council (NRC) recently published a research synthesis on human learning that included three key findings as well as implications for teaching and the design of adult learning environments (Donovan et al., 1999). The purpose of the NRC’s synthesis of available research on learning was to identify teaching practices and environments that promote successful learning (Bransford et al., 2000). The research included in the NRC report indicated that in order for a learner to gain deep knowledge of a particular content area, he or she must develop an understanding of how the knowledge may be used in a specific context and also generalized to other situations (Bransford et al., 2000).

The NRC identified three key findings from the research on human learning. First, the learner enters a learning environment with preconceived ideas about a subject matter. Accordingly, the learner may not develop an understanding of new information and skills being taught if his or her current understanding is not recognized and made explicit. Second, to develop a deeper level of understanding in a particular area, the learner must: (a) have a solid base of factual knowledge, (b) understand these facts within the context of a conceptual framework, and (c) organize the information to facilitate easy recall, use, and transfer to other situations. Third, the learner must acquire a metacognitive approach in which the learner assesses his or her own level of understanding, establishes learning goals, and measures progress (Bransford et al., 2000; Donovan et al., 1999). Results of a practice-based research synthesis of coaching as an adult learning strategy (Rush, 2003) indicate that the characteristics of coaching are consistent with the NRC findings, and especially those related to the metacognitive approach to learning and linking information back to a conceptual framework.

Overview of Coaching

Historically, coaching has been a term used primarily in athletics.
More recently, coaching can be found in the field of business (Doyle, 1999; Flaherty, 1999; Kinlaw, 1999). Coaching emerged as an accepted practice in the development and supervision of educators in the 1980s (Ackland, 1991; Brandt, 1987; Kendall, 1983). The coaching models that have been used in professional development programs have focused on building collegial relationships, solving specific instructional problems, learning new skills, and refining skills previously mastered (Joyce & Showers, 1982). Coaching has been used successfully by general educators and administrators (Delany & Arredondo, 1998; Kohler, Crilley, & Shearer, 1997; Kohler, McCullough, & Buchan, 1995; Munro & Elliott, 1987; Phillips & Glickman, 1991; Roberts, 1991; Sparks, 1996), and special educators (Kohler et al., 1997; Miller, 1994; Miller, Harris, & Watanabe, 1991), and as a strategy to promote collaboration between special and general educators (Gerston, Morvant, & Brengelman, 1995; Hashbrouck & Christen, 1997; Tschantz & Vail, 2000). Coaching has also been found effective in preservice preparation programs for special and general educators (Cegelka, Fitch, & Alvarado, 2001; Kurtts & Levin, 2000; Morgan, Gustafson, Hudson, & Salzberg, 1992).

Coaching in Early Childhood Intervention

Coaching in early childhood may be conceptualized as a particular type of helping practice within a capacity building model to support people in using existing abilities and developing new skills to attain desired life circumstances (Dunst & Trivette, 1996; Dunst, Trivette, & LaPointe, 1992; Rappaport, 1981; Trivette & Dunst, 1998). As part of early childhood practices, coaching promotes self-reflection and refinement of current practices by the practitioner being coached. This results in competence and mastery of desired skills for the early childhood practitioner and both the children and families with whom the early childhood practitioner interacts (Dunst, Trivette, & Cutspec, 2002). Coaching builds the capacity of family members to promote the child’s learning and development. This includes being with the people the child wants and needs to be with and doing what the child likes and needs to do (Shelden & Rush, 2001). The key people in a child’s life gain competence when a coach supports them in blending new or existing knowledge, skills, and experience to interact with a child in everyday situations, and then assess and perhaps improve upon the results (Flaherty, 1999) noted that coaching is “not telling people what to do, [but] giving them a chance to examine what they are doing in light of their intentions” (p. xii). For example, the early childhood practitioner who uses coaching facilitates a dynamic exchange of information based on the parent’s intentions and current level of skills necessary to promote the child’s participation in family, community, and early childhood settings (Bruder & Dunst, 1999; Hanft et al., 2004).

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF COACHING PRACTICES

The definition of coaching described next differs from previous descriptions found in the business and education literature by its focus on the operationalization of the relationship between coaching practices and the intended consequences as well as the processes that are used to produce the observed changes (Dunst, Trivette, & Cutspec, 2002). Based on a synthesis of research on coaching practices (Rush, 2003), coaching may be defined as:

*An adult learning strategy in which the coach promotes the learner's ability to reflect on his or her actions as a means to determine the effectiveness of an action or practice and develop a plan for refinement and use of the action in immediate and future situations."

Coaching can be used to improve existing practices, develop new skills, and promote continuous self-assessment and learning. The role of the coach is to provide a supportive and encouraging environment in which the learner (parent, colleague, etc.) and coach jointly examine and reflect on current practices, apply new skills and competencies with feedback, and problem-solve challenging situations. The coach’s ultimate goal is sustained performance in which the learner has the competence and confidence to engage in self reflection, self correction, and generalization of new skills and strategies to other situations as appropriate (Flaherty, 1999; Kinlaw, 1999).

Coaching Characteristics

Understanding the characteristics of a practice is important in order to inform a practitioner of what to do in order to achieve the desired effect. The coaching research synthesis by Rush (2003) was guided by a process that focused on the extent to which the specific characteristics of the practices are related to differences in their outcomes or consequences (Dunst, Trivette, & Cutspec, 2002). More specifically, the research synthesis examined the characteristics of coaching that were related to variations in the use of newly learned practices or improvement of existing skills. Although the steps in the coaching process vary (Doyle, 1999; Flaherty, 1999; Hanft et al., 2004; Kinlaw, 1999), the coaching research literature suggests that coaching has five practice characteristics that lead to the intended outcomes: (1) joint planning, (2) observation, (3) action/practice, (4) reflection, and (5) feedback (see Table 1). The definitions in the table are based on descriptions...
in the coaching research literature and highlight the characteristics used to improve existing abilities, develop new skills, and deepen the understanding of evidence-based practices of the person being coached.

