

INSIDE *inclusion*

The Council for Inclusive Education Newsletter

Volume 1, Number 1 | March 2016

Setting the Standards for Inclusive Education in Alberta

Alberta's *Standards for Special Education* were last updated in June 2004, and the education system has seen many changes since the Setting the Direction consultation process and the publication of the framework in 2009. Since then, teachers have been reporting that the supports needed to create a truly inclusive system are largely missing in classrooms.

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Calm, Alert and Happy

Just about everywhere you turn these days, you come across someone talking about the importance of enhancing children's ability to self-regulate. What isn't quite so clear, however, is what exactly self-regulation is, and what sorts of things parents, caregivers and early childhood educators can do to enhance a child's ability to self-regulate.

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CIE 2015 Conference

The Council for Inclusive Education hosted its annual Celebrating the Challenges conference on October 15–17, 2015.

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THE INCLUSIVE EDUCATOR JOURNAL IS SEEKING NEW SUBMISSIONS

The Inclusive Educator Journal is the official journal of the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) Council for Inclusive Education. Our goals are to promote professional development for those working in inclusive learning environments and to provide readers with exemplars of promising practices in inclusive education.

AUDIENCE

Practising classroom teachers, administrators and other professionals involved in inclusive education.

GUIDELINES

We welcome articles related to inclusive education practice from all educators

- articles describing promising or innovative practices in the field of inclusion, including implications for the implementation of those practices in classrooms or schools;
- research articles;
- reviews of books and technological applications, and evaluations of inclusive programs or materials;
- literature reviews; and
- articles discussing trends or issues related to inclusive practice.

EVALUATION

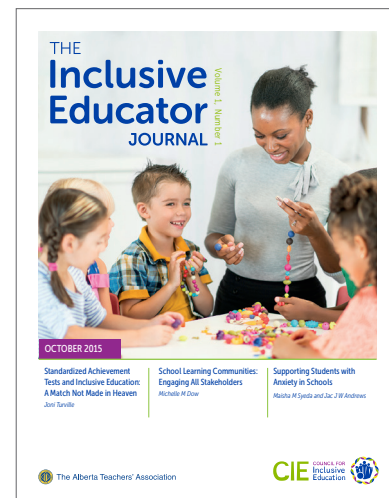
All articles will be peer reviewed in a double-blind process and evaluated according to the following criteria

- importance to the journal;
- quality of the work;
- clarity of the writing.

After reading and evaluating the article and the reviews, the editors will e-mail the author with the decision.

INQUIRIES

Please contact the editors Nancy Grigg at nancy.grigg@uleth.ca and Kelly Huck at kellyhuck@shaw.ca for more information. Submission deadline is March 31, 2016.



DEADLINE MARCH 31, 2016

The Inclusive Educator Journal
Submissions



The Alberta
Teachers' Association

CIE COUNCIL FOR
Inclusive
Education



cieducation.ca

INSIDE *inclusion*

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President's Message



It seems to me that the beginning of a new year is an appropriate time to reflect on the last year.

The Council for Inclusive Education embarked on many new activities last year, beginning with changing our council's name (from the Special Education Council). In March, the executive went on a retreat for two days of strategic planning to rebrand the council and reconsider its purpose. Through a lot of hard work over those two days, we developed a plan with short-term and long-term goals—including launching a peer-reviewed journal; alternating our annual conference between the north and the south; updating our website; updating our 2007 resource *BOATS: Behaviour, Observation, Assessment, Teaching, Strategies*; and providing responsive regional activities. Some of those goals we are still working toward, and some have already been achieved.

The inaugural issue of *The Inclusive Educator Journal* was mailed out to members in the fall. The articles are informative and valuable to all teachers as we strive daily to develop our professional practice.

Last fall also saw our annual conference, which was held at the Fantasyland Hotel in Edmonton. This location better served many of our northern members. The 2016 conference will be held in Kananaskis again, and we plan to continue alternating between northern and southern locations.

Currently, we are constructing a new website with a new URL that will match our council's new name. The website will debut this spring.

I am excited about the updates to the *BOATS* resource. Many of you are familiar with this resource and continue to find it valuable to your practice. The updated resource will be available to members this fall.

Finally, the executive continues to work with our regional councils to support them in their work. Your regional strives to be responsive to your needs, and we welcome your input as to how we can better support you in your practice.

Hayley Christen

Editor's Message



Our council has seen many changes over the past year, including a new name and a brand new journal. *The Inclusive Educator Journal* was published in the fall and included informative articles from graduate students and professors in the field of inclusive education. Our annual conference was also very successful. Held in October in Edmonton, the conference was well attended and offered a variety of sessions.

This year, we have renamed our newsletter from *The Special Educator* to *Inside Inclusion*. This name reflects some of the changes we have made to the newsletter. We want to showcase the fabulous professional development happening in our regional councils across the province, as well as present inclusion strategies. Inclusion is happening everywhere in our schools across the province. We encourage all educators to submit inclusion strategies or comments about inclusion. Please share your ideas with each other.

In this issue of *Inside Inclusion*, you will find highlights from our Celebrating the Challenges conference, including information about the sessions presented by Stuart Shanker and Karen Erickson. Read

on to find out what is happening in our regional councils across the province. The section on inclusion strategies offers a variety of suggestions for educators to use in their classrooms.

We have included a call for submissions for the 2016 issue of *The Inclusive Educator Journal*. The call contains important information for prospective authors who would like to contribute an article to the journal. The deadline for submissions has been extended to the end of March. Guidelines for article submissions are included, but if you want more details, please e-mail me (kellyhuck@shaw.ca) or my coeditor Nancy Grigg (nancy.grigg@uleth.ca). To ensure the quality of articles in the journal, we use a double-blind peer review process. This means that several experts in the field of education will review each article before it is published in the journal. To ensure objectivity, both the reviewers' and the authors' identities are concealed throughout the review process. We encourage you to consider submitting an article and to share the call for submissions with your colleagues.

