



Vol. XIV  
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# THE T/TAC TELEGRAM



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Northwestern Consortium T/TAC

This newsletter is a collaborative effort by the Northwestern Consortium of the T/TACs, which includes James Madison University, co-directed by Cheryl Henderson and Melinda Bright, and George Mason University, directed by Lynn Wiley.

# ONE STOP: Assistive Technology Resources

Carol A. Wiegler, M.A., Coordinator, VDOE Region 5 T/TAC @ JMU



You want to support your students. You want them to succeed. Some of your students have had the same goals year after year and you are rightfully concerned. Have you given serious consideration to the use of assistive technology (AT) with your students?

The Assistive Technology Priority Project has put together a resource guide, *Assistive Technology: A Framework for Consideration and Assessment*, now easily accessible at [www.ttaonline.org](http://www.ttaonline.org) and [www.vaatpp.org](http://www.vaatpp.org). This Web site can be your “one stop” to finding extensive resources to assist with the process of considering AT for all your students with special needs. Here you will find:

- A one-page, Word-formatted form, “Virginia Assistive Technology Consideration Guide,” which takes the IEP team through careful consideration of AT in all the instructional areas, helps identify strategies, accommodations or AT

currently being used, and guides the team to identify new AT

- The “Virginia Assistive Technology Resource Guide” which offers a concise listing, by instructional area, of standard tools, modifications and accommodations, and AT solutions
- The AT Assessment Process section which offers referral and assessment forms, decision making and selection tools, trial implementation information, and AT evaluation report forms

The beginning of a new school year offers an excellent opportunity to think about the benefits of AT for your students. Using this resource guide, you can identify the areas of concern and explore possible AT solutions. Your regional T/TAC libraries offer a wide range of professional books and materials and many assistive technology items to borrow for a trial period. Each regional T/TAC program has coordinators with an expertise in AT who are available by phone or e-mail to offer assistance.

Virginia Department of Education and the Training and Technical Assistance Centers sponsor an annual conference, TechKnowledge, held this year on November 19 and 20 at the Greater Richmond Convention Center, Richmond. This is an opportunity to attend sessions by nationally known speakers in the field of AT, visit with vendors, and network with educators and specialists. More information on TechKnowledge is available at: <http://www.vcu.edu/ttac/professionaldevelopment/techknowledge/> Registration will open September 1.

So, what are you waiting for? Have a great year!





# Setting the Classroom

but also helps to promote a schoolwide culture that can enable students and staff to be successful in a supportive learning environment.

## 2.) Establish expectations

Keep rules short, positively stated with no more than 3-5 rules posted in the room. Communicate to students the behavior you want to see them display. Don't forget to acknowledge students for exhibiting appropriate behavior so you can make certain it continues in your classroom and across environments. The best way to maintain appropriate behavior is to consistently acknowledge that it is happening so that it continues to do so.

## 3.) Be approachable

Make yourself available to students. Engage in meaningful feedback promptly and often with the students. Give them the opportunity to ask questions and engage in discussion around coursework while keeping the expectations clear. This can prevent many problem behaviors in the classroom and promotes

**T**he start of the school year is an exciting time for both students and teachers. It can also be a time of uncertainty. Setting the stage by building a positive classroom climate from the beginning can help manage both of these emotions, thus ensuring both teachers and students begin the school year off on the right foot. Here is a list of things that teachers can do to create a positive classroom environment for all learners.

### 1.) Be a role model

Always remember that teachers are mirrors for their students! That is why teachers should aim to treat students and other professionals in the building fairly and consistently with dignity and respect for one another. This not only promotes a positive classroom environment



# Stage: Providing a Positive Climate for All Learners

Teresa Cogar, M.Ed., Coordinator,  
VDOE Region 5 T/TAC @ JMU

problem-solving abilities on the part of the students. Remember, you could possibly be the only person they have any positive interaction with all day, so make it count!

## 4.) Make connections

Start to learn students' names from the moment they step off the bus and into the classroom. Calling students by their names helps to establish a positive relationship between the teacher and the students. It also helps students to feel as though their teachers think of them as individuals with individual ideas and feelings that they can relate to. Also, beginning on the first day, encourage students to learn the names of others in the class in order to promote a positive classroom climate.

## 5.) Create a safe place for learning

Students and teachers are more productive in an environment where they feel safe, comfortable, and are supported through the learning process. Teachers can provide this environment for students by: modeling

the problem-solving process for students, using positive reinforcement, facilitating discussions between students and teacher, providing students with constructive feedback, allowing students to provide feedback to increase understanding of content knowledge and classroom rules, as well as recognizing students' accomplishments inside the classroom and in the community. It is also important to remember that the physical arrangement of a classroom should promote ease and mobility for all students as well as provide a variety of areas for effective instruction to take place.

Taking the time to "set the stage" can assist teachers in providing a positive classroom climate that actively involves the learners, is student-centered, and creates an environment where students want to be active participants.

