

Puzzle Pieces

Solving the puzzle...Empowering the child



Meryl Lipton, MD, PhD
Executive Director

We are a Social Species

“Sometimes my child isn’t interested in being with other children. Other times he really tries, but has such a hard time;

he just doesn’t get what is going on.” At RNBC (Rush Neurobehavioral Center) we often hear these painful comments from parents and teachers, and we want to help.

Humans are very social. We learn, play, live and work together. In a profound way, much of everyone’s success in life depends on our social abilities. At all ages friendships are very important. Friendship helps us be co-operative; it is supportive behavior between children (or adults). Whether it is on the playground -- or as an adult at work or in personal relations -- knowing how to socially connect counts. Our goal is to help children and adolescents develop the skills necessary to be good friends.

Everyone understands that, in the 21st century academic world success matters, but nothing stings like social failure. Being left out, not getting play dates, being teased and bullied: these are the difficulties that make children sad and depressed. They make life at school impossible.

As a species, we have spent centuries developing social-emotional skills. Culture plays a big part in that process as it models and teaches each generation social expectations. Our brains have played a big part too. Over the centuries our brains have developed specific systems for taking in and expressing social-emotional signals. Now, with the new tools, we know that there are specific areas of the brain that process faces, emotions and body movements.

Just as some children have brain-based problems reading words, others have brain-based challenges “reading” the social cues of others.

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What’s Seen on the Social Scene



Dr. Mel Levine,
Co-Founder and Co-Chair,
All Kinds of Minds

While learning represents a major challenge for all kids, it does not compare to the social aspects of school in terms of its potential to create unhappiness and maladjustment among students.

From early in the morning until well into the evening, kids labor under relentless pressure to gain the approval of their peers, to sidestep public embarrassment, and to form protective and supportive friendships. For some, the social campaign yields devastating, even tragic results; they are crushed by their personal inability to build a positive reputation with their classmates. Often these kids have social cognitive dysfunctions. They simply lack the brain wiring needed for social success.

We can divide social cognitive functions and dysfunctions into three general areas: verbal social ability, non-verbal social ability, and political skill. Let’s take a look at how each of these skills affects childrens’ success in the classrooms, corridors and playgrounds of our schools.

Verbal Social Ability

Kids need to talk appropriately with other kids. Socially successful students usually have good conversational skills. They pick their topics well and are able to regulate their tone of voice, choice of words, and sentence structure to resonate with prevailing moods. They know how to talk kid language

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We are a Social Species

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If a child comes to RNBC unable to read words, we conduct a battery of tests that defines what part of the reading process is difficult for the child. Using that information we recommend specific reading interventions, and 85% to 90% of the time the child's reading skills significantly improve.

For children with social-emotional learning problems, we can't yet follow the same course. Why? Because science does not yet know all the different parts of social-emotional learning, and there are no tests that enable us to pinpoint a child's social-emotional strengths and weaknesses.

Understanding this frontier is exactly what RNBC clinicians and researchers are tackling. We are developing a framework for understanding social-emotional learning. It is based on the neuro-scientific literature and utilizes principles of special education and psychology. While still being refined, the framework has already helped us better understand children's brain-based social difficulties.

Using that information, we are creating a battery of tests that detail individual children's social-emotional strengths and weaknesses. Next, we will design interventions that optimize a child's social-emotional learning, enabling her or him to develop friendships.

If you want to know more about this work, we are sponsoring a seminar you might like to attend on Friday, October 13th.

On page 8, you will find seminar details. I hope you can join us, and if you can't, we will keep you informed through this newsletter.

Social Scene

Continued from front page 1

credibly, and they are adept at using language that makes others like them and also, feel good themselves. Children with social language dysfunctions may talk about the wrong things at the wrong time. They may sound angry when they're not angry. They may have trouble "reading" other peoples' feelings from the way they speak or sound. Socially rejected students are often boastful or verbally abrasive. When they try to converse with peers, their choice of language may make them sound too old or too young. In essence, they may be totally ineffective at using language as an instrument for social success.