Enjoy the rest of the school year! If you would like to submit a suggestion, an inclusion strategy or an article, please e-mail me at kellyhuck@shaw.ca.

Kelly Huck

Setting the Standards for Inclusive Education in Alberta



Alberta's *Standards for Special Education* (Alberta Learning 2004) were last updated in June 2004, and the education system has seen many changes since the Setting the Direction consultation process and the publication of the framework in 2009 (Alberta Education 2009). Since then, teachers have been reporting that the supports

needed to create a truly inclusive system are largely missing in classrooms. To address these and other concerns, the ATA's Provincial Executive Council struck the Blue Ribbon Panel on Inclusive Education in Alberta Schools, which studied the current state of the system and provided 38 recommendations for making inclusion work for all students (ATA 2014). The report emphasized the need to update the standards.

Ministry officials indicated in the fall of 2015 that the standards were being reviewed and revised. To create an opportunity for teachers to explore the current standards and provide recommendations for revisions, a curriculum circle was convened on November 20 at Barnett House, with teachers representing school jurisdictions from around the province. Participants discussed pertinent documents, including Alberta Education's (2010) *Setting the Direction Framework: Government of Alberta Response* and the ATA's (2015) *Renewing Alberta's Promise: A Great School for All*. They reviewed the current standards, as well as related standards documents from other provinces and countries.

Participants engaged in discussions following a focused conversation process:

- Objective/descriptive—What do you see?
- Reflective—What are your reactions to what you see?
- Interpretive—What is the meaning and significance?
- Decisional—What are the next steps and potential actions?

Participants noted that, with the definition of *inclusion* being so broad, coming up with standards becomes increasingly difficult. However, they felt that it was still critically important to have standards with sufficient specificity to ensure a baseline of supports and services for students with diverse needs.

Data gathered during the curriculum circle will be used during consultation meetings in which the standards will be reviewed, as well as for continued advocacy.

Hayley Christen, president of the Council for Inclusive Education, said,

The curriculum circle was valuable and timely. It is imperative that Alberta Education provide updates to this document that has become dated in language, terms and practice. As a teacher, I appreciate the opportunity to provide my input into recommendations that, hopefully, will be considered by Alberta Education as they update this document to reflect and guide the practice of schools and school districts in our province. As we move forward, Alberta can continue to be seen as a leader in education and in inclusive education, and this will have a huge impact on the service we provide for our students and, most important, the success of all our students.

References

- Alberta Education. 2009. *Setting the Direction Framework*. Edmonton, Alta: Alberta Education.
- . 2010. *Setting the Direction Framework: Government of Alberta Response*. Edmonton, Alta: Alberta Education.
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- . 2015. *Renewing Alberta's Promise: A Great School for All*. Edmonton, Alta: ATA.

Joni Turville
ATA Staff Advisor



Conference 2015 Highlights

The Council for Inclusive Education hosted its annual Celebrating the Challenges conference at the Fantasyland Hotel, in Edmonton, on October 15–17, 2015.

Karen Erickson, director of the Center for Literacy and Disability Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Medicine, drew a crowd of 250 delegates for her preconference session “Literacy for Students with Significant Disabilities.” Stuart Shanker, Distinguished Research Professor of Psychology and Philosophy at York University and creator of The MEHRIT Centre, presented to 500 delegates for his opening keynote “Self-Regulation: Enhancing the Capacity to Learn.”

Delegates were treated to a variety of fabulous breakout sessions and displays and had opportunities

for collaboration, conversation and engagement over meals. On Friday evening, delegates came together for a gallery walk featuring artwork from the Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts, Chrysalis and Brick Art by Aaron, and were entertained with two performances by players from CRIPSiE (Collaborative Radically Integrated Performers Society in Edmonton) and songs performed by two young ladies from Choral Morphosis.

The council’s new logo was unveiled on great swag bags given to the 500 delegates in attendance.

Many thanks to the dedicated and amazing conference committee for their hard work in hosting a successful conference. We look forward to Conference 2016 in Kananaskis, and we’ll see you back in Edmonton in 2017!

Calm, Alert, Happy: Journey to Self-Regulation for Children

Recent research tells us that one key to student success is self-regulation—the ability to monitor and modify one’s emotions, to focus or shift one’s attention, to control one’s impulses, to tolerate frustration and to delay gratification. But can a child’s ability to self-regulate be improved?

Stuart Shanker was a keynote speaker at Celebrating the Challenges, and he spoke on self-regulation. To learn more about his work, visit www.self-reg.ca.

Shanker is a Distinguished Research Professor of Philosophy and Psychology at York University. He is currently serving as director of the university’s Milton and Ethel Harris Research Initiative (MEHRI), a privately funded initiative whose goal is to build on new knowledge of the brain’s development and help set children (including those with developmental disorders) on the path toward emotional and intellectual health. He was recently appointed director of EPIC, an international initiative created to promote the educational potential in children by enhancing their self-regulation. He has also served as director of the Council of Human Development and director of the Canada–Cuba Research Alliance, and he was the first president of the Council of Early Child Development in Canada.

His article “Calm, Alert and Happy” appears in this issue of *Inside Inclusion*.

Darci Fulton
Behaviour Mental Health Specialist
Calgary Board of Education

Literacy for Students with Significant Disabilities

Karen Erickson was the preconference speaker at Celebrating the Challenges. She is the director and Yoder Distinguished Professor at the Center for Literacy and Disability Studies at the UNC School of Medicine in North Carolina, and coauthor (with David Koppenhaver) of *Children with Disabilities: Reading and Writing the Four-Blocks Way* (Four Blocks, 2007). She also created the MEville to WEville early literacy and communication curriculum and the Start-to-Finish Literacy Starters. These programs are designed to teach literacy skills,

concepts of print and vocabulary skills in the context of real-world experiences to students with significant disabilities. You can find more information about these series on the Center for Literacy and Disability Studies website (www.med.unc.edu/ahs/clds/).