### References:

Hilsen, L.R. (2009). Tips to Sustain a Positive Learning Environment. Retrieved August 11, 2009, from [www.personal.psu.edu/scs15/idweb/positiveclimate.htm](http://www.personal.psu.edu/scs15/idweb/positiveclimate.htm)

Establishing a positive classroom climate: Teacher advice. (2009). Retrieved August 11, 2009, from [www.interventioncentral.org/htmldocs/interventions/classroom/classclimate.php](http://www.interventioncentral.org/htmldocs/interventions/classroom/classclimate.php)

## 1.) Be a role model

## 2.) Establish expectations

## 3.) Be approachable

## 4.) Make connections

## 5.) Create a safe place for learning

# INSIGHT from Persons with Autism Spectrum Disorders

Sally Chappel, M.Ed., Coordinator, Region 5 T/TAC @ JMU

**T**he following are lessons that I have learned as I have supported persons on the spectrum. As you start your school year, try to look at the world through the eyes of someone on the spectrum. You may be surprised!

## “IF I CAN’T SEE IT I DON’T UNDERSTAND.”

- This does not necessarily mean that they have to literally see it. The student needs to be able to visualize it in his/her mind. Remember, individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) are typically visual thinkers; they do think in pictures.

## WHEN IN DOUBT, WRITE IT OUT.

- Persons with ASD tend to feel anxious when they do not know what is happening next. Even though you may voice the plan, writing it out or showing pictures will utilize their visual strength. Also, you can refer to the schedule or plan when the student persistently asks when someone is returning, what they are supposed to do now, what are they supposed to do next, etc.

Let the written word or picture answer the question or direct the student.

## REMEMBER TO BE LITERAL WHEN CONVERSING WITH A PERSON WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS.

- Attempting to understand what we are trying to say when we use sarcasm, idioms, and lots of words with little meaning is very difficult for the person with ASD. Say specifically what you mean using few words. Be simple, be concrete, and use the words that convey the meaning you are trying to express. Leave little room for misinterpretation.

## REST IS NEEDED AFTER A DAY IN SCHOOL. THIS MAY MANIFEST ITSELF IN A NUMBER OF DIFFERENT WAYS - VIDEO GAMING, WATCHING TV, AND/OR BEING ALONE IN A ROOM.

- School can be one of the most difficult times. The person with ASD has to “act” all day to function in the neurotypical world. Homework may not get done due to the exhaustion. Imagine teaching all day with the Superintendent and Principal in your room. After being on your best behavior all day, you too would be exhausted and have a difficult time planning for the next day.

## A SOCIAL LIFE IS DESIRED. “I JUST WANT TO BE ABLE TO GO OUT.”

- Although it may appear that the student does not want to socialize, he or she very much desires to be like everyone else. Although they may want to go out, they have to fight the characteristic that says how hard it is. It is difficult trying to do something that is hard to do.

**AS STUDENTS UNDERSTAND THEIR DISABILITY THEY MAY FIND THAT THEY FEEL LIKE THEY HAVE A DISEASE. THEY MAY FEEL THAT THEIR PERSONALITY IS CHANGING BECAUSE OF THE DISABILITY.**

- This is the time to educate students about ASD. Help them understand that it makes them who they are. Others may need to be educated, too. Teach the student to be a self-advocate.

**TYPICALLY HAVING A PURPOSE AND REASON TO BE INVOLVED WILL ENHANCE THEIR DESIRE TO DO SO. THERE NEEDS TO BE SOMETHING IN IT FOR THEM.**

- The reason or purpose must make sense to the person. An example may be when meeting with a person with ASD you ask him to teach you about his disability so you can better understand how to help others. This empowers the individuals so they have purpose in the meetings. Also, during group activities make sure the person with ASD has a part that not only taps his strength, but includes him in the activity.

**INDIVIDUALS MAY FEEL LEFT OUT OR DIFFERENT. THEY MAY ASK IF OTHERS FEEL THIS WAY.**

- This feeling may come from an understanding that they are different. They

know that they are not part of “the crowd,” but don’t know how to make this happen. This seems to be self-actualization and may be a start to understanding and learning the steps to genuinely feel included.