Non-verbal Social Ability

The non-verbal aspects of socialization are just as relevant as the verbal aspects. Non-verbal social skills include the ability to resolve conflicts without fighting or resorting to verbal abuse. Knowing how to respond to the social behavior of others, for example, being able to interpret other peoples' facial expressions and body language is just as crucial. Finally, children who are socially adept also know how to "market" themselves, i.e., develop an image that is appealing to others (often reflected by the way they dress, act, move their bodies, etc.). Regrettably, some students seem to be socially clueless when it comes to these nonverbal interpersonal processes. They may have no idea how they are coming across, and why they keep hearing, "Sorry, this seat is saved."

The Political Challenge

Success in school is, at least in part, a political affair. Different kids are more or less successful in pleasing their highly judgmental constituencies. The group that students most need to win over is their teachers. Indeed, children learn political skills by getting their teachers to like and respect them. Once called "apple polishing," this is a practical part of real world education. Relating well to your teachers in school is the precursor to getting your boss to like and reward you as an adult! Sadly, some kids have less than optimal relationships with the important adults in their lives, and seem unable to nurture positive interactions with those that supervise and evaluate them. Naturally, they suffer as a result of these weaknesses. They seem to miss the point that teachers are human beings, and have a need for students to compliment them, appreciate them as individuals, and also to show an interest in the subject matter they teach.

Some Helpful Hints

Parents and schools should monitor the social successes and failures of children and adolescents. Some kids need practical advice on how to succeed (or at least survive) socially. In severe cases, social skills training may be required, if available. In all instances, parents or caretakers need to serve as social sounding boards, so kids can confide in them about social setbacks endured during the school day. Such adults need to be very good listeners, avoiding the temptation to be overly reassuring (e.g., "don't worry about it, just ignore her"), and the impulse to preach a sermon.

More than anything, kids with social difficulties need adults who can be sympathetic to their situations, and who are able to offer practical advice. Sometimes, for example, a mentor in the community can help advocate for a child with social cognitive dysfunctions. At other times, when a child is being actively bullied by peers, parents may need to intercede with school administrators. Whenever possible, however, adults should provide consultation and advice only; the child should attempt to solve his own interpersonal difficulties. Learning the best ways to function in our social world is a critical skill for all students.

©2006 All Kinds of Minds Reprinted with permission. All Kinds of Minds is a non-profit institute dedicated to the understanding of differences in learning. The Institute offers professional development for K-12 educators and customized learning plans to help families understand why a student is struggling in school. Visit www.allkindsofminds.org for more information and resources, including an online Parent Toolkit.

Dr. Mel Levine will be honored at our Tenth Anniversary Awards Dinner with the Pearl Rieger Award. Please consult page 7 for details.

Easing the Teasing Strategies

Judy Freedman, MSW, LCSW

Children can use the strategies listed below to feel empowered and reduce feelings of helplessness. When children realize that there are effective strategies they can use in teasing situations, their coping skills are strengthened.

1. Self-Talk

- Encourage children to think about what they can say or do in a teasing situation.
- Reminder: Do not react with anger or tears!
- Questions:
 - "Is the tease or insult true?" Often it is not.
 - "Whose opinion is more important ... the teaser's or mine?"
- Think about positive qualities or special experiences.
- A child should say to himself, "Even though I don't like this teasing, I can handle it."

2. Ignore

- No eye contact or verbal response.
- Pretend the teaser is invisible.
- Practice/role play.
- If possible, walk away and join others.
- May not be effective with chronic teasing.

3. "I" Message

- "I feel upset when you make fun of my glasses. I would like you to stop."
- Effective in more "structured" or supervised situations.
- Effective when communicated to a friend.
- May not work in unstructured settings because it may lead to more teasing.
- Make eye contact, speak clearly and politely.

4. Visualization

- Create a mental picture that the words are "bouncing off."
- Pretend there is a shield to repel the put-downs and teases.
- Create own visualization, "I am going to the soccer field."

5. Reframe

- Accept the tease as a positive comment rather than a put-down.
- Take or accept the tease as a compliment.
 - "Thanks for noticing my glasses."
 - "Thanks for your opinion."

6. Agree

- Agree with the facts: "Yes, I have poor vision."

7. "So?"

- Conveys the message of "so what?" or "who cares?"

8. Respond to the Teaser with a Compliment

- "I wish I could see as well as you."

