

North Dakota Dual Sensory Project

D - B I N F O R M E R

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2008 Technical Assistance Training



Left to Right: Nancy Steele, Jon Harding & Sherri Nelson

The Outreach staff for the ND Dual Sensory Project met on November 13, 2008, in Grand Forks for training provided by Jon Harding and Nancy Steele, TA Specialists from the National Consortium on Deaf-Blindness (NCDB). Jon, our Area 2 Specialist from Kansas, shared the outcomes for

NCDB which coincide with those for our ND project, which include: improving the identification of children who are Deaf-Blind, increasing educational achievement, improving transition services and the achievement of post secondary goals, increasing the ability of families to effectively participate in the education of their child, and employing effective evaluation strategies to improve accountability. In addition, there was discussion and demonstration of the use of distant Technical Assistance (ie. Webinars, Instant Messaging, Blogs, Wikis, Polycom) and the implication for their use in ND.

NCDB offers technical assistance regarding the Classroom



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2008 Technical Assistance Training Continued . . .



Observation Instrument, Focus groups, Distant Education, Interveners, Webinars, Practice Perspectives, Transition/Customized Employment/Discovery, Topical workshops, and Webpage media. The Focus groups are specific to the areas of Transition, Early Childhood, Literacy Product Development, Evaluation, and

Underserved Families.

Nancy, the Area 3 Specialist from Knoxville , TN, gave us an overview of the Classroom Observation Instrument (COI) for Educational Environments serving Students with Deaf-Blindness. This tool is designed to help identify model classrooms serving students with severe and profound disabilities including those with Deaf-Blindness. The three components include: the teacher interview, the student folder review, and the observation rubric.

The teams shared their experiences regarding the possible uses and concerns of this instrument. The consensus was that the COI was very flexible, broad-based, easy to conceal, could be utilized as a “tip sheet”, a team tool (self-assessment educational tool), comprehensive, easy to use, quick, and a great entrée to help with TA. There was further discussion of the resources that exist to deliver TA in the areas of need and the use of alternate assessment.



Staff was informed of the grant’s logic model, goals, objectives, and activities for the 2008-2013 years. Census forms for 2008 were disseminated.



2008 AER International Convention By Lanna Slaby

My kind of convention is AER and my kind of Deaf Blind Project is the ND Deaf Blind Project. With assistance from the ND Deaf Blind Project, Mary Verlinde and I were able to attend the 2008 AER International Convention in Chicago. AER is the acronym for the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired. AER has been in existence since 1984 and has over 5000 professionals as members who provide services to people with visual impairments. This year's conference, CHICAGO: My AER Kind of Town was a 5 day conference with over 1200 people in attendance. The conference featured numerous presentations and workshops covering "hot" topics in the field of vision.

One session I found very interesting was entitled: How to GET EM HOOKED! Creative and Developmentally Appropriate O & M Teaching Strategies for Infants and Preschoolers. The presenter was Dr. Kay L. Clarke, who is an Infant/Preschool Outreach Specialist with the Ohio School for the Blind. She is also the author of the manual, *Hold Everything*. This manual provides parents and early childhood educators with 20 initial ideas for developing "stay put" play spaces for infants and young children with sensory impairments and other special needs. This manual is available for download in a PDF format at www.sscsco.org/ocdbe/products.html.

In this session, Dr. Clarke shared her knowledge and experience on what it takes to get young infants and children "hooked!" She felt in the early years, we as educators need to let the child take the lead and observe carefully what motivates the child. We might need to set up "jazzy" and interesting learning spaces. (Check out her *Hold Everything* manual.) She uses a lot of music and singing with children as research has shown that young children's brains are "wired" to respond to music. And you don't have to be a vocal major to sing! She uses lots of books and stories to promote learning and mobility. Some of the books she referenced were: *Sheila Rae the Brave and Once Around the Block* by Kevin Henke, *Let's Go Riding in Our Stroller* by Fran Manushkin, *Little Feet Like -Dalmatian Press*, *Mouse Count* by Ellen Stoll Walsh, *The Listening Walk* by Paul Showers or David Dirk, and *On My Street* by Eve Merriam. She reminded us the need to keep creativity and novelty alive in our teaching to keep or spark the child's interest. We might do this by using taped messages in describing a route or finding a hidden object. Taped messages offer a change of pace and put the child more in control. We can change our voice, perform a silly or unexpected action, walk backwards, or hop down the hall.