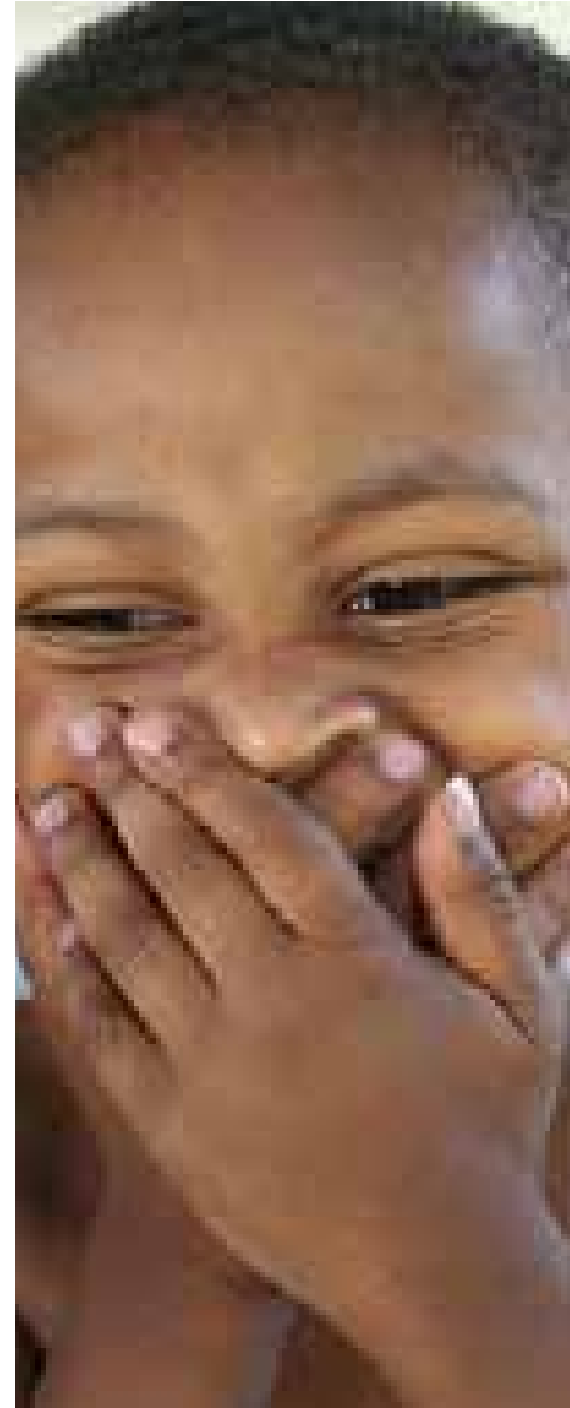
**DIRECTIONS ARE OFTEN BEST UNDERSTOOD IF YOU GIVE LANDMARKS TO THE PERSON INSTEAD OF ROAD SIGNS AND NUMBERS. THE PERSON WILL REMEMBER THE BUILDINGS AND LANDMARKS SINCE THEY ARE UNIQUE.**

- The visual strength of the disability supports this principle.

**THE PERSON MAY HAVE CERTAIN RITUALS, ROUTINES, FAVORITE THINGS, OR JUST WAYS OF DOING SOMETHING THAT MAY APPEAR UNUSUAL OR UNNECESSARY TO US.**

- This could be due to a sensory need or sensory defensiveness. It may just be what he/she needs to do. An example may be that the person only likes to drink from a water bottle or straw. Drinking from a glass may be offensive to the person. If it does not hurt or seriously offend someone, then let it go. It is not worth the battle. We all have our own idiosyncrasies that we want left alone.

The T/TACs have specialists trained in working with students with autism spectrum disorders, as well as a wealth of resources in the lending libraries. Additional resources are also available at T/TAC Online (<http://ttaconline.org>).



# A Review of Evidenced-Based Practices in Classroom Management

John McNaught, M.Ed., Coordinator, VDOE Region 5 T/TAC @ JMU

**AS** the new school year begins, it is important to review some relevant evidence-based practices in classroom management. The start of the school year is a great time to evaluate your classroom management practices and make any necessary changes in order to ensure a consistent classroom management message to your students.

We live in an era when research tells us that the teacher is probably the single most important factor affecting student achievement--at least the single most important factor that we can do much about (Marzano, 2003). Student achievement and behavior go hand and hand. It is important to remember that we need to teach appropriate behavior just like we teach academics. These five evidenced-based practices will help get your school year started in the right direction - a positive one.

## 1. Maximize structure in your classroom.

Every student thrives in structure. It is important to establish clear teacher and student routines. It is essential to teach the routines and keep

them consistent. Structure also refers to the physical environment of the classroom. Can you walk between the rows? Can you actively supervise all areas of the room? Will you use a seating chart?

## 2. Post, teach, review, monitor, and reinforce a small number of positively stated expectations.

Rules should focus on what we want students to do (i.e., “walk” versus “don’t run”). The rules need to be posted in a place where students can see them. Give examples and non-examples of what each rule means in your classroom. For example, my three classroom rules are 1. Be Safe, 2. Be Respectful, and 3. Be Responsible. In my classroom, being respectful means taking turns, waiting your turn to speak, and listening before responding. A matrix tends to work well for this activity. During the first few weeks it will be important to review, monitor, and consistently reinforce the rules.

## 3. Actively engage students in observable ways.

Active engagement is a key component of effective teaching as well as classroom management. Students need high rates of opportunities to respond in varied formats. Different formats include written responses, group vs. individual responses, gestures, individual white boards, and choral responding. It is important to vary the mode of response to keep students from becoming complacent.