9. Use Humor

- Laughing or smiling defuses the mean comments.

10. Ask for Help

- An adult can often intervene very successfully.
- Tattling vs. Reporting

The Other 3 R's

The effectiveness and success of the other 3 of the Easing the Teasing strategies are generally dependent upon the child feeling comfortable and confident in using them. Comfort and confidence develop from "the other 3 R's": rehearsal, repetition, and review. Just as children have to consistently review math facts and spelling words, they must repeatedly practice these techniques. Frequent discussions and role-plays foster and enhance a child's successful use of the strategies.

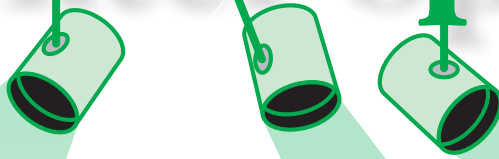
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Judy S. Freedman is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker at Prairie Elementary School in Buffalo Grove. She is the author of *Easing the Teasing: Helping Your Child Cope with Name-calling, Ridicule, and Verbal Bullying* (Contemporary Books/McGraw-Hill, 2002). Please visit her website: www.easingtheteasing.com for more information.

Ms. Freedman will also be a guest lecturer at the RNBC/Chicago Public Library Series in September. Please, consult page 9 for more details.

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Center Spotlight



Georgia Bozeday, Ed.D. joined the RNBC team at the beginning of August, in the middle of the heat wave. Recently retired from a career in public school administration, Georgia is used to working through the hot summer months. In her previous position as Assistant Superintendent and Director of Student Services at Sunset Ridge School in Northfield, Dr. Bozeday worked with fellow administrators and teachers to plan and implement an Executive Functions program in fourth through eighth grades. This experience is obviously coming in handy as Georgia assumes the position of Director of Educational Services at the Center. Other aspects of Georgia's background contribute to her understanding of children's difficulties and effective interventions. She began her work with children as a speech and language pathologist after earning her undergraduate degree from Northwestern University. The



next phase of her educational career in providing service to children in schools continued with the completion of a Masters in Education, her background is diverse, with a focus in Early Childhood, a post-masters program in Learning Disabilities, and completion of the state verification process in Gifted Education. Working in all three areas at District 29 Sunset Ridge enabled Georgia to experience professional variety and, at the same time, explore the interconnectedness of these areas in supporting and challenging students based on an assessment of each child's areas of strengths and needs. The last 14 years of Georgia's 37-year career in public education have focused on the administrative duties connected with areas of student services as well as District-level coordination and supervision. As Director of Student Services, Georgia assisted staff in writing IEPs, coordinated the problem-solving model including student assessment and interventions, as well as worked between the Student Services Department and other District concerns such as staff development, program design and implementation, in-service coordination and professional growth. Social-emotional development in children is another area of strong interest for Georgia. Her dissertation focused on studying the impact of the social-emotional aspect of the curriculum within the District Character Education Program. Georgia is an adjunct professor in the masters degree program in Curriculum and Instruction Department at National-Louis University. She also serves on two professional advisory boards in the schools of education at Northwestern University and at National-Louis University.

As Director of Educational Services, Georgia will coordinate school services, both in-services and on-going RNBC educational staff support, for the Executive Function Program. Georgia will also participate in the coordination of the Executive Function tutoring program at the Center and will help support the RNBC brain-based social-emotional learning program.

RNBC Mission Statement

Rush NeuroBehavioral Center serves the medical, psychological and education needs of children with brain-based learning and behavior problems, specializing in social-emotional learning disorders.

Jonathan Levin, MA is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) who has spent the last 8 years as a school social worker in Schaumburg, IL. Jonathan worked part time at RNBC for the last 2 years, and joined the staff as a full time employee in July, 2006.

As a school social worker, Jonathan worked with a wide variety of children and families, specializing in children identified with learning disabilities, social-emotional issues, as well as children with a variety of diagnoses; including ADHD, Autism Spectrum Disorder, depression, and anxiety disorder. Jonathan has had experience working with children in the school setting and has assisted school staff in understanding how to best meet the needs of children in an academic setting. Jonathan has also worked with families to help them to understand their rights in their child's educational setting and is a resource to help schools and families work together.