She talked briefly about using tactual landmarks. You can toggle the landmark symbol to a basket so the teacher can hold the basket and bring it to a student. You can place a Velcro band around the wrist of the child and attach the landmark symbol to

2008 AER International Convention Continued . . .



their wrist and when they reach their destination, they can remove the symbol from their wrist and match it to the signage or symbol by the door. You can also use different textures to identify landmarks. You can hang different textured scarves on the door handles and the students can match their scarf with the textured scarf on the door handle. She discussed a creative way to make a walking stick by adding dry popcorn to PVC pipe and glue the ends up. The child can hang onto one end and use their other hand to trail the walls or rail. With this walking stick, you can still support and guide the child. Gradually, one can let go of the stick. She even suggested letting the child use the stick to trail the wall. The hour and half session flew by and she left her audience wanting more!

The next AER International Conference will be in 2010 in Little Rock Arkansas and the AER members from there assured us that “They will, they will, ROCK us!

2008 International AER Conference-Chicago

July 22-27, 2008 By Mary Verlinde

I had the privilege this summer to attend the International AER Conference held in Chicago due, in part, to funding provided by the North Dakota Deaf-Blind Project. This conference was not only a valuable experience to me as a vision teacher to expand my training in the vision field, but also as a person, meeting other vision professionals from various parts of the country and beyond. Along with Marj Kaiser, superintendent of the South Dakota School for the Blind, I also had the honor to carry the flag during opening ceremonies and represent our Dakota AER chapter.

The conference offered a wide range of breakout sessions that covered many different aspects that applied to both vision teachers and vision rehabilitation counselors. Among some of the topics covered, that were of interest to myself and my colleagues, was a session on learning disabilities and vision, working with infants as well as preschoolers and implementing strategies to carry out concepts, networking with professionals who work with students with various visual conditions, and organizing and implementing an effective family network system. Many of these topics are currently being worked on at the North Dakota School for the Blind, but observing and learning about how they are being carried out by others helps in expanding our own programs.

Along with attending the conference, opportunities for sightseeing and shopping in Chicago were offered. I enjoyed a boat ride on Lake Michigan and indulged in tasting some of Chicago’s finest pizza at Gino’s East. Shopping along the Magnificent Mile was also an activity that I could not miss!

Again, I am grateful that I was able to experience this great conference and want to extend my thanks to the North Dakota Deaf-Blind Project in co-sponsoring my opportunity to attend.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE THROUGH THE Dual sensory LIBRARY

Making Evaluation Meaningful, Determining Additional Eligibilities and Appropriate Instructional Strategies for Blind and Visually Impaired Students

by Marnee Loftin, Texas School for the Blind & Visually Impaired



This book is intended to provide guidance to evaluation personnel, teachers of the visually impaired, and families in making the best possible decisions regarding student evaluation. Meaningful evaluation will depend on the knowledge and ability of staff to administer tests and interpret results. It is the author's hope that the information in this guide will help families and school staff develop and deliver more appropriate educational programs.

Beautiful Beginnings: A Developmental Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers

By Helen H. Raikes & Jane McCall Whitmer



This extensive curriculum- divided into six age ranges between birth and 3 years – takes a joyful, activity-based approach to enhancing the development of infants and toddlers. This research-supported program gives parents and professionals more than 350 activities that build on each child's natural strengths and interests, recognize and expand on emerging developments, and encourage progress in areas of concern. These activities may be photocopied.



EVALS-Evaluating Visually Impaired students Using Alternate Learning Standards Emphasizing the Expanded Core Curriculum

Compiled by teachers at Texas School for the Blind & Visually Impaired

The first two sections of this publication contain evaluations for the areas of the EXPANDED CORE CURRICULUM. The third section contains evaluations for ALTERNATE AND MODIFIED CORE CURRICULUM. The evaluations are to be used in determining areas of need and to assist in creating IEPs for students with visual impairment. In addition the Assessment & Ongoing Evaluations for Independent Living and TAPS (2nd edition) An Orientation & Mobility Curriculum for Students with Visual Impairments are available.