## 4. Establish a continuum of strategies to acknowledge appropriate behavior.

It is important to remember that a response that is followed by an acknowledgement will increase in strength and frequency of occurrence.

Therefore, it stands to reason that if you want students to display appropriate behavior

*continued on next page*



you need to acknowledge them when they display the desired behavior. Strategies for acknowledgement include but are not limited to specific and contingent praise, group contingencies, behavioral contracts, and token economy.

## 5. Establish a continuum of strategies to respond to inappropriate behavior.

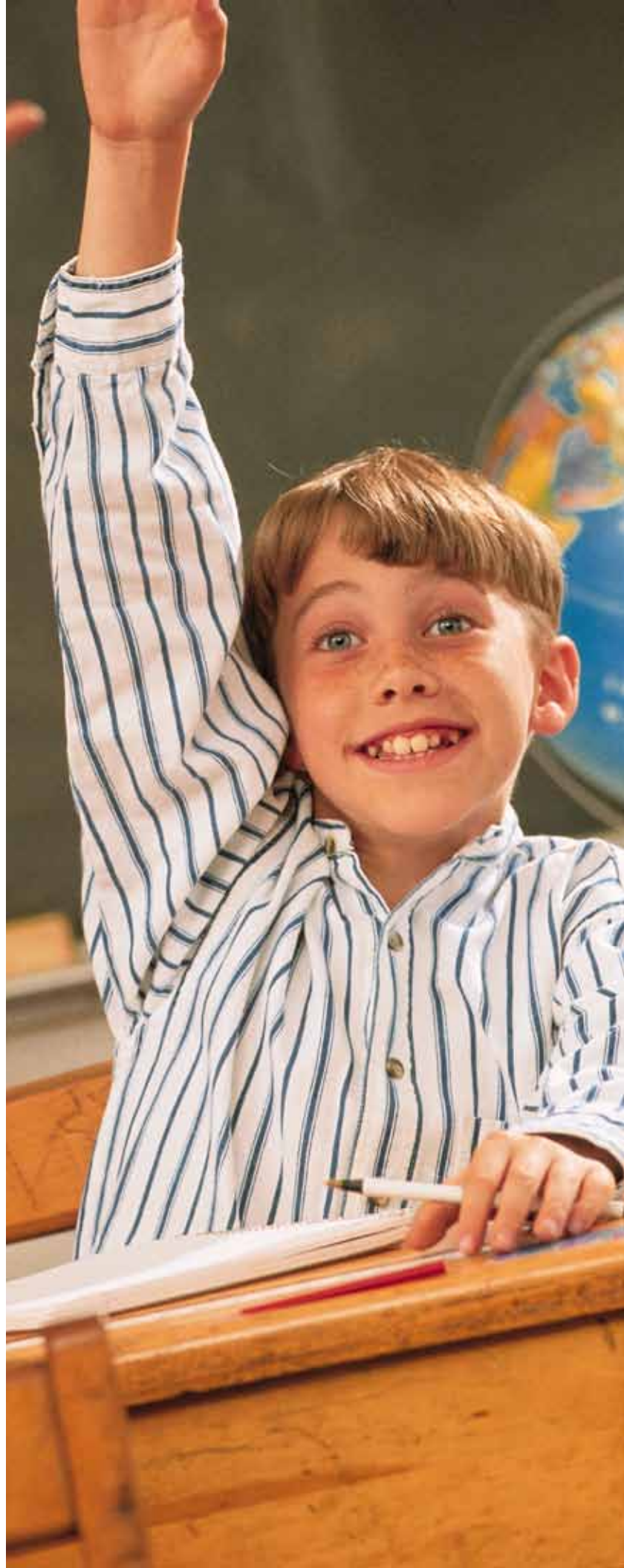
It is important to respond efficiently to inappropriate behaviors by being quick, positive, and direct. Provide specific feedback for errors and corrects. When giving feedback, provide a contingency, always indicate the correct behavior, and link the feedback to context in which it is occurring.

For more information on effective classroom management and positive behavior supports, visit the OSEP Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), a collaboration between the U.S. Department of Education and 11 technical assistance units across the United States ([www.pbis.org](http://www.pbis.org)).

### Resources:

Marzano, R., Pickering, D., & Marzano, J. (2003). *Classroom management that works: Research-based strategies for every teacher*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Simonsen, B., Fairbanks, S., Briesch, A., Myers, D., & Sugai, G. (2008). A review of evidence based practices in classroom management: Considerations for research to practice. *Education and Treatment of Children, 31*, 351-380.



# Helping Teachers and Students Understand Mathematics

Linda Hickey, M.Ed., Coordinator,  
VDOE Region 5 T/TAC @ JMU

As another school year begins and teachers find themselves in a classroom working with diverse students struggling with mathematics, it is worthwhile to stop and reflect on principles and standards that drive student success in mathematics. The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics document *Principles and Standards for School Mathematics (2000)* focuses on six principles fundamental to high-quality mathematics education that need to be deeply embedded in a school mathematics program.