Since joining the RNBC staff, Jonathan has facilitated many social skills groups for children, and will continue in that role. Providing services to children ages 3-18, Jonathan has helped them learn appropriate social skills and has created an environment where children feel safe and welcome. Jonathan also sees children individually to support them in various aspects of their life. Jonathan will continue to work with outside providers and schools to aid children in being successful in academic settings, as well as at home and in social situations. He is available to attend school meetings and for school observations.

A native Californian, **Lori G Tall**, PsyD, joined RNBC in July 2006. Over the past six years Dr. Tall has trained and worked in diverse academic and clinical settings across the country. After completion of her degree at the California School of Professional Psychology in Los Angeles, Dr. Tall interned in neuropsychology at the University of Minnesota. This was followed by working as a hospital and community based psychologist in Cincinnati at Children's Hospital. Most recently Dr. Tall finished a fellowship and became a staff member in Neuropsychology at Primary Children's Medical Center, in Salt Lake City, Utah. While in Salt Lake, in addition to enjoying Utah's unparalleled access to the mountains, Dr. Tall honed her skills in the assessment and treatment of children with neurocognitive dysfunction. She specialized in the evaluation and management of children whose deficits were secondary to their underlying illness or their tertiary care treatment (i.e. congenital heart disease, brain tumor, neurological disorders, and genetic disorders). Dr. Tall's research interests have included assessment of primary care based systems in the identification of behavioral/mental health issues in children. Additionally, she is evaluating the link between somatic complaints and learning disorders. At RNBC, Dr. Tall will conduct neuropsychological evaluations, provide treatment and consult with schools.



Learning to Let Go

By Anonymous

My son received an email from the college director of an internship department in response to an inquiry that he had initiated. The Director replied, "It was clear from your message that you were not paying attention during the workshop." He continued with commentary that my son's questions had been answered in great detail during the presentation. My son sent us a copy of the Director's reply, because he was confused. He had attended this presentation over a month earlier, and did not remember a few details. He was surprised at the negative tone of the reply, and wondered what he had done wrong.

My son was diagnosed with significant learning disabilities in the 2nd grade. His disabilities are in the processing area, most notably auditory processing. His IEP's throughout his school career included note takers, untimed tests, no scantron answer sheets, and other accommodations to allow him to work at his own pace, and not become confused. The accommodations, along with great teachers, assistants, and tutors helped him complete high school and gain acceptance into college with a respectable GPA.

One of the hardest parts of being a parent is allowing our kids to fail. To stand back, let them make mistakes, skin their knees, bruise their egos, and learn their own lessons. This is much more difficult for the parents of challenged kids. Parents become accustomed to being their child's advocate, so it becomes second nature to step in and handle matters. My wife was angry about the accusations and insensitivity in the Director's email. She wanted to rescue our son. This reaction is not just one sided. The children themselves become dependent on us. They know, from past experience, that Mom or Dad will step in and make things right.

Allowing children to learn from their mistakes is a critical part of growth from childhood to maturity. It's a shame that we must explain to our children that the world is filled with people who are neither compassionate nor understanding of individual differences or issues. This is the world that our children must learn to exist in, because we will not be around forever to protect them. In order to give our kids the best chance of success, the family must let them grow, and learn lessons within their capabilities.

In this case, my wife counseled my son to go back and look over the handout from the presentation and see if he could get a better understanding of how the program worked. What impressed her was his initial email to the director. It was polite and clearly written. Problems will come and go, but being able to communicate clearly is priceless.

In the past, our son needed hours of help with homework, a special filing system within his binder to trigger turning in his homework, and us administering his daily medication, to his current high level of functioning. He has lived in the college dormitory for two years. During this time, he managed on his own to arrive at classes, kept up with homework, select his major and required classes, and take his medication. My wife assists with balancing his checkbook and reconciling his credit card statements. The next step toward greater independence will be a studio apartment near the campus. He will have bills to pay. He will have a small kitchen to prepare his own meals, and to entertain friends.

Most of us have children with different capabilities. One thing we all have in common is that we feel if we jump in and help, most tasks would get done quicker and easier. This is not, in the long run, helping our children develop the skills that they will need for the future. As my wife said with regard to the email exchange, "sometimes the hardest thing to do is do nothing at all."