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Technical assistance request forms are located at
www.nd.gov/deafblind/
or call 1-800-421-1181

UPCOMING EVENTS

- ★ **Music Therapy In Motion**, Emily J. Wangen, MT-BC, Music Therapist-Board Certified is providing music therapy in the Fargo/Moorhead area. Music Therapy is an allied health profession which uses music to improve, increase, and maintain development, cognition, social skills, and sensory integration. She will also be providing Berard's Auditory Integration Training, AIT. For more information on Music Therapy and AIT, contact Emily at butterfly_eb@yahoo.com, or by phone 218-791-0908.
- ★ **Supporting Employment Outcomes in a Rural State**, December 3, 2008 (9:00 - 4:00 p.m.) , Comfort Inn, Bismarck, ND. Presenter-- Roger Shelley from the Rural Institute at the University of Montana. For more information mail, email, or call: Mary Mercer or Cheryl Rystedt, Minot State University/ NDCPD, Box 35, 500 University Avenue West, Minot, ND 58707, #1-800-233-1737 or fax #701-858-3483, mary.mercer@minotstateu.edu or cheryl.rystedt@minotstateu.edu
- ★ **2009 Pathfinder Parent Involvement Conference**, April 16-17, 2009, Best Western Doublewood Inn, Bismarck, ND. Presenters Michael and Eleanor Bailey from Washington, DC, and Rick Lavoie- well known for his videos, "How Difficult Can This Be?", "The F.A.T. City Workshop", "Last One Picked, First One Picked On", "When the Chips are Down", and "Motivation Breakthrough". For more information mail, email, or call: Pathfinder Services of ND, 1600 2nd Ave SW, Suite 30, Minot, ND 58701-3459, #701-837-7500 or #1-800-245-5840
- ★ **Family/Dakota AER/Vision Conference**, April 30 - May 1, 2009, Country Inn Suites, Fargo, ND (1:00 PM on Thursday to 4:00 PM on Friday). From 5:00 PM to 10:00 PM on Thursday the site will be South High School Theater, Fargo, for the Foundation Presentations, Social Time and special concert by Tom Sullivan. We have a confirmation from Dr. Jane Erin, University of Arizona, for a presentation on the ABC Braille Study for Friday, May 1, 2009.
- ★ **Families Connecting with Families**, July 17-19, 2009, Costa Mesa, California. For more information go to www.napvi.org, www.brailleinstitute.org , or www.juniorblind.org. An international conference covering all aspects of raising a child with a visual impairment.
- ★ **The 9th International CHARGE Syndrome Conference**, July 24-26, 2009, Hilton Chicago/Indian Lake Resorts, Bloomingdale, IL. For more information contact the CHARGE Syndrome Foundation, Inc. #573-499-4694 or 1-800-442-7604.



Summer Institute for Educators Washington State School for the Blind

Pamela Haus, Vision Assistant, NDVS/SB

This past summer I attended the "Summer Institute for Educators" at the Washington State School for the Blind. The Summer Institute for Educators was a week long training in the area of low vision/blindness that was held the last week in July and included 50 participants. The participants ranged from Occupational Therapists, Teacher Assistants, Administrators, Teachers and Psychologists. Some of the participants who are new to the field of blindness/low vision will be getting their first visually impaired student in the fall. They were looking at ways and ideas on how to teach these students. Others were looking for information and to gain knowledge in the field of blindness/low vision.

The Summer Institute consisted of a variety of areas from lectures, demonstrations, group sessions, Adult/Student panels, Social Skill, Adapted Physical Education to participating in Orientation & Mobility underneath the sleep shades. Topics covered in lectures were: Overview of Education of Students with Vision Impairments, Disorders of Vision, Social aspects of Vision Loss, and Educational Needs Overview.

