

Marietta Biddle Retires After 35 Years of Service

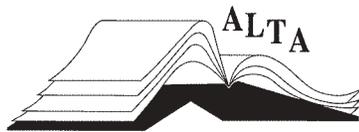


Mrs. Marietta Biddle has touched the lives of thousands of children throughout the United States and around the world. She has taught high school English, served as a library staff member, presented graduate programs at schools in the United States, Europe and South America, authored and co-authored several books and served as the dyslexia therapist and supervisor at Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children (TSRHC). Mrs.

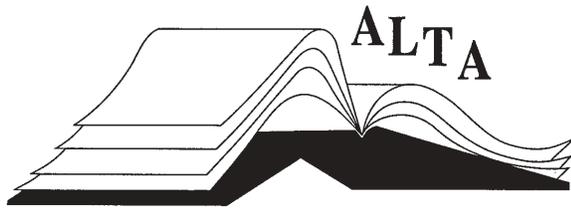
Biddle is most commonly known among school children, however, as the on-camera instructor of TSRHC's *Dyslexia Training Program* videotape series. She received the Scott Murray Excellence in Education Award in 1996 for her significant contributions to the education of children with dyslexia. In response to receiving the award, Mrs. Biddle said, "To receive an award for doing something you love to do is wonderful!" Even in this moment of recognition and honor, Mrs. Biddle was thinking of the children first and donated her prize money to the TSRHC Legacy Scholarship Fund. She said, "I hoped the donation would enable a child to go to school, and perhaps become a teacher and help our children learn." Mrs. Biddle's selfless devotion to educating children has made a tremendous impact on countless lives, and her investment in their futures will continue her legacy for years to come.

Garage Sale Reminder

Don't forget to save your no-longer-needed teaching materials to donate to the second annual ALTA Garage Sale. Many other therapists or teachers could use your extra reading and spelling decks, readers, games, workbooks, handwriting materials, educational workbooks, incentives, and even text books. Anything you may have used at one time but no longer need just could be useful to someone else. Put it aside for our Spring Conference garage sale. Profits from the sale will go to the ALTA Foundation, a non-profit organization that helps to fund ALTA. Watch for a posting of collection sites in the winter issue of *The Bulletin*.



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bul•le•tin

Fall

2003

The bul•le•tin is a quarterly publication of the Academic Language Therapy Association (ALTA), and is free to its membership.

Executive Function and Social Communication Disorders

By Margaret Semrud-Clikeman, Ph.D.

Social competence has been defined as the ability to learn, to understand another's point of view, to manage one's behavior, and the ability to work with adults and other children (Vaughn & Haager, 1994). These skills are consistent with the neuropsychological term executive functions. Executive functions are those that allow a person to view his or her behavior, assess its appropriateness, and make changes if required. Executive functions mediate the person's ability to carry through with a plan of action (Damasio, 1994). Thus a child with deficits in executive functioning can know the appropriate plan of action in a social situation, but be unable to carry through with it. Social competence is an important building block for the development of perceptions of a child's behavior and that of others (Dodge, 1986). Emotional competence is a related concept and has been defined as the ability to adapt to a dynamic environment as well as to realize when an emotionally taxing situation has been managed appropriately (Saarni, 1999). Social experience teaches emotional competence and parent-child and peer relationships are at its foundation. For example, children who are securely attached to their mother are less likely to show antisocial behaviors and more prosocial behaviors (Greenberg, Speltz, & DeKlyen, 1993; Speltz, DeKlyen, & Greenberg, 1999; van IJzendoorn, 1997).

Social Information Processing

In Dodge's (1986) social information processing model, children learn how to encode social information, represent that information in a meaningful way, generate alternatives, and evaluate their responses. Children with social communication difficulties may readily provide a verbal explanation of what should be done in a particular situation, but be unable to follow-through with these behaviors in an appropriate manner due to misinterpretation of the situation. When difficulties are present in representation and/or encoding, i.e., understanding the situations, the child's ability to match behavior to the situation is frequently faulty. The child's social skills are compromised and traditional social skills training is not effective for children when difficulties are present in these initial stages of processing (Abikoff, 1991). In contrast, when the difficulties are at the stage of generating alternatives and applying the selected behaviors social problems are less difficult to remedi-