Erickson’s preconference session offered participants an instructional framework and practical approaches for addressing the literacy learning needs of students with significant disabilities. Participants also learned some amazing tips and techniques for teaching reading and writing and vocabulary skills to these students. Her presentation focused on comprehensive instruction strategies for emergent and conventional readers and writers. Much of the material presented can be found at www.med.unc.edu/ahs/clds/files/.

Erickson shared with participants her Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) Professional Development website (<http://dlmpd.com/>), as many of the strategies she discussed can be found there. The website offers educators the opportunity to learn about various learning strategies and techniques for students with significant disabilities in the areas of English language arts and math. Interactive modules are available in two formats: online self-directed learning and facilitated materials to be presented to groups.

Erickson broke down the big picture ideas from her preconference session in three other sessions during the conference.

Her session “Text Comprehension: Teaching Students to Understand While Reading and Listening” took participants through an anchor–read–apply framework and a directed reading–thinking activity. These modules can be found on the DLM Professional Development website.

Her second session, “Writing: Getting Started with Students with Significant Disabilities,” focused on the barriers students face throughout the writing process and strategies for modelling the writing process, as well as the use of alternative pencils. Alternative pencils have been designed for students who are unable to hold traditional pencils. Examples of these can be found on the DLM Professional Development website.

A third session, “AAC: Core Vocabulary as an Approach to Early Communication,” showed participants how to create a core vocabulary system for students with the DLM Core Vocabulary, which comprises words and symbols for augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) users. This session also focused on ways to teach and implement core vocabulary. You can learn more

about beginning communication and the DLM Core Vocabulary through the DLM Professional Development modules or at www.med.unc.edu/ahs/clds/files/.

Karen Erickson's sessions were thorough, full of fabulous ideas and well executed. She has an amazing passion for teaching students with significant disabilities. Best of all, the materials she recommended for implementing a well-rounded literacy program can all be found at the websites provided.

Kelly Huck
Inside Inclusion Editor

Six Powerful Principles for Teaching All Learners: Universal Design for Learning and Differentiated Instruction

Donna McGhie-Richmond and Sally Brenton-Haden, from the University of Victoria, presented the half-day session "Six Powerful Principles for Teaching All Learners: Universal Design for Learning and Differentiated Instruction."

McGhie-Richmond is an associate professor in the Department of Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies. Brenton-Haden is an adjunct assistant professor in that department and coordinator of the university's programs for a professional specialization certificate in special education and a diploma in special education, offered part-time or online. These programs are designed for working professionals. For more information, go to www.uvic.ca/epl/.

The session covered the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and differentiated instruction (DI) and how to apply those principles to instruction. The presenters took participants through examples of applying the principles to a variety of lessons in multiple subjects. Participants also designed lesson examples of their own.

The presenters compiled the following list of websites, readings and examples to help educators learn more about UDL and DI.

Universal Design for Learning

Websites

Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST)
www.cast.org

National Center on Universal Design for Learning
www.udlcenter.org/aboutudl/
www.udlcenter.org/implementation/examples/

Readings

"The Future Is in the Margins," by David H Rose and Anne Meyer
www.udlcenter.org/resource_library/articles/margins/

"Universal Design for Learning," by David H Rose and Jenna W Gravel
www.udlcenter.org/resource_library/articles/udl/

Videos

UDL Principles and Practices Series
www.udlcenter.org/resource_library/videos/udlcenter/guidelines/

Rachel Campbell, Middle School Language Arts Teacher
<http://udltheorypractice.cast.org/video;jsessionid=1DDB4AA3E0E64643B8987DE7ACA82E76?0&chapter=4&id=o6>

Differentiated Instruction

Website

Differentiation Central
<http://differentiationcentral.com>

This site from the University of Virginia (home of Carol Ann Tomlinson) is your go-to place for reliable information and resources on differentiated instruction.

Reading

How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed-Ability Classrooms, 2nd Edition, by Carol Ann Tomlinson (ASCD, 2001)

Videos

Differentiation in the Classroom: Sixth Grade Math Problems
www.youtube.com/watch?v=kBhQu_-trE&feature=related

Questioning Styles and Strategies

www.youtube.com/watch?v=5uKqs3D0Z0M

Applied Differentiation: Making It Work in the Classroom

www.youtube.com/watch?v=THQRIs3_HMk&feature=related

Differentiating Instruction to Meet the Needs of All Students

www.youtube.com/watch?v=wdGknb9zbEU&feature=related
Intermediate level

Applied Differentiation: Making It Work in the Classroom

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nkqph0s1sp4&feature=related
Predicting in reading

Differentiated Instruction at Maize Central Elementary

www.youtube.com/watch?v=75kt4iDSP3w&feature=related

Applied Differentiation: Making It Work in the Classroom

www.youtube.com/watch?v=axwGhfLN1Oo&feature=related
Differentiation in a high school skills class

Comparing UDL and DI

Compare/Contrast: UDL and DI

<https://mpassa1.wordpress.com/2012/02/13/comparecontrast-udl-di/>

UDL and Differentiation

<http://universal-design-for-learning.wikispaces.com/UDL+%26+Differentiation>

Universal Design for Learning and Differentiated Instruction: Compatible Approaches

http://donjohnston.com/udl/#VLk-jCgx_zI

BOOK A PD WORKSHOP TODAY!



**Creating Positive Classrooms
and Schools Series**



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FNMI Success Series**



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comprehensive plan or as a series.**

To book a workshop, please contact
Debra Augustyn, Professional Development,
telephone 1-800-232-7208 (toll free in Alberta) or
780-447-9485 (Edmonton area) or e-mail debra.augustyn@ata.ab.ca.

Please book at least six weeks in advance. The Alberta Teachers' Association charges a nominal inclusive fee of \$100 plus GST for each session.

For a complete listing and descriptions, please visit the Alberta Teachers' Association website.