Demonstrations in Daily Living Skill, Braille, Technology and Orientation & Mobility were given and participation was encouraged. On our second day they had every one go underneath the sleep shades and we all got on a bus and went to a restaurant, ordered our meals with the assistance of our waiter/waitress and ate our evening meals underneath the sleep shades. We were not allowed to take the sleep shades off until our bill had arrived. We also participated in a Vision Stimulation Room experience which included a number of things from threading a needle, to making a sandwich, to pouring water and writing your name just to name a few; all of these stations were done either under a sleep shade or vision stimulators.

We also broke out into strands that fit the age group that we work with and at these sessions we spoke of concerns that we may have with the students that we work with and we also discussed the topics of the lectures that were given each day. This was a very supportive group and it was nice to get the insight of the others in the group.

I enjoyed the training that I received while at the Summer Institute and learned more about blindness and vision loss. The overall training was exceptional and it was nice to see how Washington School for the Blind functions and hear from other professionals in the field of Vision Impairments.



Parent Resource Centers through NDSU Extension Service has many classes to offer on parenting and parenting issues.



Fargo: Angela Berge, Parenting Resources Coordinator, NDSU Extension Service/Cass County 1010 2nd Ave S, PO Box 2806, Fargo, ND 58108-2806; 701-241-5700 or angela.berge@ndsu.edu

Minot: Holly Arnold, Parent Resource Coordinator, 1020 N Broadway, Minot, ND 58703; 701-838-1812 or holly.arnold@ndsu.edu

Dickinson: West Dakota Parent & Family Resource Center, 701-456-0007

Williston: Deb Roel, Coordinator, 110 W Broadway Ste 202, Williston, ND 58801; 701-774-6335 or prc@nd.gov

Devils Lake: Patti Kerlin, Coordinator, Jigsaw Junction, 115 5th Ave NE, Devils Lake, ND 58301; 701-662-7529 or blomqu@stellarnet.com

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Jamestown/Valley City: Amy Tichy, Coordinator, 230 4th St NW #204, Valley City, ND 58072; 701-845-6652 or 701-845-8528; amy.j.techy@ndsu.edu

Bismarck/Mandan: Kathleen Schmaltz, NDSU Extension Agent, Human Dev & Family Science/Parenting Resources Coordinator, 210 2nd Ave NW, Mandan, ND 58854; 701-667-3342 or kathleen.schmaltz@ndsu.edu

COMMUNICATING PARTNERS WORKSHOP

By Sherri Nelson, Project Coordinator

I attended this workshop sponsored by the Anne Carlsen Center in Grand Forks on September 23 & 24, 2008. Dr. James MacDonald from Ohio State University presented on building social and communicative lives with late-talking children. Dr. MacDonald has spent over 30 years investigating how people with developmental and emotional disabilities socialize and communicate.

One of the most helpful resources that he shared was his ARM program (Adult-Child Relationship Map). The ARM is the central tool of the Communicating Partners program for parents and professionals to help children socialize and communicate more effectively. The ARM measures a child's current strengths and changes over time, identifies the child's next developmental steps, and provides adults with guides for interacting in ways that will increase the child's communication. He shared the five stages of communication development: Interactive life, Nonverbal Communicative life, Social Language life, Conversation life, and Civil and Emotional life. In addition, five strategies were discussed: Sensitive Responding, Balancing, Matching, Sharing Control, and Being Emotionally Playful.

The ARM is based upon 30 years of research with over 1000 children, parents, and educators. The ARM is explored in the book *Communicate with your Child (2002)* and *Communicating Partners (2004)*. For further information visit the website: www.jamesdmacdonald.org

Through his videos and lecture, he stated the critical importance of "silent waiting". Other points of importance that I took away from the workshop:

- *People learn by being social first!
- *Assume your child's communication has a lot to do with your communication style.
- *Waiting is the hardest thing you can do!
- *Imitation is a sign that you have entered the child's world.
- *Stop asking so many questions!
- *Ignoring is a very effective tool!
- *Turn-taking is a life long effective tool in good relationships!
- *Talk about what the child CAN DO, and what is the NEXT STEP, not what they CAN'T do!
- *You must learn your child's language before they learn YOURS.
- *Children do MORE when partners do LESS!
- *There's always a reason for the behavior.
- *Act like your child + 1

I particularly enjoyed his TIPPING POINTS TO TALKING:

- Play in the child's world and act as the child does
- Imitate the child's actions/sounds/signs
- Play turn-taking games
- Wait silently for the child to participate
- Focus on personal vocabulary (experiences) NOT academic vocabulary
- Keep the child interacting a little longer
- Allow the child to lead as much as you do—Share Control
- Respond more to "desired" than "undesired" behaviors
- Reduce your questions and comment instead
- Believe that children learn more from play than directives
- Believe in your child and find his/her current learning path and join it interactively

His new book *Play to Talk* looks like a valuable resource to any library!