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ALTA assumes no responsibility for errors or omissions. To submit news items or articles, which are subject to editing for space and style, or for advertising or other information, contact:

Chris Wylie
Editor

Brandi Silva
Executive Director

ALTA
13140 Coit Road
Suite 320 LB 120
Dallas, TX 75240-5737
972/233-9107 ext. 206
Fax 972/490-4219
Hopeline 1-866-283-7133
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President's Letter

Dear ALTA members,

Fall is a busy time for ALTA members. Some of us are providing academic language therapy to individual students, some are teaching small groups and others are presenting research-based information to teachers regarding structured language education. Each is important to the field of academic language therapy. Each area will ultimately make a difference in the life of someone who struggles with reading.

On September 18, 2003, ALTA joined ALTA CC, IMSLEC, Dallas Branch IDA and Park Cities LDA and The Shelton School to co-sponsor a special presentation. Guinevere Eden, Ph.D. discussed the topic of brain imaging. She presented information to parents, teachers and other professionals regarding how brain imaging can be used to study reading, how reading instruction changes the brain and how the efficacy of reading intervention can be evaluated scientifically. Dr. Eden is currently the Director of the Center for the Study of Learning at Georgetown University Medical Center, Washington, D.C. The Center is funded by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and is working in collaboration with Gallaudet University and Wake Forest School of Medicine. The Center's research focuses on the neurobiological representation of reading and how it may be altered in individuals who are deaf or dyslexic. We appreciate the opportunity to co-sponsor this event with The Shelton School and the other professional organizations in our community. A research article by Dr. Eden is available on The Shelton School website (www.shelton.org).

Two professional conferences are on the calendar for this fall. Learning Disabilities Association of Texas is presenting its 39th Annual State Conference October 29-November 1, 2003 in Austin, Texas. The 54th Annual Conference of The International Dyslexia Association is scheduled for November 12-15, 2003 in San Diego, California. ALTA members are among the presenters for each of the conferences.

ALTA representatives will attend the Alliance meeting November 16th in San Diego. There, member of the Alliance board of directors will discuss future projects. The winter edition of the *bul*le*tin* will include a report from the meeting.

Mark your calendars for April 17, 2004. You do not want to miss this ALTA spring conference and annual meeting. The meeting is open to ALTA members and the general public. See page 10 for conference schedule details. Jana Jones and her conference committee have planned an outstanding day for all of us.

It is the desire of the ALTA Board of Directors to provide representation from our diverse membership in the newsletter. Please send information to the editor of the newsletter through the ALTA office.

We hope you have received your ALTA Directory in the mail. If not, contact Brandi or Madeleine, at the ALTA office.

Kay Peterson, CALT
ALTA President

Upcoming ALTA Exam Dates

November 16, 2003
Teachers College Columbia
University
PO Box 31
New York, NY 10027
212-678-3237

January 17, 2004
Southwest Multisensory
Training Center
600 S. Jupiter
Allen, TX 75002-4065
P 972-359-6646

June 5, 2004
The Neuhaus Education
Center
4433 Bissonnet
Bellaire, TX 77401
P 713-664-7676

June 5, 2004
Scottish Rite Learning Center
of Austin
508 W. 14th St.
Austin, TX 78701
P 512-472-1231

June 30, 2004
The Scottish Rite Learning
Center of West Texas
602 Avenue Q
PO Box 10135
Lubbock, TX 79408
P 806-765-915

Executive Function and Social Communication Disorders *continued from Page 1*

ate as the representation of the situation is intact. Children with difficulties in these areas respond more favorably to social skills interventions.

There are several reasons why children have social competence difficulties. Voeller (1994) has conceptualized three groups. First, severe externalizing behaviors can result in difficulties with social competence. These children often have diagnoses of oppositional defiant disorder or conduct disorder with accompanying attention deficit hyper-activity disorder (ADHD). They frequently bully others, have difficulty waiting their turn, and are often rejected by their peers. Second, children may experience difficulties due to perceptual deficits that result in a faulty interpretation of their environment. Difficulties in reading social cues, facial expressions, and body gestures are not unusual for such children. These children are often diagnosed with Asperger's Disorder, Pervasive Developmental Disorder, and/or nonverbal learning disabilities. Finally, there are children who have classic difficulties in executive functioning. These children experience difficulty applying what they know to situations, sometimes due to difficulty with inhibition, attention, and/or activity level. Some may be diagnosed with ADHD while many may simply be seen as disorganized and flighty.