Selections from children and young adults sharing their gifts

MASTER PIECE

How Computers Help Me In School

By Josh Rosen

In school I use computers to get my work done. Why? Computers help me for 3 reasons. They help me with my hand writing, (it's not that neat). I can get my thoughts down faster, and it's a lot of fun!

My handwriting is not that neat. Sometimes the teacher can have a harder time reading it. So when I was in 4th grade my teacher recommended that I type up my assignments up on the computer. Ever since that I got my work done neater.

Before I started to use the computer it took a lot longer to do my work. I had to think up what I wanted to say and get it down on paper. My hand would get tired and all that. When I started to type I got my work done a lot faster. I learned how to type fast in the beginning of 4th grade.

The last thing is it is a lot of fun, typing my work. I like to get my work done on the computer and I like to use the computer. It even got to be more fun after I learned how to type. Before that it was a lot harder to work on the computer.

Remember those are the three ways I get my work done easier, faster, and neater.



CORNER

DONORS'

A Conversation with RNBC Advisory Board Chairman, Ted Schmidt

July 27, 2006

As we reflect on the past ten years, one cannot overlook the incredible support and guidance RNBC has received from the Advisory Board. RNBC Advisory Board members share an intense passion for increasing resources for children and families of all backgrounds faced with the challenges of pediatric neurobehavioral disorders. Guiding the Board for the past two years is Chairman, Ted Schmidt.

Ted is the President of a Chicago law firm, Schmidt Salzman & Moran Ltd., concentrating in real estate tax law. He is no stranger to working with nonprofit governance and philanthropy as a volunteer with multiple organizations for the past 20 years. Having known Dr. Meryl Lipton for several years, he was invited in 1998 to join the Advisory Board. As Chairman since July 2004, Ted has been instrumental in expanding the

involvement and communication between Board members and key leaders at RNBC. He took a few moments to reflect on RNBC and why he continues to dedicate his time and resources to the RNBC mission year after year.

How did you become involved with RNBC?

Before my daughter's third birthday, it was clear to my wife and me that she was struggling with severe behavioral and learning difficulties. We spent the next few years going from one specialist to another. When she turned five years old, child diagnostician, Pearl Rieger, referred us to Dr. Meryl Lipton. By this point, things were rough. My wife and I disagreed on the use of pharmaceuticals and almost everything else. Through many years of perseverance, interventions and the Landmark School my daughter is currently independent, enrolled at a university and pursuing educational and social interests we have always wished for her.



Patti and Ted Schmidt, 2005
RNBC Annual Awards Dinner.

Do you have any advice for parents currently struggling with the challenges faced by children with neurobehavioral issues?

It is so important to remain patient and willing to try different approaches. The problems can get worse before you see results, but the outcome can be well worth the effort. Finding professionals with expertise is key. Until RNBC, the multi-disciplinary approach did not exist in one place so we were constantly receiving contradictory advice from different professionals.

It is also important to let your child know they are not alone and that their issues do not prevent success. I was in my forties when I became aware that I had Tourette's syndrome, ADHD, OCD and language processing difficulties. A lifetime of questions was answered. Children need to know that adults suffer from these challenges as well, but with the right amount of determination and assistance from professionals they can overcome their weaknesses and celebrate their strengths.

As a parent, Advisory Board member, and donor, why do you dedicate your time and resources to RNBC's philanthropic endeavors?

I feel strongly that if we help one child who otherwise would be suffering, it is worth every bit of my time and support. Living with neurobehavioral issues is not only challenging for the child but often is devastating to the entire family. The outreach, education, and research programs currently underway at RNBC serve and have the potential to grow as limitless outlets for underserved children and families to recognize and treat the challenges of neurobehavioral issues. As a Center, we are setting the highest of standards for the care of ALL children and that is truly exciting!

Help RNBC celebrate TEN YEARS of community service
by making a donation today!
please contact Stacy Shafer Peterson at
(847) 763-7940.

To download a copy of our donor newsletter,
RNBC Connections, please visit
<http://www.rnbc.org/contributions.asp>

We would like to extend a special thank you to Friends of the Center

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RNBC CELEBRATES TEN YEARS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE!!!