## 1. The Equity Principle

High expectations for all students should be the norm for every classroom regardless of background, personal characteristics, or disability.

## 2. The Curriculum Principle

Mathematics is not a collection of isolated bits and pieces. Students need opportunities to see how mathematical concepts build on one another in a useful

network of connected ideas. Mathematics should be connected a student's prior knowledge, to the real world, as well as other disciplines.

## 3. The Teaching Principle

“Effective mathematics teaching requires understanding what students know and need to learn and then challenging and supporting them to learn it well.” (NCTM, 2000, p.16).

In order for teachers of mathematics to be highly effective in the classroom, they must have a deep conceptual understanding of the math they are teaching. A reasonable expectation for classroom teachers would be for them to have the ability to explain why a triangle has 180 degrees and why you invert the second fraction and multiply for division of fractions. The instructional tasks and strategies being directed by the classroom teacher should encourage

students to think and enhance their learning.

## 4. The Learning Principle

The *Principles and Standards* stress the importance of students not only learning computational skills but also to learn mathematics with understanding. When a classroom becomes a community of learning, one can observe student engagement where ideas are valued, conjectures are real, and mistakes provide opportunities for learning.

## 5. The Assessment Principle

According to Van de Walle, et al (2008), teachers must use a variety of assessment techniques, understand their mathematical goals deeply, and have a good idea of how their students may be thinking about or misunderstanding the mathematics that is being developed in order for the assessments to be effective.

## 6. The Technology Principle

Technology allows students to explore and enhance mathematical concepts in ways that are often impossible without these tools.

Technology is truly a part of their generation and can make mathematics very engaging and relevant to their interests.

If your school division is interested in providing professional development addressing personal growth opportunities in understanding math concepts, how students learn math, or just being a part of a community of

math educators enhancing the teaching of mathematics in your classrooms, then you may find the following course, sponsored by Outreach Programs at JMU, helpful: *Embracing the Revised SOLs: Building Successful Classrooms*. This is a 3-hour graduate credit course for math teachers kindergarten through eighth grade. Contact Linda Hickey, T/TAC Coordinator, at [hickeylr@jmu.edu](mailto:hickeylr@jmu.edu) or 540.568.8813 for more information.

### References:

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. (2000). *Principles and standards for school mathematics*. Reston, VA.

Van de Walle, J.A., Karp, K.S., & Bay-Williams, J.M. (2008). *Elementary and middle school mathematics: Teaching developmentally* (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.





# Inclusion, and Behavior, and Early Childhood **Oh My!**

Cheryl Henderson, M.Ed., Co-Director, VDOE Region 5 T/TAC @ JMU



**I**nclusive practices and social-emotional development are two of the “hot topics” in early childhood education and early childhood special education right now, both in Virginia and across the nation. Numerous evidence-based resources are available for early childhood educators that may assist with programming and instructional needs.

Highlighting the importance of inclusive practices, the Council for Exceptional Children Division for Early Childhood and the National Association for the Education of Young Children this year approved a joint position statement that underscores both organizations’ commitment to quality early childhood inclusion. *Early Childhood Inclusion: A Joint Position Statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)* provides a shared national definition of inclusion as “the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant and young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities, and society.” This position statement represents a major collaborative agreement between these two national organizations that is expected to have a widespread impact on the early childhood field. To download the document, visit <http://community.fpg.unc.edu/resources/articles/files/EarlyChildhoodInclusion-04-2009.pdf>

To further emphasize the importance of this historic joint document and early childhood inclusive practices, Connect: The Center to Mobilize Early Childhood Knowledge has created a series of Web-based resources that address challenges faced by those working with young children with disabilities and their families. A 12-minute video, *Foundations of Inclusion Birth to Five*, highlights the DEC/NAEYC statement as well as questions about inclusive practices (What is inclusion? Is there research to support it?)





What are characteristics of high quality inclusive settings?, etc.). For more information and to view the video go to <http://community.fpg.unc.edu/connect?nectac>

Another “hot topic,” social-emotional skill development – the Positive Behavior Support programs for early childhood – has a wealth of resources available, much from two federally-funded, national resources. The **Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children (TACSEI)** is a five-year grant project of the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, based at the University of South Florida. TACSEI personnel take the research that shows which practices improve the social-emotional outcomes for young children with, or at risk for, delays or disabilities and apply the best practices to everyday work with young children. The TACSEI Web site ([www.challengingbehavior.org](http://www.challengingbehavior.org)) has free, downloadable products and resources. Included on the site are fact sheets about the social costs associated with young children who have challenging behaviors, the importance of early intervention, and information

about applying the Response to Intervention (RtI) model to early childhood programs.