The Alberta
Teachers' Association

www.teachers.ab.ca



Regional Updates

Calgary

The Calgary Regional held its first workshop on November 7, with Wayne Hammond. Hammond is the president and executive director of Resiliency Initiatives (www.resil.ca). The workshop provided an overview of the Resiliency Model and frameworks used to assess resiliency, build capacity and shift paradigms toward a strengths-based culture. Hammond discussed how adopting a strengths-based perspective and practice produces positive changes in how students think and feel about themselves.

Following the workshop, we held a general meeting to get feedback from members about upcoming workshops and areas of interest. The information gathered was helpful for planning upcoming workshops and guiding our Share and Learn evenings, where members and nonmembers can come together to share strategies and resources. Our first Share and Learn was held January 27. We are looking forward to more evenings like this, where members can network in a relaxed environment.

Our second workshop of the school year is being planned for February and will be geared toward Zones of Regulation. Information has been difficult to disseminate because of antispam legislation; we are doing our best to make sure that information about upcoming workshops and events is delivered in a timely manner. Please continue to check the Regionals section of the council's website (www.specialeducation.ab.ca/regionals/) and feel free to contact us any time.

Michelle Dow

Canadian Rockies

To start our year off with a bang, the Canadian Rockies Regional conducted a survey to narrow in on the professional development wants and needs of our educators.

According to the results, the number one topic of interest in our region is anxiety. In response, in January

we hosted a workshop on addressing anxiety in the classroom, featuring Karen MacMillan, co-executive director, Community Services, Foothills Academy Society.

The topic of differentiation came in a close second. In its Inclusive Classroom and School Series, the ATA offers a number of workshops related to differentiation, including the following:

- Addressing Learning Disabilities in the Inclusive Classroom
- Differentiated Instruction to Address Student Learning Styles
- Here Comes Everyone—Teaching in the Culturally Diverse Classroom (English/French)
- Universal Design for Learning—Supporting Diverse Learning Needs

For more information, go to www.teachers.ab.ca and click on Workshops and Presentations (under For Members). Dates for the workshops will be set in late April. Keep an eye on our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/ATAInclusiveEdCouncil/) for updates on workshops near you.

The survey also indicated that reading comprehension strategies is a topic of interest, followed by self-regulation and then by boys and learning. These topics will be pursued this year and next.

If you are interested in joining our executive to help plan PD events in our region, our next meeting will be held on March 24. Our annual general meeting will be held May 26 from noon to 1 PM at the Summit Cafe in Canmore. For more information, please e-mail me at myka_breymann@yahoo.ca.

The Canadian Rockies Regional welcomes three new members:

- Leslie Kestle, learning support teacher, Canmore Collegiate High School
- Dave Purcell, learning support teacher, Lawrence Grassi Middle School
- Laura McCully, humanities teacher, Banff Community High School

Our current executive is as follows:

- President—Myka Breymann, learning support teacher, Banff Community High School
- Secretary—Janis Bekar, learning support teacher, Elizabeth Rummel School
- Treasurer—Mike Shoemaker, learning support teacher, Canmore Collegiate High School

Myka Breymann

Anxiety Workshop

On January 12, Karen MacMillan, co-executive director of Community Services at the Foothills Academy Society, presented to the Canadian Rockies Regional on how to address anxiety in schools and at home. She uncovered key understandings related to the definitions of *anxiety*, the prevalence of anxiety among youth and adolescents, and the common signs a person with an anxiety disorder might exhibit. She also discussed connections between other diagnoses, including ADHD and learning disabilities.

MacMillan highlighted the importance of comprehensive assessments that help tease out student needs and the consequences of not identifying students with anxiety challenges. These consequences include an increased likelihood of dropping out of school, lower grades, an increased risk of depression, and an increased risk of future substance abuse and mental health disorders.

Practical strategies that educators and families can use to help students cope with anxiety include the following:

- Adopting general relaxation strategies, such as breathing, progressive relaxation, movement and mindfulness exercises
- Modelling positive self-talk that helps students overcome fears and become more persistent
- Encouraging critical-thinking skills by focusing on effort rather than intelligence or success and by helping students ask questions about the overall importance of the issues they are struggling with
- Changing the conversation through strategies such as redirection and the use of humour to help students move on from difficult thoughts

- Combatting the tendency to catastrophize the future, by helping students set up realistic goals, checking in with students after challenging events and celebrating students' successes
- Creating a plan that includes consistent implementation of coping strategies at school
- Working together to ensure that messages and strategies are consistent between the home and the school
- Collaborating with mental health professionals

MacMillan shared resources that educators and parents can use for support, including AnxietyBC (www.anxietybc.com), WorryWiseKids.org (www.worrywisekids.org) and a fact sheet on anxiety disorders in the classroom (www.schoolmentalhealth.org/Resources/Educ/MACMH/Anxiety.pdf).

Mike Shoemaker

Central

In November, the Central Regional hosted a behaviour workshop on the council's *BOATS* resource (available at www.specialeducation.ab.ca/library/). The workshop was led by Darci Fulton, a behaviour specialist from the Calgary Board of Education. The 35 participants all received a copy of *BOATS* and supper.

On February 25, we hosted another behaviour session, "To Behave or Not to Behave." The session was again led by Darci Fulton, along with Myka Breymann from Canadian Rockies Public Schools.

In May, we will hold our annual general meeting, including a book study of *The Zones of Regulation*, by Leah Kuypers (Think Social Publishing, 2011).

We have a great regional, and we always welcome new members and new ideas for PD. Please contact me at judy.windrim@rdpsd.ab.ca for more information.

Judy Windrim

South East

We are well into another exciting school year in the South East Regional. We held our first executive meeting in December to get organized for the year. We

established our PD goals for the year, and we are looking forward to working with our members.

On February 18, we hosted a session on inclusion policy at the Southeastern Alberta Teachers' Convention. This was an opportunity to dialogue with colleagues about inclusion. This spring, we will continue our Speaker Series with a session in March on self-regulation and the brain highways. We have plans in the works for an April session, as well. Stay tuned!