Development of Social Communication Skills

Skills involved in the development of emotional competence include: a) an awareness of one's emotional state; b) the ability to discern other's emotional state; c) the ability to use emotion words; d) empathy to others, and e) the ability to cope with emotionally distressing situations (Saarni, 1999). Emotional competence also involves the ability to manage one's emotions. A significant factor in the development of emotional competence is the child's ability to pay attention to how others react to a situation. It is difficult to share perspectives with someone when perceptual input is distorted, or the child does not scan the environment correctly. The ability to recognize emotion is important for the development of social acceptance. Language is socially mediated to permit appropriate communication of an emotional event.

The easiest emotions to understand are positive ones with more negative emotions (anger, sadness) being more difficult to decode (Russell & Ridgeway, 1983; Semrud-Clikeman & Schafer, 2001). In addition, children who cannot interpret facial expressions have lower peer acceptance and poorer social adjustment (Barth

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Access the ALTA bul•le•tin On-line

You may now access the Academic Language Therapy Association newsletter, ALTA bul•le•tin, on-line. Go to ALTA's web site at www.ALTAread.org and click on the title "RESOURCES" in the heading. You will then come to the Newsletters page. There is a large banner-type heading announcing the availability of the ALTA bul•le•tin. Click on the icon that says: "click here." The newsletter in its entirety will be downloaded to your computer. The newsletter, which is in Adobe Acrobat PDF and has numerous pages, will take several minutes to download.

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& Bastiani, 1997). The tendency to attribute negative intentions to the other child while not understanding their own responsibility for their actions has been found in samples of children with ADHD but without LD (Bennett, Semrud-Clikeman, & Emmer, 2000; Mattys, Cuperus, & Van Engeland, 1999).

Learning Disabilities and Social Competence

Children with LD and/or ADHD have been found to experience more peer rejection and less popularity than others (Flicek & Landau, 1985). Without intervention these difficulties will continue throughout development and worsen during adolescence (Parker & Asher, 1987; Parker, Rubin, & DeRosier, 1995;

Pelham & Bender, 1982). Not all children with LD show the same level of difficulty in developing social competence. The difference appears to be the presence of co-existing disorders (i.e., ADHD, conduct disorder, oppositional defiant disorder) or severe perceptual deficits. Children with ADHD perceive more hostility and negative intent from their peers than is actually present (Dodge & Frame, 1982; Whalen & Henker, 1987). They also interact more intensely with others and this is most often seen as negative by their peers. These findings appear to be more evident in situations that are ambiguous and contribute to the child's feeling of social stress (Hargrave, et al., 2000).

Children with nonverbal learning disabilities (NVLD) have been found to show a high percentage of difficulties with social competence that appears to be based in faulty perceptual skills (Semrud-Clikeman & Hynd, 1990). These children experience difficulties with motor tasks, visual-spatial skills, and tactile abilities that likely contribute to problems with perception (Rourke, 2000). Difficulties in arithmetic and in inferential reasoning are often present. The extent of executive function deficits in this disorder is not fully understood and requires additional study. Difficulties with fluid reasoning, concept formation, and problem-solving have been identified in children with NVLD (Schnoebelen, Semrud-Clikeman, & Strassner, 2003). Many

of these children also appear to have ADHD, particularly the inattentive subtype (Voeller, 1986).

Children with emotional and behavioral difficulties appear to be unable to understand that feelings do not have to be acted upon. Disorders of self-control and disinhibition (seen frequently in children with ADHD) have been linked to difficulties in modulation of affect and in the understanding of nonverbal cues (Saarni, 1999). Self-regulation of emotions may well be a required foundation for the development of coping behavior.