Recently added to the TACSEI Web site is the *Evidence-Based Social-Emotional Curricula and Intervention Packages for Children 0-5 Years and Their Families* (June 2009), which provides guidance to families and early childhood special education providers seeking interventions that promote healthy social emotional development in young children. It is available at [http://www.challengingbehavior.org/do/resources/documents/roadmap\\_2.pdf](http://www.challengingbehavior.org/do/resources/documents/roadmap_2.pdf)

Another resource is the **Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL)**, a national resource center funded by the Office of Head Start and Child Care Bureau, based at Vanderbilt University. CSEFEL’s focus is on promoting the social-emotional development and school readiness of young children birth to age five. CSEFEL disseminates research and evidence-based practices to early childhood programs across the country. Visit the CSEFEL Web site at [www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel) to download free training materials,

teaching resources, quick fact sheets, and other information. Additionally, last school year, the Virginia Department of Education Office of Special Education Instructional Services and T/TACs provided every school division with a DVD of the CSEFEL training materials.

For further information about inclusive practices and social-emotional development for young children, visit the Web sites mentioned above or contact the early childhood coordinator at your regional T/TAC.

**Numerous evidence-based resources are available for early childhood educators that may assist with programming and instructional needs.**

# Rockin' With Region

Celebrate Learning!  
Professional Development Opportunities Abound!

*By: Lynn Willey Ph.D.*

VDOE T/TAC Region 4 George Mason University



The beginning of a new school year means a renewed opportunity to work with the young minds that will one day be in charge of our world. What a big task! You should be proud of all you do for your students, not only now, but throughout the year. While you are settling into your new routine, don't forget to check for upcoming professional development events on T/TAC Online. Some of those occurring in the near future are listed here, but there are many more on the horizon! Access further details and register for events on [www.ttaonline.org](http://www.ttaonline.org). Click on the Events tab. Registration is typically required. Some events involve a fee.

## Building Social Relationships: A Systematic Approach to Teaching Social Interaction Skills

Date and Time: 9/17/2009 8:00 am - 3:00 pm

Description: This workshop, for teachers, therapists, administrators, and parents, will provide an overview of a social skill instructional model developed by Dr. Bellini. The workshop integrates research on social-emotional functioning with effective strategies for teaching social skills to children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorders (ASD). Registration deadline: September 8. The event will be at the Stonewall Jackson Hotel and Conference Center, 24 South Market Street, Staunton, Virginia.

## Video Modeling/Video Self-Modeling: Research to Practice

Date and Time: 9/18/2009 9:30 am - 3:00 pm

Description: Video Modeling/Video Self-Modeling is an evidence-based approach that allows individuals to view peers or themselves on video engaging in behaviors targeted for intervention such as communication, social, daily living skills, and more. In part one of this training, participants will learn about the research that supports this as an evidence-based approach for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders. The second part of the training will be hands-on and participants will learn how to take video, edit, and use the video with the student to improve skills and behaviors. It is expected that participants will use this approach with a student in the following three months. Follow-up assistance will be available. Each participant will receive a copy of the recently released book by Dr. Tom Buggey, *Seeing is Believing: Video Self-Modeling for People with Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities*. School teams of 3 participants are encouraged to attend. Priority will be given to participants from Superintendents Region 4. Space is limited to 20 participants. Location: George Mason University - Prince William Campus, Verizon Auditorium, 10900 University Blvd., Manassas, VA 20110

## Transition Practitioners' Council (TPC) West Fall Meeting

Date and Time: 10/1/2009 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Description: A panel of parents with children at various stages of transition will discuss the transition process from their point of view, offer ideas as to how families can be more active in transition planning, identify aspects important to the transition process, and provide direction to resources in the local areas. School personnel and adult service providers will also contribute to the panel. Targeted audience are transition practitioners and others interested in the provision of transition services who are located in Superintendent's Regions 4, 5, 6, & 7 and also in the DRS Northern, Blue Ridge and Southwest regions. Registration is required. Location: George Mason University - Prince William Campus, Verizon Auditorium, 10900 University Blvd., Manassas, VA 20110

## Vincent Carbone- Autism and Verbal Behavior

Date and Time: 10/7/2009 8:00 am - 4:00 am

Description: Verbal Behavior - Teaching Communication Skills to Children with Autism or Other Disabilities. This workshop is 200.00 until September 23, 2009. After this date registration will be 220.00. There is a professional group rate of 185.00 per person for groups of 5 or more. Registration is required.

## Fall into Literacy

Date and Time: 10/9/2009 9:00 am - 4:30 pm

Description: Fall into Literacy is an interactive symposium about early literacy for all young children, including those with special needs. The morning session focuses on the new edition of the Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation Tool (ELLCO), an assessment tool that measures the effectiveness of classroom environments in promoting young children's early literacy outcomes. The afternoon will include breakout sessions focused on the literacy environment, English Language Learners, and storytelling strategies and resources. This event takes place at the Virginia Department of Education, Monroe Bldg., Richmond, VA.