Meeting dates and locations, as well as PD opportunities, will be posted at www.specialeducation.ab.ca/regionals/. Members are welcome to come to meetings to catch up on what is happening around the province, to get involved in organizing PD events and to share suggestions with the council.

Thank you to all the members who agreed to take on executive positions:

- President—Joanne Stockman
- Secretary—Lisa Bosch
- Treasurer—Kerri Watson
- Professional development rep—Lydia Carrier
- School district reps—Connie Guenther (Medicine Hat School District), Terri Ball (Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education) and Kerry Watson (Prairie Rose School Division)

Joanne Stockman

New from the ATA Library

BOOKS

Handbook of Reading Disability Research

Anne McGill-Franzen and Richard L Allington, editors
Routledge, 2011
371.9144 A437

Developing the ability to read is a long-term process, and interventions to support learners may be required at any stage along the way. The essays in this collection are written by leading reading scholars and provide an array of reading solutions for teachers.

The ADHD Book of Lists: A Practical Guide for Helping Children and Teens with Attention Deficit Disorders, Second Edition

Sandra F Rief
Jossey-Bass, 2015
371.93 R553

Sandra Rief provides a detailed description of the processes of diagnosis through to intervention and discusses the latest behaviour-management techniques and medications for managing ADHD.

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University Programs

Athabasca University

Athabasca University offers a diploma program in inclusive education, in an online environment for certificated teachers. More information can be found at <http://psychology.athabascau.ca/programs/inclusive/>.

University of Alberta

The University of Alberta offers a master's program in special education through the Department of Educational Psychology. For more information, go to www.edpsychology.ualberta.ca/GraduatePrograms/SpecialEducation/MEd%20Program.aspx.

University of Calgary

The Werklund School of Education, University of Calgary, offers a range of blended and fully online graduate programs to meet the learning needs and interests of all students.

Designed for working professionals, the master's programs engage learners in current issues in education and action-oriented research on innovative solutions. You can choose from a diverse range of specialized topics and have the option to complete your master's degree within two years (MEd specialist) or at your own pace, one year at a time (MEd interdisciplinary).

For more information about the MEd specialist program, go to <http://werklund.ucalgary.ca/gpe/specialist-med/>. Applications are due **February 1** of each year. Areas of concentration include literacy across contexts, leading for learning, design-based learning and teaching English as an additional language.

For more information about the MEd interdisciplinary program, go to <http://werklund.ucalgary.ca/gpe/med-interdisciplinary/>. Applications are due **March 15** of each year. The 24 areas of concentration include universal learning environments, assessment and measurement, promoting resiliency in children with ADHD, and supporting and enhancing children's mental health.

University of Lethbridge

For more than 25 years, graduates from the graduate studies program in the University of Lethbridge's Faculty of Education have enhanced their professional practice, made advancements in their careers and shaped their communities. The University of Lethbridge invites you to explore your greatest potential, create professional foundations and build exceptional knowledge at the master's level.

The master of education program in inclusive education and neuroscience offers the best of the Faculty of Education's nationally respected programming, along with the cutting-edge research that has brought the university's Canadian Centre for Behavioural Neuroscience (CCBN) to a position of leadership in North America. The program reflects the most current research on best practice for today's diverse inclusive classrooms. This program is intended for all teachers, whether they have taught in special education or general education settings. Also welcome are those who currently hold administrative or leadership positions, as well as those who aspire to such roles.

The program is delivered in a cohort format, with participants progressing through a sequence of courses as a group. Courses will be held over a three-year period, using a blended-delivery model. Courses offered in July will be taught on campus. During the school year, students will complete one online course in the fall (September–December) and one in the spring (January–April).

The next cohort begins July 2017. The application deadline is **December 1, 2016**.

For more information, visit <http://edgradstudies.ca>.

Inclusion Strategies

Learning Boxes

Create 8–10 boxes, each containing one or two activities. Use these boxes during learning times. Alternate 10 minutes on task and 10 minutes break time (or 5 and 5, if needed). Students should be included in all activities they can do with the whole class, to maintain a sense of community and build self-esteem.

FINE MOTOR BOX

- Use tweezers or tongs to pick up pompoms and put them in a cup.
- Use a clothespin to pick up small pieces of paper.
- Play with playdough. In the playdough area, keep rolling pins, plastic knives, cookie cutters, scissors and hand brooms (for cleanup). For playdough activities, go to <http://prekinders.com/play-dough-ideas/>.
- Play with Lego pieces of various sizes.
- Use a spray bottle to water plants.
- Put beads on pipe cleaners.
- Use a spoon to transfer marbles into a pop bottle.
- Stick golf tees into Styrofoam and balance marbles on top.
- Squeeze stress balls.
- Do up the buttons on an old shirt.
- Thread and tie the laces on an old shoe.
- Rip paper and glue it together.
- Cut thick lines and shapes.
- Sort buttons, beans and other small items into an egg carton.
- Tear a newspaper into strips and crunch the strips into balls to use for stuffing something.
- Pick out small objects (such as pegs, beads or coins) from a tray filled with salt, sand, rice or putty. Try it with eyes closed, too. This helps develop sensory awareness in the hands.
- Draw in a tactile medium, such as wet sand, salt, rice or “goop.” Make goop by adding water to cornstarch until the mixture is the consistency of toothpaste. The drag of this mixture provides feedback to the muscle and joint receptors, thus facilitating visual motor control.
- Attach a large piece of drawing paper to the wall. Try the following exercises to develop visual motor skills. Using a large marker, make an outline of a figure. Have the child trace over your line from left to right, or from top to bottom. Trace each figure at least 10 times. Then, have the child draw the figure next to your model several times.
- Turn a Magna Doodle upside down so that the erasing lever is at the top. Experiment with making vertical, horizontal and parallel lines.
- Push coins into money boxes. All kids love feeling rich! Encourage them to pick up one coin at a time and put it in the box. Then, let them hold a few coins and put them through one by one, without letting the others fall.
- Play the game Operation.
- Play Feed the Shark. Students lie on their bellies, crumple up scrap paper and toss the paper into a shark’s mouth. (The shark is a trash can with shark’s teeth around the top edge.)
- Use Wikki Stix for letter and numeral formation.
- Use sand trays for letter and numeral formation.
- Wrap several rubber bands around small dinosaur or animal figures. Students then use thumb and index finger to release one band at a time.
- Play with flippy frogs by flipping them into a makeshift pond (kind of like tiddlywinks).
- Play Crows in the Corn. Students use tweezers to get crows (black beans) out of the corn (popcorn kernels).
- Squeeze clothespins and clip them to the sides of a box. To make the activity more interesting, write letters on dot stickers and place the stickers on the sides of the box. Write those same letters on the

clothespins, and then have children match the clothespins to the letters on the boxes. Colours, numbers or beginning sounds can also be used.