Joint planning. Joint planning ensures the parent’s active participation in the use of new knowledge and skills between coaching sessions. Joint planning occurs as a part of all coaching conversations, which typically involves discussion of what the parent agrees to do between coaching interactions to use the information discussed or skills that were practiced. For example, as a result of the coaching conversation with the practitioner, a parent may decide to offer her child choices during each mealtime.

Observation. Observation does not necessarily occur during every coaching conversation, but is used over the course of several coaching visits. Observation typically occurs by the practitioner directly observing an action on the part of the parent, which then provides an opportunity for later reflection and discussion. An example of observation would be when a practitioner observes the parent reading a book to his child. Observation may also involve modeling by the practitioner for the parent. In this instance, the practitioner may build upon what the parent is already doing and demonstrate additional strategies (e.g., allowing the child to choose a book) and then reflect with the parent how the example matches the parent’s intent and/or what research informs us about child learning.

Action. The characteristic of action provides opportunities for the learner to use the information discussed with the coach or practice newly learned skills. Action may occur during or between coaching interactions. For example, when a parent reads a book with the child before bedtime, the parent encourages the child to select the book, describe the pictures as she reads, and then pauses to give her child a turn if he would like to take one.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
<th>Definitions of the Five Key Characteristics of Coaching</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Joint Planning</strong></td>
<td>Agreement by both the coach and learner on the actions to be taken by the coach and/or learner or the opportunities to practice between coaching visits.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Observation</strong></td>
<td>Examination of another person’s actions or practices to be used to develop new skills, strategies or ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Action</strong></td>
<td>Spontaneous or planned events that occur within the context of a real-life situation that provide the learner with opportunities to practice, refine, or analyze new or existing skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reflection</strong></td>
<td>Analysis of existing strategies to determine how the strategies are consistent with evidence-based practices and may need to be implemented without change or modified to obtain the intended outcome(s).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Feedback</strong></td>
<td>Information provided by the coach based on direct observations of the learner by the coach, actions reported by the learner, or information shared by the learner to expand the learner’s current level of understanding about a specific evidence-based practice.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reflection. Reflection on the part of the person being coached is what distinguishes coaching from consultation, supervision, and training. Reflection follows an observation or action and provides the parent an opportunity to analyze current strategies and refine her knowledge and skills. During reflection, the practitioner may ask the parent to describe what worked or did not work during observation and/or action followed by generation of alternatives and actions for continually improving her knowledge and skills.

Feedback. Feedback occurs after the parent has the opportunity to reflect on her observations, actions, or the topic being discussed and jointly develop new ideas and actions. Sharing additional ideas for potty training following the parent’s reflection on what she has tried and found to be either successful or unsuccessful is an example of informative feedback.

Use of the Coaching Characteristics

Knowledge and understanding of the characteristics of coaching are useful for any number of purposes. First, the characteristics can help determine the extent to which coaching practices are being used by practitioners. Practitioners can use the characteristics to determine if they are engaged in coaching. In order for a practice to be labeled coaching, all of the
characteristics must be used during the course of multiple coaching sessions.

Second, references to coaching in the literature should include these characteristics as descriptors of the practice. In order for a practice to be accurately described as coaching, the characteristics must be present. Otherwise, outcomes claimed or refuted as a result of coaching may be attributed to something other than the coaching practices.

Third, the characteristics may be used for research purposes to further examine the conditions under which coaching practices are most effective. The characteristics should be especially helpful in studies for reliability purposes to assist in collecting data regarding adherence to the practice.

CONCLUSION
The coaching characteristics described in this paper are currently being used in a number of studies to investigate the use of coaching as a strategy for supporting parents and other caregivers in early intervention programs in three states. In these same programs, coaching is being studied as a strategy for practitioners to support each other in a primary coach model of teaming practices. The characteristics of coaching are also being studied in an Early Head Start program to examine teachers’ use of coaching to promote parent competence and confidence in supporting their children’s learning and development.

The purpose of this CASEinPoint was to describe an operational definition of coaching. The characteristics of coaching were also delineated and further establish coaching as a practice to build the capacity of a parent, caregiver, or colleague in developing new skills, refining existing abilities, and gaining a deeper understanding of their actions. Operationalizing coaching and defining the characteristics further establishes coaching as an evidence-based practice for adult learning.

References


**AUTHORS**


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So often educators hear about “great apps” for learners with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), but the school year is so charged with demands, that there is little time to explore them. As summer nears, recharge your iPad and use your time to review these what’s ‘appening. The following lists 10 social skills apps for learners with ASD and their description as found at the iTunes® store. Keep in mind, that although an iPad is a wonderful tool, personal and/or professional judgment should be applied prior to recommending or using a particular app.

**All About Me**
*Company:* I Get It, LLC
*Category:* Education
*Cost:* $2.99

This is an application offering picture and text support to individuals learning their personal information. Twelve icons representing categories lead to statements that can be individualized for the user. In addition, personal photos can be inserted to provide visual support. Personal information fields include: name, birthday, home address, telephone number, family members, pets, school, friends, things I like, places I go and computer favorites.

**Everyday Skills**
*Company:* Ablelink Technologies
*Category:* Life Skills
*Price:* $49.99

Everyday Skills provides self-directed learning sessions for 40 skills necessary for living independently and accessing the community.

**Everyday Social Skills**
*Company:* The Conover Company
*Category:* Social Skills
*Price:* $0.99

The Everyday Social Skills application is designed to teach and reinforce basic social skills critical for independent living. The Everyday Social Skills application provides easy-to-understand information that allows users to become more capable of functioning independently at work, at home, and in the community.