Difficulties in self-regulation have been at the cornerstone of some of the problems experienced by children with executive functioning deficits and result in a higher proportion of negative social interchanges (Pelham & Bender, 1982). These behaviors change the social and emotional experience of the child and in many cases the child does not understand why others react the way they do. Denckla (1996) suggests a difficulty in crucial executive functions involving review of one's own behavior and the ability to change such behavior based on social feedback explains the difficulty that children with ADHD have in social interactions. The level of social stress that a sample of children with ADHD were experiencing was compared to their level of social skill development. Those who were high in social stress generally reported poorer social relationships, showed an external locus of control, and did not feel they could change their behaviors (Hargrave, Perfect, Cheng, Young, & Semrud-Clikeman, 2000). Children with co-occurring ADHD/LD have been rated as having poorer social perception than the non-diagnosed group (Hall et al., 1999). Children with a sole diagnosis of learning disabilities have not been found to automatically show peer rejection or social competence difficulties (Coleman & Minnett, 1993).

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Shelton School

Executive Function and Social Communication Disorders *continued from Page 4*

It appears that social difficulties are linked more directly to specific difficulties with executive functions and perceptual deficits than to LD generally.

An Intervention Model

A program has been developed at the University of Texas at Austin that combines the social information processing model and exercises in drama and creative expression. The SCIP program (Social Competence Intervention Program) is a multisensory intervention addressing perceptual deficits that is combined with a metacognitive component to assist with generalization to classroom and play settings. It involves retraining children in the fundamentals of social perception. Theatre games were selected that emphasized sensory, space/movement, mirroring activities, physical control, and social communications. The exercises are structured to move from perception of emotions (input) to interpretation (integration) to response (output); they begin with basic emotions and move to less common emotions. The program is developed for small groups of children aged 9 to 14 and requires 2 to 3 leaders for each group.

The first sessions involve the evaluation of the child's ability to understand facial expressions, body movement, and vocal cues (intonation and speech pacing). They involve games to develop trust and group cohesion, which include activities that encourage mutual problem-solving and time to get to know the other children. For our groups each child needed to show an IQ of 85 or greater, had social skill deficits as measured by parent and teacher report, and were free from significant neurological disorders.

One of the activities involved giving a child a silly sentence and telling him or her to say it with different emotions. This exercise allowed for a discussion of how emotions may not always match words.

Another activity required a child to silently mirror another's actions. This task requires both physical self-control and cooperation. It also allowed the child to evaluate how accurate his or her perceptions were of the other child's actions and how accurately he or she reproduced bodily communications.

Role-plays can be particularly stressful for children. To lessen stress, several activities were adapted that allowed the children to explore their "acting" abilities in smaller groups and on safe topics. As the children mastered these abilities, larger groups were introduced. After a role-play would occur, the groups would discuss what they had seen. In this manner, executive function development was encouraged as the children analyzed the feelings portrayed and how they knew what was felt by the actors. Through the use of open questioning techniques, the children explored how the actor was feeling, how the receiver of the role-play responded, what tone of voice was being used, and what were non-verbal cues. In addition, the audience was asked to describe how they were feeling during the role-play.

The activities for this program were sequential in nature and they built on each other as they become increasingly complex. Weekly assignments were utilized as well as frequent communication with parents. The data from this program is currently being generalized. Preliminary information indicates improvement for most children in understanding emotion, perspective-taking, and interactions in structured setting. Continued difficulty has been found in unstructured settings as well as in utilizing the metacognitive strategies that were taught during the sessions (Semrud-Clikeman, Guli, Kutz, Schnoebelen, Wilkinson, & Kruschwitz, 2002). Long-term follow-up has not been possible at this time but interviews six months after the intervention have indicated many skills have continued to be utilized. Parent training is an important aspect of this program that has not yet been fully developed.

Conclusion

Executive functions are an important part of social communication for all children. For children with ADHD and some types

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of LD these skills are particularly problematic and require facilitation and support from parents and teachers. Executive functions are crucial for the child to be able to evaluate his or her functioning and to determine the changes that are required in order to be successful.

Successful social communication requires the child to focus on the speaker, to understand the relationship between verbal and nonverbal communication, and to implement learned skills in the real world. "Social executive functions" are important for successful adaptation. Without these skills, children are at risk for depression, suicide, and maladaptive behaviors in adolescence and adulthood (Rourke, Young, & Leenaars, 1989). Executive functions, therefore, are not just important for cognitive functioning but appear to be crucial for successful social adaptation and quality of life.