- Punch holes in a sheet of construction paper and lace yarn through the holes.
- Other items and activities: nuts and bolts, eyedroppers, mazes, tracing.

LITERACY BOX

- Create an alphabet using sand, stickers, pompoms, feathers and so on. Each letter gets a texture.
- Explore easy-to-read books on topics being covered in class.
- Play alphabet puzzles and matching.
- Match upper- and lower-case letters.
- Do sight word work. Try playing Sight Word Jenga. Write sight words on Jenga pieces. As each piece is pulled out of the tower, read the word.
- Use glue to draw letters on small cards. Sprinkle coloured sand or glitter on the letters.
- Read digital books.
- Look at book flix (interactive fiction and nonfiction books).
- Make explosion books. For an example, see www.cutoutandkeep.net/projects/making-an-explosion-book-2/.
- Create a book. See <http://kidsactivitiesblog.com/lego-education-book/>.
- Use Lego for sight words. See www.filthwizardry.com/2010/07/diy-spinny-spellers-and-repurposing.html.
- Play the Candy Land board game, using an upper- or a lower-case letter on each square.
- Write or trace letters.
- Play name matching. Write a name on a piece of paper. Put the letters on clothespins and match them. Try it with upper- and lower-case letters, too.
- Roll playdough over large letters of the alphabet.

MATH BOX

- Do addition and subtraction activities. See www.k-5mathteachingresources.com/addition-and-subtraction-centers.html.

- Do number activities. See <http://jmathpage.com/topics/jmpheadnumber.html>.
- Use number bracelets. See <http://kindergartendoodles.blogspot.ca/2012/05/building-number-sense.html>.
- Use 10 frames.
- Use a 100 chart.
- Match dots to numbers.
- Sort different attributes (shape, colour and so on).
- Cut pictures out of catalogues and use a calculator to add up the cost of the items.
- Play dice games. See www.sparklebox.co.uk/6041-6050/sb6050.html#UHzMCMBgMZ4.
- String beads on pipe cleaners for counting. See <http://kidsactivitiesblog.com/preschool-math-with-beads/>.
- Use Unifix Cubes for counting.
- Do Lego math. See <http://countingcoconuts.blogspot.ca/2011/07/lego-math-other-activities.html>.
- Do ruler counting.

PARTNER BOX

A partner box can be used daily to create community in the classroom and build social skills. Include games and partner work.

COMPUTER BOX

- Play cool math computer games.
- Look at book flix.
- Visit Starfall (www.starfall.com), an interactive website that teaches the basics of reading.
- Do dance mat typing at www.bbc.co.uk/guides/z3c6tfr/.



Point a flashlight at the ceiling. Have children lie on their backs or tummies and visually follow the moving light from left to right, from top to bottom, and diagonally.

Strategy: Give Me Five



Use this strategy every day to get students actively listening. It focuses on five body parts: eyes on the speaker, mouth quiet, body still, ears listening and hands free. Start a lesson by using the simple cue “Give me five.”

Tell students that when they hear you say, “Give me five,” or when they see you raise your hand with your palm facing them, they are to stop what they are doing and do the following five things:

1. Place eyes on the speaker.
2. Be silent.
3. Stay still.
4. Put things down (hands free).
5. Listen.

TIPS

- Outline the strategy on a poster or cue cards to encourage students to think directly and independently.
- Include the strategy in students’ individualized education programs (IEPs).
- Inform parents about the strategy so they can reinforce it at home.

Source:

Swain, K D, M Friehe and J M Harrington. 2004. “Teaching Listening Strategies in the Inclusive Classroom.” *Intervention in School and Clinic* 40, no 1 (September): 48–54.

Strategies for Reducing the Noise Level in the Classroom

- Talk about noise levels during the early days of the school year. Have students practise different volume levels as they read something on the wall or repeat what you say. Compliment their effort and progress.

- Help your students better understand the level of quiet you desire for a particular activity. Operationalize what you mean by identifying the distance their voices should travel:
 - “With your partner, use your hand-length voices.”
 - “Use your arm-length voices, please.”
 - “Use your table voices for this activity.”
 - “You may use your outside voice until we line up in 20 minutes to re-enter the building.”
 - “As soon as your foot touches the school building floor, your lips are closed until you are back in your seat in the classroom.”
- Notice when students are displaying the correct attentive behaviour and voice levels. Use specific praise that identifies the action you appreciate (for example, “The red group is doing a wonderful job of using their table voices”).
- Develop a signal system. When you want quiet and student attention directed toward you, give students the signal (such as a raised hand or a finger held to closed lips). Students then acknowledge you by making the same signal. Of course, this system must be practised, and you should positively recognize students for following your lead.
- Develop a classroom chant that students are to repeat when they hear you doing it. They then close their lips and attend to you. For example, “One, two, three. Eyes on me.” If they reply, “One, two. Eyes on you,” make sure they do not yell it.
- Teach students to repeat your clapping sequence. When you need their undivided attention, clap a rhythm. Students then repeat that cadence. Then, clap again using a different rhythm. At that point, students are attending to you.
- Count down from five to one. At one, students should be silent and attentive to you. (Again, practise, practise, practise—and praise, praise, praise.)
- Rather than getting louder in an attempt to talk over the noise, reduce the volume of your voice so that students will have to lower their volume to hear you.
- Repeatedly set a dial timer for different lengths of time. Hide the dial from students. Evaluate whether students are using the correct voice level when the bell goes off. Award one point (toward the 25–50

points needed for the class to earn a privilege) if students are speaking at the correct volume. You will find that students will remind their peers to “quiet down” so they can earn points more quickly.