**Hidden Curriculum For Kids**
*Company:* AAPC
*Category:* Social Skills
*Price:* $1.99

This app explains social information to learners with ASD that many other children seem to learn automatically. These real-life based entries spur conversations about the countless “unwritten social rules” that we encounter every day and that can cause confusion and anxiety.

**Living Safely**
*Company:* Ablelink Technologies
*Category:* Life Skills
*Price:* $34.99

Living Safely provides self-directed learning sessions for 27 safety skills.

**Model Me Going Places**
*Company:* Model Me Kids
*Category:* Life Skills
*Price:* Free

Model Me Going Places™ is a visual teaching tool for helping children with ASD learn to navigate challenging locations in the community. Each location contains a photo slide show of children modeling appropriate behavior. Locations include: Hairdresser, Mall, Doctor, Playground, Grocery Store, and Restaurant.
QuickCues is a social script app that helps teens and young adults on the autism spectrum to handle new situations and learn new skills. The Communication module comes pre-installed and provides help with conversations at school or work, listening, and talking on the telephone. It also gives tips on reading body language and finding shared interests with others. Available for additional purchase via the In-App purchase are modules for: “Life Skills,” “Socialization,” “Coping” and “On the Job.”

Social Skills provides six interactive social narratives designed to help learners with ASD increase their social skills in areas such as joint attention, non-verbal communication, greetings, imitation, turn taking, responding to classroom rules and structured game play. Users can modify the stories by adding different photos, text, as well as audio.

Social Skill Builder uses interactive videos to teach key social thinking, language and behavior that are critical to everyday living. It contains videos to build skills in problem solving, friendship and life skills, critical thinking and understanding emotions.

Stories2Learn allows the user to create personalized stories using photos, text, and audio messages. In addition to being a great app for literacy instruction for students who benefit from personal experience books, this app allows educators to create customized social narratives to support social skills instruction. It has been used to teach skills such as turn taking, sharing, and personal greetings through its unique story format.

Source
http://www.apple.com/itunes/
As you start helping your students pack up their book bags and prepare to move on to the next grade, take some time to reflect on their mathematical skill journey over the course of the past year. Where did they start? What did you discover about them when they arrived in your classroom? What skills did they have? What did you have to fill in? Where are they now? Are they good problem solvers? Can they reason mathematically? Can they use communication skills to articulate their understanding of mathematical concepts? Are they able to make connections between mathematical procedures and ideas? Do they use mathematical representations to interpret and solve problems?

Think about helping them pack their suitcases with versatile essentials that will support their transition to the next grade. While you hope that they take every content skill detailed by the curriculum standards, consider deeper process skills that will serve them well regardless of the grade or content on their mathematical journey. What will they be able to pull out of their strategy suitcases and independently use to move themselves forward? What will help them become mathematical thinkers prepared to attack new concepts?

**Math Strategy Packing List**

**Problem-Solving**

Many problem-solving strategies involve acronyms that provide students with a list of steps to follow when working through problems. While these strategies can be very effective for many students, consider teaching students to develop their own list of individualized steps when learning how to work through specific types of problems. Students can generate lists “from scratch” or alter existing lists of steps. Transitioning students from dependence on memorizing predetermined steps to being able to develop their own list helps develop metacognition (Uberti, Mastropieri, & Scruggs, 2004).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym Strategy Example</th>
<th>Student-Generated Steps</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RPV-HECC</td>
<td>1. Read it two times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read for understanding</td>
<td>2. What do I need to figure out?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraphrase—in your own words</td>
<td>3. Try to say it in a different way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visualize--draw a picture or a diagram</td>
<td>4. Organize the information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesize--make a plan</td>
<td>5. Think about what to do with the information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimate--predict the answer</td>
<td>6. Try it out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compute--do the arithmetic</td>
<td>7. Test the answer to see if it fits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check--make sure everything is right</td>
<td>(Montague, 2005)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reasoning**

Develop student reasoning by introducing open-ended math questions. Open-ended math questions do not have one path to a single solution. They force students to consider the information provided in a variety of ways. Teachers can explore students’ ability to reason mathematically by observing their responses to open-ended math problems. As students develop reasoning skills, they will be better able to attack traditional types of math problems. Open-ended math problems
are available from a variety of online sources, such as those listed below, or teachers can turn traditional math problems into open-ended items by removing information.

### Open-Ended Math Problem Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPEN-ENDED ASSESSMENT IN MATH: A SEARCHABLE COLLECTION OF 450+ QUESTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://books.heinemann.com/math/about_site.cfm">http://books.heinemann.com/math/about_site.cfm</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPEN-ENDED MATH PROBLEMS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.fi.edu/school/math2/index.html">http://www.fi.edu/school/math2/index.html</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Communication

Encourage students to engage in mathematical discussions. Let their questions and ideas drive the direction of lessons. Support them as they explain their thinking and paraphrase the explanations of others. Build in opportunities for students to engage in math talk in pairs or groups instead of teacher-directed whole-group structures. Rubrics, such as the one below, can be used to assess students' ability to communicate and help them develop an awareness of high-quality math communication skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Math Communication Rubric</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPERT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• A sense of audience and purpose is communicated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Communication at the practitioner level is achieved, and communication of arguments is supported by mathematical properties used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Precise math language and symbolic notation are used to consolidate math thinking and to communicate ideas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRACTITIONER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• A sense of audience or purpose is communicated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Communication of an approach is evident through a methodical, organized, coherent, sequenced, and labeled response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Formal math language is used throughout the solution to share and clarify ideas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPRENTICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Some awareness of audience or purpose is communicated, and may take place in the form of paraphrasing of the task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Some communication of an approach is evident through verbal/written accounts and explanations, use of diagrams or objects, writing, and using mathematical symbols.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Some formal math language is used, and examples are provided to communicate ideas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOVICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• No awareness of audience or purpose is communicated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Little or no communication of an approach is evident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Everyday, familiar language is used to communicate ideas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Connections

Students need to make connections between math concepts and processes and should be able to see how they can be useful in meaningful contexts. Consider helping pull it altogether for your students by starting with real life situations and having them discover what types of concepts and processes will be needed to solve problems. For example, see how Dan Meyer illustrates a learning environment where “…the math serves the conversation. The conversation doesn’t serve the math” in the video below (Meyer, 2010).