## Virginia Middle School Association (VMSA) 20th Annual Conference

Date and Time: 10/16/2009 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Description: The Virginia Middle School Association (VMSA) is pleased to announce its 20th Annual Conference at the Greater Richmond Convention Center, Richmond, Virginia. Dr. Marilyn Friend will present the keynote address focusing on inclusive practices in middle level education. Dr. Friend is currently Chairperson and Professor of Education in the Department of Specialized Education Services at the University of North Carolina-Greensboro where she teaches coursework on inclusive practices and collaboration among service providers.

## 2009 VA CEC Annual Conference Balancing Trends And Issues: 21st Century Special Education

Date and Time: 10/17/2009 8:00 am - 4:00 am

Description: The Virginia Council for Exceptional Children (VA CEC) Annual Conference will be held at Regent University in Virginia Beach. Peter W.D. Wright, ESQ (from Wrightslaw) will be the keynote speaker.

## VT & RU T/TAC Collaborating for Student Success: Creating Inclusive Communities Conference

Date and Time: 10/19/2009 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Description: This conference will provide a high-quality professional development opportunity for educators, parents and all school community members to reflect on topics that relate to creating inclusive schools which embrace a culture of collaboration. The morning keynote will be presented by Dr. Susan Copeland and Dr. Liz Keefe, Associate Professors at the University of New Mexico. Much of their work in schools involves the implementation of effective inclusive practices for all students. Both speakers share a passion for reading and co-authored Effective Literacy Instruction for Students with Moderate to Severe Disabilities. There will be breakout sessions that include the topics of collaborative problem-solving, Universal Design for Learning, math instruction, literacy instruction, co-teaching, assistive technology, behavior support, possibilities beyond school, on-line collaboration, differentiation of instruction and more.

## Effective Literacy Instruction for Students with Moderate or Severe Disabilities - ONSITE

Date and Time: 10/20/2009 9:00 am - 3:30 pm

Description: This workshop will focus on teaching students with intellectual disabilities in inclusive settings. Topics discussed will include instruction in the key literacy components, lesson planning, and more. Key Presenters will be Dr. Susan Copeland and Dr. Liz Keefe, Associate Professors at the University of New Mexico. Workshop participants will receive a copy of the book Effective Literacy Instruction for Students with Moderate to Severe Disabilities and a certificate of attendance. Location: The Omni Charlottesville Hotel



# Library Corner

Jackie Petersen, MLS, VDOE T/TAC @ GMU



Welcome back to school everybody!

Where did summer go? It seems like it just flew by. I know all of you are really busy right now, getting your classrooms ready, attending meetings, preparing lessons, getting to know your new students, talking to parents, and all of the many other behind-the-scenes “back to school” things teachers do. Probably some of you are brand new teachers and are also getting to know your new colleagues and your new schools. I am not foolish enough to believe that the T/TAC library collection is high on your agenda right now. But it SHOULD be and I promise you, it WILL be when you need access to something not available at your school or at your local library.

The T/TAC library collection (aka George Mason University’s Kellar Library at the Kellar Institute for Human disAbilities) is a free resource available to all teachers in the Virginia Department of Education’s Region IV. This is a special collection of almost 4,000 items including books, software, assistive technology devices, videos/dvds, assessment materials, textbooks, kits, reference materials, and journals. It focuses on special education and learning disabilities. Did I mention that it is FREE? This is a great opportunity for you to access materials that can support your teaching without using school funds (or your own) to buy them. That is especially welcome news in this economy.

How do you find out if the library has what you need? Search the online catalog at <http://129.174.57.212/InmagicGenie/opac.aspx> If you find something you would like to check out, select it and add it to the “Shopping Book

# LIBRARY

# CORNER

*with Jackie Petersen*



Cart” at the top right of the screen. Fill out the online check out form and submit it. You can choose to have materials mailed to you at either your home address or school address or if you prefer, you can stop by the Kellar Library at the Kellar Institute for Human disAbilities, Krug Hall, Room 109 and pick up materials there. The library is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm.

If you have any questions or need any help finding what you need, call me at 703.993.3672 or email me at [kihdlib@gmu.edu](mailto:kihdlib@gmu.edu) . I am here to help you!

Welcome back to school and I hope you all have an awesome school year!





# The Paraprofessional Press

**P**roject Participate, based at the University of Colorado Health Science Center, provides families, educators, administrators and therapists with simple strategies to increase the active participation of students with disabilities in school programs. The project is supported by a U.S. Department of Education grant. Some of the goals of Project Participate are to facilitate team collaboration, enhance learning for students

with disabilities, and promote the appropriate uses of technology in the classroom. The Web site ([www.projectparticipate.org](http://www.projectparticipate.org)) includes success stories, sample curricular adaptations, handouts for training, and intervention planning forms. For more information about Project Participate, visit the Web site or contact the University of Colorado Health Science Center at 303.315.2318 (phone) or [info@projectparticipate.org](mailto:info@projectparticipate.org) (e-mail).