Please join us for the

**RNBC Tenth Anniversary Awards Dinner
Four Season Hotel Chicago – Grand Ballroom**

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2006

Ten years ago, five pioneers in the world of brain-based, social, behavioral, and academic learning disorders embarked on a journey that resulted in Rush Neurobehavioral Center. Join us October 18, 2006 as we honor **Meryl Lipton, Joseph Palombo, Karen Pierce, Pearl H. Rieger, and Warren Rosen** with the **RNBC Founders Award**. Their vision and perseverance led to an organization that has touched the lives of tens of thousands of children with neurobehavioral issues.

We are thrilled to announce this year's **Pearl H. Rieger Award** recipient as the internationally recognized **Dr. Mel Levine**, Professor of Pediatrics at the University of North Carolina Medical School in Chapel Hill, North Carolina and the Director of the University's Clinical Center for the Study of Development and Learning. The Pearl H. Rieger Award pays tribute to an individual or institution that has made a significant difference in the lives of children.

Over the past thirty years, Dr. Levine has pioneered programs for the evaluation of children and young adults with learning, development, and/or behavioral problems. Dr. Levine is the co-founder of All Kinds of Minds, a nonprofit Institute for the study of differences in learning, and co-chairs the Institute's Board of Directors with Charles R. Schwab. In 1995, Dr. Levine received the C. Anderson Aldrich Award from the American Academy of Pediatrics for outstanding

contribution to the field of child development.

This year, RNBC will bestow the **Living Proof Award** upon Chicago restaurateur, **Jerry Kleiner**. The Living Proof Award is given to recognize an individual with neurobehavioral issues for his or her lifetime of achievements.

Jerry Kleiner, co-owner and designer of Carnivale, is a restaurateur, entrepreneur, and trendsetter. Kleiner and his partners are credited with pioneering Chicago's West Randolph Street restaurant district with long-time hotspots Vivo, Marche, and Red Light. He has also taken over the South Loop with innovative concepts including Gioco, Opera, and Saiko. Kleiner also set his sights on Chicago's Fulton Street Warehouse District, designing and opening the trendy lounge Victor Hotel along with Carnivale, a grand scale Latin American restaurant.



Jerry Kleiner



Alex Mahoney

A very special **Creating the Future Award** will be presented to RNBC patient and college student, **Alex Mahoney** and his parents **Wendi and Robert**. The Creating the Future Award highlights the accomplishments of a young adult with neurobehavioral issues who, with his or her family, has struggled and achieved.

Alex is the eldest of 5 children. He is a Division 111 distance runner. He attended New Trier High School and Singapore American School. He recently transferred from Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Virginia to Rhodes in Memphis, Tennessee. He is a junior studying political science and economics.

We hope you can join us for what promises to be an exciting and educational evening! For more information regarding the RNBC Tenth Anniversary Awards Dinner, please contact Pat Hurley & Associates at (312) 553-2000.

Advisory Board Members

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Autism Spectrum Disorders

Helping Children with Asperger's Syndrome, Nonverbal Learning Disability (NLD), High-Functioning Autism, and Other Social-Emotional Learning Disorders

Who: Rush Neurobehavioral Center

What: Annual Conference

When: Friday, October 13, 2006
8 AM-4:30 PM

Where: Oakton Community College
1600 East Golf Road
Des Plaines, Illinois
Room 1604

Keynote: Catherine Lord, PhD

Speakers: Meryl Lipton, MD, PhD
Emily Rubin, MS, CCC-SLP

Objectives: Develop a broader understanding of children with Social-Emotional Learning Disorders including High-Functioning Autism, Asperger's Syndrome and Nonverbal Learning Disability

Understand the diagnostic processes for children with High-Functioning Autism and Asperger's Syndrome

Gain expertise in intervention planning for emotional regulation

Acquire knowledge for the design of learning environments that promote social communication

Learn about the Social-Emotional Learning Framework (SELF)

Gain insight into important research on Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)

Audience: Parents, Teachers and allied health and medical professionals

Solving the puzzle...Empowering the child

How to Register

By Mail: Send a check for tuition (payable to Oakton Community College), or pay by credit card (MasterCard, VISA, Discover). Mail to Alliance for Lifelong Learning, P.O. Box 367, Skokie, IL 60076.