Click the image to link to the Ted Talk Video Clip

Representation

Students need to be able to create and interpret representations of mathematical problems and processes. They encounter graphic representations on math assessments and in their daily lives. A powerful method for building their skills with graphic representations is using Question-Answer Relationships (QARs) in math. While the four types of QAR questions were designed as a reading strategy, they can also be applied to math problems.

QAR Question Types
Adapted from http://www.readingquest.org/strat/qar.html

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right there</td>
<td>The answer can be found easily in the passage or problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think and search</td>
<td>The answer requires some searching, but can be gained directly from the passage or problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author and you</td>
<td>The answer requires the student to put his or her own thinking together with the information in the passage or problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On my own</td>
<td>The answer requires the student to use his or her own ideas and information.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To apply this strategy teachers must first provide explicit instruction on the different kinds of math graphics. Once students are familiar with the different kinds of graphics, they must begin to explore the different types of information in those graphics. After students can identify the different graphics and information, teachers can start to help them make connections with the four types of QAR questions (Wright, n.d.). A detailed process for implementing this strategy with students can be found at the link below.

http://images.pcmac.org/Uploads/FranklinCountyGA/FranklinCountyGA/SubDepartments/Forms/QARs%20to%20Interpret%20Math%20Graphics.pdf

References and Resources


This article was originally printed in the May/June 2011 edition of Link Lines. It is reprinted with permission from the author.
INTRODUCTION

This BriefCASE outlines what an individual using a coaching interaction style and the person being coached (i.e., the learner) would each do in relation to the characteristics of the coaching process. Coaching is an adult learning strategy that is used to build the capacity of a parent or colleague to improve existing abilities, develop new skills, and gain a deeper understanding of his or her practices for use in current and future situations. Coaching has five research-based practice characteristics that lead to the intended outcomes: (1) joint planning, (2) observation, (3) action/practice, (4) reflection, and (5) feedback. The characteristics of coaching occur purposefully within the context of a coaching interaction, but the sequence may vary depending upon the flow of the conversation between the coach and the learner.

CHARACTERISTIC: Joint Planning
What The Coach Does
S/he begins every coaching conversation with a review of the previous joint plan and what the learner did between conversations relative to the plan.

What The Learner Does
S/he shares what s/he has tried or accomplished between coaching conversations.

What The Coach Does
S/he ends every coaching conversation with a plan of who is going to do what by when based on the actions and ideas discussed.

What The Learner Does
S/he identifies what s/he wants to try/accomplish between coaching conversations and when the next conversation should be scheduled.

CHARACTERISTIC: Observation
What The Coach Does
S/he observes the child and family member(s) or care provider(s) interact with the child within the context of everyday activities.

What The Learner Does
S/he observes the coach model a behavior or activity with the child in the context of an everyday activity with an explicit understanding of what/why s/he is watching.

CHARACTERISTIC: Action/practice
What The Coach Does
S/he interacts directly with the child to model a behavior or activity or assess the child in the context of an everyday activity with an explicit understanding by the parent or care provider of what/why s/he is watching.

What The Learner Does
S/he tries new ideas/actions related to the child/environmental arrangement that were either previously discussed and planned with the coach or resulted from a previous coaching conversation and relates to the parent or care providers priorities for the child.

CHARACTERISTIC: Reflection
What The Coach Does
S/he uses reflective questions to assist the parent in analyzing the current situation followed by generation of alternatives and actions for continually improving his/her knowledge and skills in promoting child participation in everyday activities thereby achieving desired priorities.

What The Learner Does
S/he determines what worked or did not work and why during the observation and/or action as well as ideas for next steps.

CHARACTERISTIC: Feedback
What The Coach Does
S/he uses non-committal acknowledgement when appropriate to affirm what the parent or care provider says or does. S/he provides positive feedback when necessary. S/he shares information to build upon the parent or care providers knowledge and skills.

Authors:

BriefCASE is an electronic publication of the Center for the Advanced Study of Excellence in Early Childhood and Family Support Practices, Family, Infant and Preschool Program, J. Iverson Riddle Developmental Center, Morganton, NC. CASE is an applied research center focusing on the characteristics of evidence-based practices and methods for promoting utilization of practices informed by research.

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This article, BriefCASE, January 2008, Volume 1, Number 1, was reprinted with permission from the authors. It may be accessed from: http://www.fipp.org/case/briefcase.html
As a paraprofessional, you wear many hats and work with many different individuals throughout the school day. “Your role is likely determined by the unique needs of the students you support and the unique classroom context. These responsibilities typically include supporting children socially, academically, physically, and behaviorally. Social support includes helping children make and maintain friendships with other children. [. . . ] Academic support involves helping students as they attend to academic content and learn new material.” (Causton-Theoharis, 2009)

You fulfill many essential duties related to instruction and “offer crucial support that is helpful to both students and teachers.” (Causton-Theoharis, 2009) The following books offer practical suggestions for clarifying and understanding your role and responsibilities with students, teachers and administrators and fostering better communication as you all work together for the benefit of students and their families.

As you enjoy some well-deserved rest and recreation, consider putting one (or more) of these books in your book bag when you head to the beach or the pool. Happy Reading!

The Paraprofessional’s Handbook for Effective Support in Inclusive Classrooms
This handy survival guide, equally useful for the brand-new paraprofessional or the 20-year classroom veteran is packed with friendly guidance, practical tips, and relatable first-person stories. This book shares many ways to provide effective, respectful services to students in inclusive classrooms (Causton-Theoharis, 2009).