Margaret Semrud-Clikeman, Ph.D., is Associate Professor, Department of Educational Psychology, University of Texas, Austin.

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ALTA CENTERS COUNCIL (ACC)

Who are Qualified Instructors, and what do they do in the summer?

By Nancy Coffman, MS, CALT, QI
ACC Accreditation Chair

While many CALTs were sitting by the pool reading “mind candy” books over the summer, Qualified Instructors (QIs) across the nation were reading *Overcoming Dyslexia* or the latest professional journals. While our fellow CALTs were working on their tans, the QIs were working on lectures. And while many CALTs were giving individual instruction to students, QIs were starting new groups of future CALTs.

All of us remember those summers of “intro” and “advanced” as intense, stressful, exhausting, thrilling, and life altering. The ACC Centers spend all of their summers attempting to offer the highest quality instruction in manageable units, with the least amount of stress, and the most energy so that the new trainees may feel thrilled and altered in the best possible way! An ALTA Qualified Instructor or a Qualified Instructor in training under

close supervision by a current Qualified Instructor provides all of the instruction provided by an accredited center.

The requirements to become a Qualified Instructor are even more vigorous than those to become a CALT. To apply for enrollment in a Qualified Instructor program, you must be a CALT in good standing and have a Master's degree or be in the process of acquiring a Master's degree. You must also have taught an additional 1,400 hours beyond certification, have finished the curriculum twice, and have experience with various ages, levels and situations (small groups and individual students). Once accepted into the program, a Qualified Instructor in Training (QIT) will spend two years observing lectures, writing lectures, observing trainees, grading papers, and keeping records. For a list of the current QIs, see page ten in your ALTA directory. It is the ALTA Centers Council that accredits and monitors training centers to insure that trainees and QIT's are getting the best for their time, talent, and financial resources. All of the ACC centers offer Qualified Instructor training.

Those centers that have gone through the rigorous accreditation process and are

currently accredited are:

Centers for Youth and Families,
Little Rock, Arkansas
LEAD (Literacy Education & Academic
Development, Inc.), Argyle, Texas
Multisensory Language Training
Institute of New Mexico,
Albuquerque, New Mexico
The Neuhaus Education Center,
Bellaire, Texas
Payne Education Center, Oklahoma City
and Ardmore, Oklahoma
The Scottish Rite Learning Center of
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The Scottish Rite Learning Center of
Austin, Austin, Texas
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Southwest Multisensory Training Center,
Allen, Texas
Stratford Friends School Multisensory
Teacher Training Program, Havertown,
Pennsylvania
Teachers College, Columbia University,
New York, New York
Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for
Children, Dallas, Texas

If you are interested in excellent training in an Alphabetic Phonics curriculum at either the therapist level or at the QI level, contact the training center nearest you!

In Memorium

SUSAN GAYLE DISHMAN (August 30, 1943 – July 28, 2003) lost her three-year battle with ovarian cancer on July 28. She trained with both Edmar Associates and Neuhaus Education Center. Susan practiced privately in both Plano and Richardson. She has been a member of ALTA and a long time participant in the Plano ALTA group.

PRISCILLA LUKE VAIL (November 20, 1932 – July 6, 2003) passed away on July 6 after a long battle with cancer. She was an

educator active in the fields of learning disabilities, dyslexia and the education of the gifted. Priscilla wrote and published nine books and professional articles for the NAIS and the Orton Dyslexia Society. She also lectured at conferences around the world.

ALTA's condolences go out to Susan's and Priscilla's families and friends. They will be missed by many and remembered for all the lives they've touched.

CORRECTION:

In the 2003-2004 ALTA directory, please add the name of
CALTKathryn Johnson, 440 Fieldwood Dr., Richardson, TX 75081,
972-238-8471.

bulletin Calendar

Event: **Phonemic Awareness Class**
Date: Tuesdays: 11/04; 11/11; 11/18
Times: 4 pm – 6:30 pm
Sponsor: Stratford Friends School Multisensory Teacher Training Center
Location: 5 Llandillo Rd., Havertown, PA
Contact: Sara Rivers, P 610-446-3144
Cost: \$280
Credits: One Credit or Thirty hours
Description: The major focus of the class will be on practical, multisensory activities that cultivate phonemic awareness in children. Extra attention will be given to working with young children.