*Tips for Paraprofessionals* shared with written permission (Retrieved on July 24, 2009).

<http://projectparticipate.org/handouts/TipsParas.pdf>

# Ten Tips for Paraeducators

Classroom aides can support teaching, foster student independence, and discourage learned helplessness.

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## Facilitate peer relationships.



Remind others to communicate directly with the student. Let students choose their own seat or place in the classroom. Give students the space and freedom to socialize and develop friendships.

## Let students make mistakes and take risks.



Everyone learns from mistakes. Allow natural consequences to be part of the student's classroom experience.

## Give as few prompts as possible.



Foster independence. Fade out hand-over-hand assistance and use it to teach a task, not to complete a task. Resist the temptation to give verbal directions for every aspect of a task.

## Multi-task in the classroom



Use class lectures as an opportunity to program a student's communication device, plan accommodations or modifications, and develop curriculum materials. Time away from the student's side promotes independence.

## Watch your voice and volume.



Discussions with other adults or students during instruction can be disruptive to the class. Save important discussions for after class.

## Help students create authentic work!



Students learn when they actively participate in assignments. Avoid completing assignments, taking tests, or answering questions for students. Show caregivers their child's genuine work and progress.

## Ask for help.



You are not alone. Ask for direction in the classroom. Request assistance with disciplinary issues. Leave decisions about content and curriculum modifications or accommodations to the teacher.

## Maintain student dignity!



Assume the student can do it! Be discreet about the student's physical needs. Schedule tube feedings, splint adjustments, stretching exercises and toileting for in between classes.

## Let students to make choices.



Give students the ability to control their lives and interact with the environment. Offer choices to the student no matter how insignificant they may seem.

## Communicate and consult with caregivers.



Listen to what families have to say and keep them informed. Learn the strategies that work at home and can work at school.

# Conferences

## SEPTEMBER

**September 17:** "Building Social Relationships: A Systematic Approach to Teaching Social Interaction Skills to Children and Adolescents on the Autism Spectrum" featuring Scott Bellini, Ph.D. Stonewall Jackson Hotel and Conference Center, Staunton. Visit <http://ttac.cisat.jmu.edu/training/index.html> for registration information.

## OCTOBER

**October 7-9:** "Verbal Behavior: Teaching Communication Skills to Children with Autism or Other Disabilities" featuring Vincent Carbone. Contact Tidewater Autism Society of America at 757.461.4474 or [tidewaterasa@verizon.net](mailto:tidewaterasa@verizon.net) for further information.

**October 16:** Virginia Middle Schools Association 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference with Keynote by Dr. Marilyn Friend. Greater Richmond Convention Center, Richmond. For online registration go to: [www.vmsa.org](http://www.vmsa.org)

**October 17:** Virginia CEC Annual Conference. Balancing Trends and Issues: 21st Century Special Education. Keynote by Peter W.D. Wright, Esq. of Wrightslaw. Regent University, VA Beach. Visit [www.virginiacec.org](http://www.virginiacec.org) for registration information.

**October 20:** Effective Instruction for Students with Moderate or Severe Disabilities featuring Dr. Susan Copeland and Dr. Liz Keffe. Omni Hotel, Charlottesville. Visit [www.ttaonline.org](http://www.ttaonline.org) for event information.





**October 27:** Symposium on Professional Collaboration and Inclusive Education - "Powerful Partnerships: Connecting for Student Success." Williamsburg Marriott Hotel, Williamsburg. Sponsored by the College of William and Mary and VDOE T/TAC W&M. For more information: 757.253.4787 or [www.wm.edu/TTAC](http://www.wm.edu/TTAC)

**October 30-November 1:** ASCD 2009 Conference on Teaching and Learning. Gaylord National Resort and Conference Center, National Harbor, MD (suburban Washington, DC). Contact info: 1.800.933.2723 or [www.ascd.org/conferences/fallconference/2009.aspx](http://www.ascd.org/conferences/fallconference/2009.aspx)

## **NOVEMBER**

**November 19 & 20:** TechKnowledge: Special Topics in Assistive Technology. Greater Richmond Convention Center, Richmond. Sponsored by VDOE T/TACs and the Hospital Education Program at Children's Hospital in Richmond. For additional information and registration, visit [www.vcu.edu/ttac](http://www.vcu.edu/ttac). Registration will begin September 1.

**November 21:** Future Quest: A Free College & Career Forum for Students with DisAbilities, Parents and Professionals. Sponsored by the Northern Virginia Transition Coalition George Mason University Johnson Center. For more information visit [www.VaCollegeQuest.org](http://www.VaCollegeQuest.org).

**November 30-December 2:** VSTE Annual State Technology Conference, Hotel Roanoke and Conference Center, Roanoke. Visit [vste.org/se3bin/clinetgenie.cgi](http://vste.org/se3bin/clinetgenie.cgi) for information.



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