Newly-updated, this interactive guide helps teachers and paraprofessionals work together to create effective inclusive classrooms. It includes strategies for building classrooms that welcome and support all students, as well as, the latest information on legislation, the family’s role in education, classroom management, and behavioral supports (Doyle, 2008).

Let’s Team Up! A Checklist for Paraeducators, Teachers and Principals
Filled with helpful tips and practical suggestions, this checklist is written to help paraeducators, teachers, and principals understand their roles and responsibilities as they relate to each other (Gerlach, 2007).

This practical, easy-to-use book contains activities for individual reflection or group discussion, as well as, reproducible forms to help with communication, schedules, responsibilities and organization (Hammeken, 2003).

You’ll find these books and many other resources in the Region 4 T/TAC@ GMU T/TAC lending library, which can be accessed at http://kihd.gmu.edu/library. Additional resources are also available from the Region 5 T/TAC@ JMU lending library, which can be accessed at http://www.jmu.edu/ttac.

References:


Creating Connections to Shining Stars:

This statewide conference will focus on evidence-based practices that connect the dots to quality early childhood practices, birth through 5. Sessions will include hot topics in the field of early intervention and early childhood/early childhood special education, such as:

- Assistive Technology
- Autism
- Behavior
- Primary Provider Model/Supports and Services
- Social-Emotional Development/Infant and Child Mental Health
- Accessing Funding Resources
- Inclusive Practices
- Curriculum and Assessment

WHO SHOULD ATTEND:

- Early Childhood Educators
- Early Childhood Special Educators
- Early Intervention Providers
- Paraprofessionals
- Related Service Providers
- Administrators/Supervisors
- Administrators/Supervisors
- Parents and Family Members

SPONSORED BY:

The Virginia Department of Education
The VDOE’s Training and Technical Assistance Centers
The Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services
The Partnership for People with Disabilities
The Integrated Training Collaborative
The Virginia Head Start Collaboration Office
The Virginia Division for Early Childhood
The Virginia Education Program for Homeless Children and Youth

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER, LOG ONTO: WWW.TTACONLINE.ORG AND CLICK ON THE EVENTS TAB.

Registration will be available beginning mid-March 2012.
Spring is here! Perhaps the recent beautiful weather has allowed you to entertain thoughts of a warm, balmy summer of well-deserved relaxation! While there are still a few months of school ahead of us, we do know that soon we will have time to refresh our spirit with activities that we enjoy. In this newsletter, the TTAC staff has provided you with some ideas for summer reading and reflection. We have suggested some professional books as well as some books that will, hopefully, invigorate you and cause you to positively reflect on why you became an educator. We hope you have a wonderful summer break and we look forward to working with you in the next school year!

Our TTAC Region 4 Advisory Board met on March 15th to provide us with feedback on our current work, inform us about their own work, and advise us on how TTAC can support their schools/school divisions. We had a very busy and productive day but, as always, it was made much more enjoyable because of the willingness of our members to enthusiastically participate in the different activities. The advice we receive helps guide us as we plan for future professional development and technical assistance to schools. We would like to recognize the members of our Board and thank them for sharing their thoughtful insights into the successes and challenges they face as they support the efforts of all school personnel to improve educational outcomes for students with disabilities.

The following individuals are members of our Advisory Board.

**Susan Birnie, Mathematics Curriculum Specialist**
George Washington Middle School Campus
Alexandria City Public Schools

**Katherine Bolluyt-Meints, Principal**
Brentsville District High School
Prince William County Public Schools

**Toni Cary, Coordinator of Transition Services**
Winchester County Public Schools

**Virginia “Ginny” Doherty, ELL Specialist**
William Ramsay Elementary School
Alexandria City Public Schools

**Kathleen M. Donovan, Special Education Coordinator**
Special Education Parent Resource Center
Arlington Public Schools

**Lisa Ferguson, Parent**
Falls Church City Public Schools

**Jim Hall, Counselor Manager**
Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services

**Margaret Harmon, English Teacher**
Washington Irving Middle School
Fairfax County Public Schools

**Cathleen Hopfinger, Administrative Coordinator, Intellectual Disability Programs and VAAP**
Prince William County Public Schools

**Lynette Johnson, Director of Special Instructional Services**
Frederick County Public Schools

**Steven Knight, K-12 Instructional Technology CIRT**
Falls Church City Public Schools

**Suzanne Lank, K-12 Curriculum Developer**
George Washington Middle School Campus
Alexandria City Public Schools

**Mark Luther, Principal, Subschool 2 (Middle School – 8th grade)**
South County Secondary School
Fairfax County Public Schools

**Cathy Marston, Principal Stanley Elementary School**
Page County Public Schools

**Mark Nichols, Supervisor, Assistive Technology, Digital IEP and Lead DRM for AIM-VA**
Loudoun County Public Schools

**Steve Parker, Principal**
Cedar Lee Middle School
Fauquier County Public Schools

Lynn Wiley, Ph.D., VDOE TTAC at George Mason University
Jane Razeghi, Associate Professor, Graduate School of Education
George Mason University
Executive Director, Division on Career Development & Transition Council for Exceptional Children

Susan F. Rismiller, Special Education Teacher, Crisis Intervention
Saratoga Elementary School
Fairfax County Public Schools

Cindy Scott, Lead School Psychologist
A.G. Richardson Elementary School
Culpeper County Public Schools

Melissa Saunders, Principal
Metz Middle School
Manassas City Public Schools

Joe Strong, Principal
Apple Pie Ridge Elementary School
Frederick County Public Schools

Tony Tallent, Special Education Teacher/Alternative Education Coordinator, Assistant Athletic Director, and Head Football Coach
Warren County High school
Warren County Public Schools

Jocelyn Washburn, CLC Coordinator and SIM Professional Developer
Culpeper County Public Schools

Lisa Wooditch, Secondary Adapted Curriculum Specialist
Fairfax County Public Schools

John A. Word, Sr., Principal
Kenmore Middle School
Arlington Public Schools
What’s in YOUR library at VDOE’s TTAC at GMU?