In Person: Mon - Fri, 8:30 a.m. - 4:45 p.m. at the Des Plaines or Ray Hartstein campuses.

By Fax: Complete the registration form, include credit card number and expiration date, then fax to 847.635.1448.

Group Discount: A 10 percent discount will be offered to two or more participants from the same organization. To receive the discount, registrations must arrive together.

Register by October 2, 2006.

Registration Form

Autism Spectrum Disorders (HUHA77-001) \$ 150.00

TOTAL \$ _____

Nonrefundable payment must accompany registration form.

Name _____ Sex: Male Female

Social Security Number _____ Birth Date ____/____/____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Office Phone _____

E-mail _____

(used ONLY for notification of upcoming educational opportunities, NEVER shared)

Last College Attended _____

Most Credits/Highest Degree Earned _____

Profession _____ License No. _____

To monitor compliance with civil rights legislation, federal agencies require colleges to describe their racial populations. Please check the category that best describes your racial/ethnic background.

Black (African American) White (Caucasian) Asian or Pacific Islander

Amer. Indian/Alaskan Hispanic (surname American) Other/no answer

For Credit Card Payment Only, check one: Discover VISA MasterCard

Credit Card No. _____ Expiration Date _____

Signature _____

For credit cards only, fax to: 847.635.1448.

No confirmation of enrollment will be sent. This form may be photocopied.



Register Now!

UPCOMING PRESENTATIONS

Parent Connections

2006 Schedule:

September 13, October 11, November 8 and December 13

Wednesdays from 1:00- 2:30 p.m.

Parent Connections is held at RNBC, 9711 Skokie Blvd., Suite D, Skokie.

There is no fee to participate in this program.



Parents of children with neurobehavioral disorders often face many challenges unique to having children with these special needs. While a supportive friend or sympathetic family member is always appreciated, it can be helpful to talk with others in similar circumstances. That's why **Parent Connections** was formed.

Chicago Public Library

RNBC is committed to increasing knowledge and awareness about neurobehavioral disorders through community outreach. A partnership with the Chicago Public Library (CPL) has been a successful way to disseminate accurate information and resources to people who would not otherwise have the opportunity to learn about neurobehavioral issues and how they impact children/students. Our current library series will be held at the [Sulzer Regional Library, 4455 N. Lincoln Ave., Chicago](#). These events are free and open to the public. For information call Adult Services at 312-747-4252 or Cate at 847-763-7933. CPDU credits are available.

Easing the Teasing - Helping Kids Cope with Name-Calling, Ridicule, and Verbal Bullying

Tuesday, September 26, 7 pm

Judy S. Freedman, MSW, LCSW

Author of *Easing the Teasing: Helping Your Child Cope with Name-Calling, Ridicule, and Verbal Bullying* (Contemporary Books/McGraw-Hill, 2002)

Teasing is a universal and widespread problem, and it cannot be completely prevented. Although children are unable to control what others say or the actions of the teasers, they can learn to control their own responses and reactions, which will "ease the tease." Parents can teach kids simple strategies that will empower them, reduce feelings of helplessness, and strengthen their coping skills. This lecture will address three types of teasing vs. bullying, reactions to and prolonged effects of teasing, what children are teased about, why children tease, the EASING THE TEASING strategies, and the importance of activating the bystanders.

Parenting Children with ADHD: Motivating, Monitoring, and Medicating

Tuesday, October 24, 7 pm

Marc S. Atkins, PhD

Dr. Atkins is Director of Psychology Training and Professor of Psychology at the University of Illinois at Chicago Department of Psychiatry and Institute for Juvenile Research. In this workshop, he will provide a framework for parents and a range of solutions to assist children with ADHD, including when medication should be considered and where parents can go for help.

After the Mid-Term Report Card...Is it Time to Advocate for Your Child?

Tuesday, November 28, 7 pm

Gail C. Getz, MA, CCC-SLP, LBS-II

Mid-term report cards are meant to reflect a child's academic achievement in their coursework. However, these grades may be reflecting underlying learning and/or executive functioning deficits that impact a student's ability to achieve at his/her potential. Addressing these issues may mean that parents are in a position to advocate for their child in the academic setting. Ms. Getz, Coordinator of Executive Function Tutoring at RNBC, will provide an overview of working effectively with the school system to help meet the academic needs of children.