- Do not penalize the entire class for the loud behaviour of one or two students. Recognize the efforts of the majority, and set up a separate system for the persistently loud.
- Warn students nonverbally about being too loud, so that you don’t end up yelling even louder than them. Get a student’s attention (perhaps by saying his or her name quickly) and hold up one finger to indicate the first warning. Hold up two fingers for the second warning. On the third incident, wave the student over to you for a consequence. Whatever consequence you have decided upon should have already been discussed with students.
- When the classroom is noisy, look for students who are using the correct voice levels. Recognize them positively.
- Model the voice level you want students to use. Teachers tend to try to talk over their students. Don’t do this. Use a quiet voice and expect that they will listen.

Strategies for a Successful Recess

- Divide recess into three parts:
 - With adult support, a student observes other students, looking for positive peer interactions. Record these observations on a mini-whiteboard or a chart. Discuss what the interactions looked like, felt like and sounded like. One school did this as though students were Martians observing human interactions. The students really engaged with that idea.
 - Next, allow the student to show understanding by giving him or her a small, well-defined area to play in. Let him or her play with a peer or two. Observe and assist. Reinforce positive behaviour.
 - Finally, give the student time to play freely.
- All staff should use a unified system of nonverbally reminding key students that they are on task (green card), that they should show caution or

make a better decision (yellow card), or that they need to take a time out or consult with an adult (red card). Staff can carry these small laminated cards with them. Find reasons to use the green card much more than the other cards.

- Provide whole-school or whole-class lessons on appropriate play, including what play should look like, feel like and sound like. Role-play positive play. Do not role-play negative play. Team is the theme, and the message is that safety and fun go hand in hand.
- Consequence reasonably, with learning in mind. Positive learning takes place when students can role-play or show positive behaviours, as well as repair any ruptures in relationships with their peers or adults. An apology should be demonstrated through deeds, in addition to words.
- Where appropriate, create a social story, using digital pictures of the student in proactive situations. A rule card (a small laminated card with a simple list of three to five positive statements, such as “I’ll use my hands safely”) can be used to reinforce positive understanding of recess prior to recess.
- Have a daily check-in, either with all students in a circle meeting or with key students only, and ask them what their plan for recess is today. Make a list of recess activities and role model how you might answer the question, if you were a student. Require a plan from key students before they go outside. For example, “Today I plan to ask Johnny to play catch with me. I would like to play catch for a while, and then maybe I’ll play tag in the field.”

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Calm, Alert and Happy

What Is Self-Regulation?

Just about everywhere you turn these days, you come across someone talking about the importance of enhancing children's ability to self-regulate. This is because of a growing number of studies showing that self-regulation lays a foundation for a child's long-term physical, psychological, behavioural and educational well-being (Shanker 2012). What isn't quite so clear, however, is what exactly self-regulation is, and what sorts of things parents, caregivers and early childhood educators can do to enhance a child's ability to self-regulate.

There is a tendency to think that *self-regulation* is just another way of talking about self-control. We have long seen self-control as a sort of muscle: as having the internal strength to resist an impulse. Self-control is clearly important for children's ability to deal with the tasks and the temptations that they are confronted with every day (Moffitt et al 2011; Duckworth and Seligman 2005). But *self-regulation* represents a very different way of understanding why a child might be having problems with self-control and, more important, what can be done to help that child.

One of the most common mistakes is to confuse *self-regulation* with *compliance*. A child might behave the way we want because he is afraid of being punished, or solely in order to obtain some coveted award, but this is not at all the same thing as the child who actually *wants* to behave this way, where the consequences of such an attitude for healthy development are profound. Self-regulation has nothing to do with being strong or weak, and to punish a child for a lack of self-discipline when his problem has to do with an overstretched nervous system risks exacerbating the self-regulatory problems that the child is dealing with.

For a long time, the prevailing idea was that you can get a child to do what you want by using punishments and rewards. But the more these behaviour-management techniques have been studied, the more we've come to recognize that not only is this very draining on the adults who have to play the role of disciplinarian but, as far as the child is concerned, they often don't work very well,

and in too many cases they can actually make things worse (Pink 2011). Self-regulation, on the other hand, represents an attempt to understand the causes of a problematic behaviour and then mitigate those causes, rather than simply trying to extinguish the behaviour.

In simplest terms, *self-regulation* refers to how efficiently and effectively a child deals with a stressor and then recovers (Porges 2011; Lillas and Turnbull 2009; McEwen 2002). To deal with a stressor, the brain triggers a sort of gas pedal, the sympathetic nervous system, to produce the energy needed, and then applies a sort of brake, the parasympathetic nervous system, in order to recover. In this way, the brain regulates the amount of energy that the child expends on stress so that resources are freed up for other bodily functions, like digestion, cellular repair, maintaining a stable body temperature, or paying attention and learning.

The Development of Self-Regulation

A baby is born with only between 20 and 25 per cent of her adult brain. At the moment of birth, her brain starts to grow at a phenomenal rate, producing approximately 700 new synapses every single second.

In addition to forming connections between all the different sensory and motor systems, the part of the baby's brain that is growing the most is the prefrontal cortex, where the systems that support self-regulation are housed.

Over the past decade, developmental neuroscientists have learned that it is by being regulated that these robustly growing systems are wired to support self-regulation. The experiences that promote this process begin immediately. The tactile stimulation that the baby receives when you hold or stroke her releases neurohormones that are highly calming; through your voice, your shining eyes, your smiling face, or gently rocking or bouncing your baby when she is fussy, you are laying the foundation for good self-regulation.