April/May 2012

Featuring some of our Most Wanted resources . . .

7 Steps for Developing a Proactive Schoolwide Discipline Plan: A Guide for Principals and Leadership Teams
Geoff Colvin (Foreword by George Sugai); Call number: 371.509 COL 2007
This book is a 'how-to' manual for implementing an effective and sustainable school-wide intervention plan. The worksheets and checklists will prove invaluable for those building school-wide systems.

Collaborating with Students in Instruction and Decision Making: The Untapped Resource
Richard A. Villa, Jacqueline S. Thousand, & Ann I. Nevin; Call number: 371.394 VIL 2010
Practical strategies and tools are offered for empowering students as co-teachers, decision makers, and advocates in the K-12 classroom.

Instructional Power: Co-Teachers Share Instructional Techniques
Marilyn Friend; Call number: VIDEO 371.102 INS 2010
This DVD is a collection of simple yet effective strategies and ideas for increasing student engagement and participation. You’ll see elementary, middle school, and high school teachers in action in co-taught classes using techniques that are easily adaptable for use.
No time to come to the library?
No problem!
Most items can be mailed to your school or home address.

If you like these, search our catalog for more @
http://kihd.gmu.edu/library

Day One and Beyond: Practical Matters for New Middle-Level Teachers
Rick Wormelli; Call number: 373.11 WOR 2003
The practical details of day-to-day teaching in the middle school environment are discussed in this book.

The Highly Engaged Classroom
Robert J. Marzano & Debra J. Pickering; Call number: 371.102 MAR 2011
Part of the Classroom Strategies Series, this book discusses how to generate high levels of attention and engagement in the classroom. It summarizes key research and translates it into recommendations for classroom practice.

The Power of Our Words: Teacher Language that Helps Children Learn
Paula Denton; Call number: 371.1022 DEN 2007
Stories and practical examples are shared in this book to show teachers how to use their words and tone of voice to bring out the best in children.

Turning Best Practices into Daily Practices: Simple Strategies for the Busy Teacher
Anne M. Beninghof; Call number: 371.102 BEN 2010
This book addresses common teacher concerns ranging from increasing participation to focusing attention to strengthening memory. It includes dozens of reproducibles and strategies to engage students.

Accessible Mathematics: Ten Instructional Shifts that Raise Student Achievement
Steven Leinwand; Call number: 510.71 LEI 2009
Utilizing research and visits to highly effective classrooms, the author shows how small adjustments in your teaching can lead to deeper student learning in math.

Mind in the Making: The Seven Essential Life Skills Every Child Needs
Ellen Galinsky; Call number: 305.231 GAL 2010
Synthesizing research on child development and learning, the author identifies seven life skills that will help children reach their full potential in school, the workforce, and in life. She shares how to build these skills in children for the present and for years to come.

To request one of the items above or any other materials available for checkout, please contact Region 4 T/TAC Librarian Jackie Petersen, jpetersk@gmu.edu or 703.993.3672

New library location: Finley Hall, Room 116, GMU Fairfax Campus

The TTAC Telegram - April/May 2012
**JUNE**

**June 18, 2012:** For Speech and Language Pathologists – Assess, Track and Treat: Authentic Assessment of Language with Lynn Adams, Ph.D., CCC-SLP
This workshop will provide attendees with an authentic approach to assessment and treatment planning based on the work of Bloom and Lahey. Using normal development as its foundation, the CFU approach allows the user to assess and plan treatment using a “communication-referenced” measure; that measure being the child’s actual language production skills. This approach is in keeping with the VDOE’s guidelines. Using the CFU method of sampling and language problems, the user can:

1. Effectively determine the child’s present language level
2. Develop meaningful language goals and objectives
3. Easily and effectively track progress over time.

**Cost:** $25 includes beverage, lunch, snack and a copy of Dr. Adams’ book
**Location:** Stonewall Jackson Hotel & Conference Center, 24 South Market Street, Staunton, VA
**Contact:** Susan Bowman at 540.568.8843 or bowmansp@jmu.edu
**Sponsored by:** Virginia Department of Education and Region 5 T/TAC @ JMU
**Registration deadline:** May 25, 2012
**For Information and Registration form:** visit [http://www.jmu.edu/ttac/training/wm_library/AssessTrackandTreat.pdf](http://www.jmu.edu/ttac/training/wm_library/AssessTrackandTreat.pdf).

**June 20, 2012:** “Bullying Prevention in the Promotion of a Positive School Climate: Effective Principles and Practices”
Presentations by national and state experts at this one-day conference will translate bullying prevention theory and research into practical strategies and effective practices for implementation in Virginia’s schools.

**Cost and registration:** $25 conference registration fee includes morning coffee and a boxed lunch. Pre-registration is required.
**Location:** Martin Luther King Jr. Performing Arts Center at Charlottesville High School, 1400 Melbourne Road, Charlottesville, VA 22901
**Contact:** Donna Michaelis at Donna.michaelis@dcjs.virginia.gov or 804.371.6506
**Sponsored by:** the Virginia Department of Education, the Virginia Department of Health, Safe Schools/Healthy Students of Albemarle/Charlottesville, Youth-Nex, The University of Virginia Center to Promote Effective Youth Development, and the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services
**For Information and Registration:** [http://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/vcss/training/bullyingPrevention/](http://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/vcss/training/bullyingPrevention/)
6th Annual Conference for educational professionals who work with students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Location: Doubletree by Hilton Hotel, Charlottesville, VA
Contact: Ann Hughes at awhughes@vcu.edu
Registration: Will be available at www.partnership.vcu.edu under Upcoming Events

June 25-29, 2012: 13th Annual Content Teaching Academy
These Academies are open to teaching professionals in Virginia and surrounding states. During the week-long program, teachers can earn 30 hours of professional development for recertification, work toward becoming highly qualified in a content area, or earn graduate credit.