DESCRIBED AND CAPTIONED MEDIA PROGRAM

Just wanted to share the information about the wonderful services available through the Described and Captioned Media Program (DCMP) through Spartanburg, South Carolina. The mission of DCMP is to ensure that all students who are blind, visually impaired, deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf-blind have the opportunity to achieve the standards of academic excellence. DCMP provides a clearinghouse of information and research about accessible media, lesson plans and teaching materials, and is a gateway to accessibility information from the web sites of DCMP collaborators. They provide free-loan education media that is described, captioned, and available on the Internet, and through the US mail. DCMP will provide services to agencies, businesses, and schools including guidelines for describing and captioning educational media, and evaluation of description and captioning agencies upon request.

When they refer to the description this includes providing additional narration to make media accessible for students who are blind or visually impaired, adding new narration during natural pauses in the spoken dialogue, or describing visuals (pictures, charts, graphs, etc.), actions, and settings not explained in the narration. Captioning refers to providing the text (captions) of the audio to make accessible for students who are deaf or hard of hearing, displaying captions at approximately the same time narration is spoken, and identifying the speaker and captions the narration, dialogue, music, and other sound effects. Their philosophy is that Description + Caption = Access.

This agency serves K-12 school personnel, students, families, media producers, describers, interpreters, captioning agencies, and others. The DCMP is your resource for learning why and how to make media accessible, locating captioned and described educational media, and borrowing free-loan accessible educational media (for members only).

If you are interested in learning more about this program call #1-800-237-6213 (voice), 1-800-237-6819 (TTY) or 1-800-538-5636 (Fax) or visit their website at www.dcmp.org or email them at info@dcmb.org. Funding for this program is provided by the US Dept. of Education and is administered by the National Association of the Deaf (www.nad.org).

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Envision Conference

By Ken Dockter

Envision conference, a multi-disciplinary low vision rehabilitation and research conference, was held in September, 2008, in San Antonio, Texas. I was able to attend the conference and learn many new things that are happening in low vision and blindness. There were many different topics such as managing geriatric low vision patients and evaluation/management of the pediatric patient with vision impairment. With these two sessions happening on the first day of the conference, I knew that there would be something for everyone at this conference.

One of the first sessions I went to was “Managing Geriatric low vision patients: Myths, Misconceptions, and Low Vision Rehabilitations for Success”, presented by Dr. Gregory Goodrich, Ph.D. of Vision Research. This session was very educational. He talked about the statements, “if we see better, we hear better” and “if we hear better, we see better” which are true, particularly with adults with hearing loss and/or vision loss. When one of these senses starts to decrease, the other sense will as well. In addition, the quality of life changes in the following areas: family, health, and/or socialization. A person can become depressed and need more energy for everyday tasks, therefore needing more individual training.

When giving adults training, we need to try and meet them at their level. We need to remember this might be a new sensory loss for the person to accept. As instructors, there are many different situations and different styles of people that we will work with. As our comfort level grows, we will take more time teaching them the skills they need to regain their independence.

Another presentation I went to asked the question, “Who should eye doctors refer to vision rehabilitation services?” The answer was given: “Anyone that the eye doctor cannot help or fix.” If the person is still complaining about their vision, after the eye doctor has done all that he can do, they should be referred for vision rehabilitation services. Acuity does not mean that much, it is how they are functioning with the vision they have, that is important. I would tend to agree with this, and there are many adaptations that vision rehabilitation services can teach a person, that will make their life easier.

I found the Envision Conference very educational and informative on a variety of topics in the areas of low vision and blindness.

We are on the web!
www.nd.gov/deafblind/

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