The next critical stage in the development of self-regulation is called social engagement. This begins long before your baby begins to speak. The more calmly and

warmly the caregiver responds to her baby's crying, and the better she reads the cues as to what her baby is feeling or wants, the better she can "up-regulate" or "down-regulate" her.

This is a fundamental principle of self-regulation: it is as much about "arousing" a baby—for example, energizing her when she is drowsy and it is time to eat or perhaps just play—as it is about calming a baby down when she is agitated or it's time to sleep.

The development of language marks a critical advance in this social engagement system. Now the toddler can tell you what he wants or needs, and it is imperative that we respond to these communicative overtures—even if only to tell the child that we will come in a moment—in order to help him develop the functional language skills that enhance self-regulation.

When they are young teens, children start to go through a fundamental transition in their self-regulation, needing their parents much less and their peers much more. But not all teens go through this development at the same age or the same rate and, indeed, some may still not have fully mastered this transition until they are young adults. Furthermore, children suffer all sorts of setbacks and regressions in their ability to self-regulate, and in times of acute stress it is not at all unusual to see a child or even a teen revert to the infant stage of needing a parental hug in order to get calm.

The Arousal Continuum



The ability to self-regulate refers to how smoothly a child is able to move up and down through different arousal states, which are critical for expending and restoring energy.

When children are calmly focused and alert, they are best able to modulate their emotions; pay attention; ignore distractions; inhibit their impulses; assess the consequences of an action; understand what others are thinking and feeling, and the effects of their own behaviours; and feel empathy for others.

Children's Stress

Over the past two decades, scientists have made a number of important discoveries with regard to children's stress:

- While some stress is highly motivating, too much stress can have a long-term negative effect.
- Too many children are dealing with too many stressors in their lives today.
- We need to develop a much better understanding of the nature of these stressors and how to reduce them.
- Children need to learn how to identify for themselves when they are becoming agitated and what they can do to return to being calm and focused.

So what exactly are these stressors? We all know that children are under a lot of pressure today and there is a lot of uncertainty in their lives. But scientists have been developing a much broader understanding of stress—of the sorts of things that activate the sympathetic nervous system and, just as important, the sorts of things that help a child's recovery.

The five primary sources of stress in children's lives today are the following:

- Biological
- Emotional
- Cognitive
- Social
- Prosocial

Each of these levels influences and is influenced by all the others. So when working on a child's self-regulation, we always have to be mindful that we are looking at all five levels, and not simply one or two. For a lot of children, too much noise or visual stimulation or strong smells can be a stressor. For some children, too much junk food or sugar can be a stressor. For far too many children today, not enough sleep or exercise or just playing with other children is a huge stressor. Many children struggle with strong negative emotions, like fear, anger, shame or sadness. Some children find certain kinds of cognitive challenge very draining. A great many children find group activities stressful. And, finally, children can find it very challenging to have to deal with other children's feelings or needs.

The Signs of an Excessive Stress-Load

When we study the above list, it starts to become clear that many of the things that might be stressing a child aren't things that we necessarily think of as a stressor. So how can we tell if a child is overstressed?

For parents, caregivers and educators, there are a number of signs of when a child is being overloaded by stress. Some of the key ones are when a child

- has a lot of trouble paying attention, or even responding to his name;
- has a lot of trouble doing the simplest things;
- is very crabby when he wakes up in the morning, or never seems to be happy during the day;
- argues a lot, or seems to want to oppose our wishes, however reasonable these might be;
- gets angry a lot, or too angry, or resorts to hurtful words or even violence;
- is highly impulsive and easily distracted;
- has a great deal of trouble tolerating frustration; and
- has difficulty sitting still, going to bed, thinking through even the simplest of problems, getting along with other children, having any positive interests, or turning off the TV or stopping playing a video game.

The Three Key Steps to Self-Regulation

1. The first step is to reduce the child's overall stress level. This can be as simple as making sure the child is well slept and getting nutritious foods and lots of exercise, turning off the radio or the TV in the background if we suspect that our child is sensitive to noise, or limiting the amount of time spent on computer or video games if these seem to leave the child agitated. Just going to school can be stressful for a lot of children, and even very simple aids like a disc for their chair at school or a weighted bag for their lap or some playdough to squeeze while doing lessons can be calming.
2. The second step is to become aware of what it feels like to be calmly focused and alert, and what it feels

like to be hypo- or hyperaroused. A large number of Canadian children lack this basic aspect of self-awareness.

3. The third step is to teach children what sorts of things they need to do in order to return to being calmly focused and alert and what sorts of experiences they may need to manage or even avoid.

The world our children are growing up in today is one where self-regulation is becoming ever more critical. But research is now showing that sports, playing a musical instrument, involvement in the arts, yoga and martial arts (like tae kwon do) all provide enormous benefits for self-regulation (Diamond and Lee 2011). Self-regulation is every bit as much about doing all those things that increase a child's energy levels as learning how to deal with situations or stimuli that the child finds very draining.

Questions for Reflection

- What can I do to support children in learning how to self-regulate?
- What can I change in my environment to reduce children's stress levels?
- How can I support children in recognizing when they are under- and overstimulated?
- How can I help children recognize what sorts of activities help them to become calmly focused and alert and what activities they need to limit?

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The Canadian Self-Regulation Initiative (CSRI) was launched in the fall of 2012. The goal of this initiative is to embed practices designed to enhance self-regulation in the classroom. A number of schools in British Columbia, Ontario and Yukon are involved in the first wave of the CSRI. For more information about this initiative, as well as useful tips and practices for parents and educators, go to www.self-regulation.ca.

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The Council for Inclusive Education (CIE) benefits from the significant contributions of its members. Many volunteer their time, effort and expertise far beyond the call of duty. These contributions advance and benefit the field of inclusive education.

The council's annual awards recognize these contributions and outstanding achievements in support of public education in Alberta.

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