Location: James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA
Contact: Linda Stover at 540-568-4130 or stoverls@jmu.edu
For More Information and Registration: Visit http://www.jmu.edu/contentacademy

(Pre-Conference Day – June 26, 2012)
The APSE conference focuses on integrated employment and career advancement for individuals with disabilities. Opening Keynote Speaker: Dr. Temple Grandin.

Location: Crystal Gateway Marriott, Arlington, VA
For Information and Registration: Visit http://apse.org/
**JULY**

**July 16-18, 2012:** Creating Connections to Shining Stars: Virginia’s Collaborative Early Childhood Birth through Five Conference

This conference is a collaborative effort between early intervention providers and early childhood special educators in Virginia. The conference will focus on evidence-based practices that connect the dots to quality early childhood practices, birth through age five. Topics will include issues such as transition, assistive technology, autism, coaching, curriculum framework, the impact of prematurity, the primary provider model, behavior, assessment, and inclusive practices. The event is designed for early childhood special educators, early childhood educators, early intervention providers, paraprofessionals, Head Start, Early Head Start, Even Start, and Title I personnel, related service providers, administrators and supervisors, and families.

**Location:** The Cavalier Hotel, Virginia Beach, VA  
**Contact:** Krystle Aidif at aidifkm@vcu.edu  
**For Information and Registration:** visit http://www.ttaonline.org/staff/s_events/s_event_detail.asp?cid=1982

**AUGUST**

**August 1-2, 2012:** The Council for Exceptional Children’s Virginia Division on Career Development and Transition VADCDT SUMMER INSTITUTE 2012: We Make the Difference!

Topics include: “Best of Virginia” – Community & School Collaborations; Youth Stories, Employment First initiative; Learning Focus Groups – Participant engagement; VADCDT Annual Awards to Employer, Practitioner & Leader; Rehabilitation Engineer connects to the classroom and on the job.

**Location:** Roslyn Center, 8727 River Road, Richmond, VA  
**Contact:** Joan Lovegren-O’Brien at jlovegrenobr@vcu.edu or 804.827.1409  
**For information & registration:** visit http://www.cvent.com/events/vadcdt-summer-institute-2012/event-summary-aa49814a53ad4e999cda2005d97a8b2b.aspx

The TTAC Telegram has gone electronic. If you would like to receive our quarterly newsletter, please sign up on our website at: http://ttac.gmu.edu/newsletters. You will receive each new issue of our newsletter delivered right to your inbox.
Mathematics News

- The 2001 Math Standards of Learning (SOL) were updated in 2009.
- The updated VDOE Mathematics Enhanced Scope and Sequence (ESS) Sample Math Lesson plans for K-8 can now be found on both T/TAC Online & VDOE websites.
- Algebra I & II, Geometry, Algebra, Functions & Data Analysis are coming soon.
- **New:** The Enhanced Scope & Sequence (ESS) & the Enhanced Scope and Sequence PLUS (ESS+) are now the same lesson plans for Mathematics.

VDOE Mathematics Enhanced Scope and Sequence (ESS) Sample Lesson Plans help teachers align instruction with the 2009 Mathematics Standards of Learning (SOL) by providing examples of how the knowledge and skills found in the SOL and curriculum framework can be presented to students in the classroom. The lesson plans are accessible using a keyword search or by selecting specific SOL objectives organized by grade level and reporting category.

**To find the searchable Math ESS Sample Lesson Plans:**

*Go to [www.ttaconline.org](http://www.ttaconline.org) > Click on “SOL Enhanced tab” > Click on “List by SOL” (on left margin) > Under Option 1, 2 or 3, Select “Mathematics” (for Subject) & Click “Go.” The searchable lessons will appear.

or

*Go to [www.ttaconline.org](http://www.ttaconline.org) > Click on “SOL Enhanced tab” > Click on “Mathematics” (on left margin) > Click on “Mathematics Enhanced Scope and Sequence (ESS) Sample Lesson Plans” (inside blue box). The searchable lessons will appear.

or

Standards-Based IEP Update

The VDOE website has been updated to include resource materials to assist school division personnel as they write standards-based IEP goals for English and Reading, K-12.

The updated resources include:

- English Skills Worksheets, K-12
- Standards-based IEP Sample Measurable Goals for English/Reading, K-12
- Sample Student PLOPs and Standards-based Goals for English/Reading
- Sample Student English/Reading Skills Worksheets
- Samples of completed Assessment Consideration for Reading

How do you find these resources?


1. Click on Region 4
2. Click on the purple Resources tab on the top of the page
3. Type IEP in the Search box
4. Scroll down the page and you will find “Standards-Based IEP Resources (Virginia Department of Education)”
ANNOUNCING THE
2011 – 2012
SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT INVOLVEMENT SURVEY

All parents of school-aged children and youth who receive special education services in Virginia’s schools are encouraged to complete the Department of Education’s annual Parent Involvement Survey. This survey is not intended to measure satisfaction with the special education program. It is designed to determine whether or not the school facilitated parent involvement. The English and Spanish versions of the survey have been combined into one survey with both languages.

If you are unable to take the survey online, your child’s school will provide paper versions for your use. All paper versions of the survey will include a pre-addressed postage paid return envelope. All responses will be sent directly to the Virginia Department of Education.

If you have any questions related to the Parent Involvement Survey, please contact Gloria Dalton gloria.dalton@doe.virginia.gov at the Virginia Department of Education at (804) 371-7420.

This survey will be available November 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012
This online survey can be found at:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ParentInvolvementSurvey2011

ANUNCIO DE LA ENCUESTA DE 2011-2012 SOBRE LA PARTICIPACIÓN DE LOS PADRES DE JÓVENES COLEGIALES EN EDUCACIÓN ESPECIAL.