Gail C. Getz, MA, CCC-SLP, LBS-II

As part of the Executive Function Tutoring Program at Rush Neurobehavioral Center, week long workshops were offered this summer. An introductory workshop, Fundamentals in Executive Function, was attended by middle school students (July 10-13) and high school students (July 24-27). After establishing a shared understanding of executive function skills and how they might impact their learning, the students engaged in



Gail Getz, Coordinator of the Executive Function Tutoring Program joined RNBC in June.

learning through group discussion, cooperative learning activities, experiential activities, and direct instruction.

An informal survey indicated that most of the students shared the challenges of handing in their homework, planning for long term assignments, and effectively employing a homework schedule. To meet these needs, the students were introduced to the following tools and strategies:

- Setting goals
- Self reflection
- A binder system
- Effectively implementing an assignment planner
- Task-Analysis of a long term project
- Time management of a long term project

In addition, strategies for following directions were woven into the instruction for the middle school students. High school students were exposed to strategies for note-taking in order to facilitate a systematic approach when reading textbook level material.

Workshops are currently being planned for the fall semester in addition to Executive Function tutoring. Fundamentals in Executive Function will be offered, as well as an intermediate workshop which

will build on the concepts and strategies focused on in the fundamentals workshop.

If you would like more information about Executive Function workshops or individual tutoring, please contact Gail at (847) 763-7947.



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INCHES

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Parent/Teacher Tip

“Use incentives before punishment”
– Russell Barkley, PhD

Assessing Social-Emotional Learning (Part 2): Looking Back and Looking Ahead

Clark McKown, PhD

In the last Research Corner, we defined social-emotional learning (SEL) as “the skills and behaviors needed to initiate and maintain relationships and function effectively in a variety of social situations.” Then we described several research initiatives to understand how to assess and treat children’s social difficulties. Specifically, we are working to develop sound and clinically useful strategies for assessing children’s SEL strengths and weaknesses. We are happy to report some exciting developments in these efforts.

One of our first research projects involved looking back at clinical data we have been collecting over the past several years. We have routinely assessed children’s SEL skills, including their ability to decipher nonverbal cues (facial expressions and tone of voice) about emotions, their ability to interpret and use language to achieve social goals, and their ability to solve complex social problems. We also collected information on parent and teacher reports of children’s social functioning. We used these data to evaluate the clinical usefulness of our SEL battery. We learned that all of our SEL tests are related to parent and teacher reports of social functioning, and also that tests of social language skills and social problem-solving are the strongest predictors of social functioning. In May, we presented the findings from this study at the Association of Psychological Science’s annual meeting, and in July, an article reporting the results of this study was accepted for publication in the *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*.

Last spring, under the leadership of Dr. Michael Balthazor, we also piloted a child self-report questionnaire measuring children’s social interest or desire for age-appropriate peer relationships. We learned that the measure is easy to administer and that children like it. Preliminary data analyses also suggest that the questionnaire has the desirable property of high reliability, or consistency of measurement. We will continue data collection in the coming school year with the aim of presenting our findings at a national conference and in a peer-reviewed journal. Of course, when we are done, we will also have developed an instrument that clinicians can use to measure children’s level of social interest.

We are proud of these accomplishments, but we view them as just the beginning. We still have far to go before clinicians and researchers have useful tests in their toolkits to understand why children struggle socially. To move the field forward, we have entered a partnership with the Illinois Rondout school district in Lake Forest, IL. In collaboration with Rondout’s leadership and staff, we will use a wide range of tests to assess children’s SEL skills, and the quality of children’s social behavior and peer relationships. We will provide information to the district that they can use to meet students’ SEL needs. We will use the data ourselves to understand which assessment strategies are most useful predictors of children’s social functioning. We are excited about this project both because of what we believe it will bring to the Rondout community and what we will learn about assessing SEL strengths and weaknesses.



RNBC Social Development Groups

New Social Development Groups are forming.

RNBC groups are run by psychologists, social workers and educational consultants.

For more information, please contact Nadine Wengroff at 847-763-7944.

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