El Departamento de Educación de Virginia querría que todos los padres de jóvenes colegiales que ya reciben los servicios de educación especial completaran una encuesta. El propósito de la encuesta es determinar si las escuelas han facilitado la participación de los padres o no.

La encuesta, disponible por Internet, está escrita en español e inglés. Se encuentra las dos versiones en la misma hoja. Si usted no usa el Internet, la escuela de su hijo le dará una versión de papel y un sobre con sello y dirección para enviarlo al Departamento de Educación.

Si usted tiene alguna pregunta sobre la encuesta o necesita más información, por favor, llame al centro de padres que abogan por la educación especial de sus hijos (PEATC) al 1-800-869-6782, o a María Isabel Frangenberg de la asociación de gente con discapacidades al 804-827-1547. También, usted puede escribir a Gloria Dalton por correo electrónico en gloria.dalton@doe.virginia.gov.

Esta encuesta estará disponible el 1 de noviembre de 2011 al 30 de junio de 2012
Usted podrá encontrar la encuesta en línea (Internet) en:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ParentInvolvementSurvey2011
The new list of *Workplace Readiness Skills for the Commonwealth* was created from research provided through the University of Virginia’s Weldon Cooper Center based on employer input and 21st Century Skills. More information can be found on the VDOE Career Resource Center’s Web site ([http://www.cteresource.org](http://www.cteresource.org)). With permission granted from the Office of Career and Technical Education, Virginia Department of Education in September 2010, the Central Virginia Transition Council (CVTC) was able to use these skills to create activities and resources. These were generated from teams of educators, employment specialists, and parents from CVTC.

The following link, [http://www.jmu.edu/ttac/WorkplaceReadiness.shtml](http://www.jmu.edu/ttac/WorkplaceReadiness.shtml), is your access to a list of common everyday activities and resources that you can use at school, home, or the community to prepare your students or children at any age for the skills they are going to need to be successful in the workplace. Activities and resources can be added to the documents by e-mailing your ideas to Sally Chappel, VDOE Region 5 TTAC at JMU, at chappesl@jmu.edu.
Welcome to the first Virtual TechKnowledge Conference sponsored by the Virginia Department of Education’s Training and Technical Assistance Centers. This conference is located on the T/TAC Online website. Review the conference program and choose from over 30 online AT sessions developed by local and national presenters. You will be required to login to the sessions using your T/TAC Online username and password each time you visit the conference. If you are not an existing T/TAC Online user, you will be prompted to set up an account and will immediately receive an e-mail with your username and password. Remember to visit the Virtual Exhibit Hall, register for prizes on vendor websites and complete the treasure hunt to win "fish" prizes. Enjoy this new online TechKnowledge Conference format!

Welcome from John Eisenberg, Director, Office of Instructional Support and Related Services, Virginia Department of Education.

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**Focus Areas**

**JT Solutions for Early Childhood Population**

You are now entering the Virtual TechKnowledge Conference area for practitioners and families working with the early childhood population. We hope you will visit as many of the webinar sessions as possible. You will notice each webinar specifies an approximate completion time and includes an evaluation. The evaluation is required in order to receive a certificate of participation. You may want to print your certificate and attach it to your conference program thus verifying your conference participation. Enjoy the conference! This conference will remain live from November 10, 2011 through October, 2012.

**JT Solutions for Students with Low Incidence Disabilities**

You are now entering the Virtual TechKnowledge Conference area for practitioners and families working with students with low incidence disabilities. We hope you will visit as many of the webinar sessions as possible. You will notice each webinar specifies an approximate completion time and includes an evaluation. The evaluation is required in order to receive a certificate of participation. You may want to print your certificate and attach it to your conference program thus verifying your conference participation. Enjoy the conference! This conference will remain live from November 10, 2011 through October, 2012.

**JT Solutions for Students with Autism**

You are now entering the Virtual TechKnowledge Conference area for practitioners and families working with students with autism spectrum disorders. We hope you will visit as many of the webinar sessions as possible. You will notice each webinar specifies an approximate completion time and includes an evaluation. The evaluation is required in order to receive a certificate of participation. You may want to print your certificate and attach it to your conference program thus verifying your conference participation. Enjoy the conference! This conference will remain live from November 10, 2011 through October, 2012.

**JT Solutions for Communication and AAC**

You are now entering the Virtual TechKnowledge Conference area for practitioners and families interested in learning more about communication and augmentative and alternative communication (AAC). We hope you will visit as many of the webinar sessions as possible. You will notice each webinar specifies an approximate completion time and includes an evaluation. The evaluation is required in order to receive a certificate of participation. You may want to print your certificate and attach it to your conference program thus verifying your conference participation. Enjoy the conference! This conference will remain live from November 10, 2011 through October, 2012.

**JT Solutions for Students with Mild/Moderate Disabilities**

You are now entering the Virtual TechKnowledge Conference area for practitioners and families working with students with mild to moderate disabilities. We hope you will visit as many of the webinar sessions as possible. You will notice each webinar specifies an approximate completion time and includes an evaluation. The evaluation is required in order to receive a certificate of participation. You may want to print your certificate and attach it to your conference program thus verifying your conference participation. Enjoy the conference! This conference will remain live from November 10, 2011 through October, 2012.

**JT Solutions for All Students**

You are now entering the Virtual TechKnowledge Conference area with AT sessions to benefit ALL students with disabilities. We hope you will visit as many of the webinar sessions as possible. You will notice each webinar specifies an approximate completion time and includes an evaluation. The evaluation is required in order to receive a certificate of participation. You may want to print your certificate and attach it to your conference program thus verifying your conference participation. Enjoy the conference! This conference will remain live from November 10, 2011 through October, 2012.