Event: **Basic Language Skills**
Sponsor: The Neuhaus Education Center
Location: 4433 Bissonnet, Bellaire, TX
Contact: Irene McDonald, 713-664-7676
Dates: November 4, 11, 18, 2003; or April 26-May 7, 2004; or June 7-18, 2004.

Description: A 60-hour course for teachers, specialists, and educational therapists working with students with special needs on learning to read and spell. The course provides a comprehensive approach to teaching literacy skills, e.g. phonological awareness, letter recognition, decoding, comprehension, spelling, grammar, and written composition. This curriculum is particularly effective with dyslexic or reading-disabled students. Completion of this course is a prerequisite for entering the Dyslexia Specialist Preparation Program. Prerequisite: Foundations for Language

Event: **Gifted and Learning Difference**
Date: November 10, 2003, 7:00 p.m.
Sponsor: Dallas Dyslexia Information Group
Location: Lovers Lane United Methodist Church, Asbury Hall, Room 203
Presenter: Dr. Addie Beth Denton, Counselor, Oak Hill Academy
Contact: Velda Carr Skinner, 214-357-0565
Credit: CEU credit pending

Event: **Holiday Party at the home of Velda Skinner**
Date: December 13, 2003, 7:30 p.m.
Sponsor: Dallas Dyslexia Information Group
Location: 3605 Vancouver Dr., Dallas, TX
Contact: Velda Carr Skinner, 214-357-0565
Credit: No CEU credit for this event

Event: **Leadership Goals for 2004**
Date: January 12, 2004, 7:00 p.m.
Sponsor: Dallas Dyslexia Information Group
Location: Lovers Lane United Methodist Church, Asbury Hall, Room 203
Presenter: Velda Skinner, Language Therapist in Private Practice
Contact: Velda Carr Skinner, 214-357-0565
Credit: CEU credit pending

Event: **C. J. Davidson Memorial Lecture Series: "Advances in Literacy" From Research to Practice**
Date: February 6, 2004 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Sponsor: Scottish Rite Learning Center of West Texas

Location: Lubbock Civic Center, 1501 6th St., Lubbock, TX 79401
Presenters: Gordon Sherman, Ph.D., Developmental Dyslexia: Lessons from Neuroscience Deardra Rosenberg, M.A., LDT/C Lessons from Neuroscience: Applications in the Classroom

Event: **Phonemic Awareness Class**
Date: Tuesdays: 2/24; 3/9; 3/16; 3/23; 3/30
Time: 4:00 PM – 6:30 PM
Sponsor: Stratford Friends School Multisensory Teacher Training Center
Location: 5 Llandillo Rd., Havertown, PA
Contact: Sara Rivers, P 610-446-3144
Cost: \$280.
Credits: One Credit or Thirty hours
Description: The major focus of the class will be on practical, multisensory activities that cultivate phonemic awareness in children. Extra attention will be given to working with young children.

Event: **31st Annual Conference on Dyslexia**
Date: March 5-6, 2004
Sponsor: New York Branch of the IDA
Location: New York City
Contact: 212-691-1930, Fax 212-633-1620, www.nybida.org

Event: **Dyslexia Identification Seminar**
Date: April 7, 2004
Sponsor: Scottish Rite Learning Center of West Texas
Location: 602 Avenue Q, Lubbock, TX
Speakers: Gladys Kolenovsky and Lois Pohl, Texas Scottish Rite Hospital
Credit: .5 Credit
Contact: Doris Haney, 806-765-9150

Event: **Alphabetic Phonics Introductory Course**
Dates: May 31-June 11, 2004
Sponsor: Southwest Multisensory Training Center
Location: Allen, Texas
Contact: 972-359-6646

Event: **Introductory Alphabetic Phonics Dyslexia Therapist Training**
Date: June 7 – 25, 2004
Sponsor: Scottish Rite Learning Center of West Texas
Location: 602 Avenue Q, Lubbock, TX
Contact: Doris Haney, 806-765-9150

Event: **Advanced Alphabetic Phonics Dyslexia Therapist Training**
Date: June 21 – July 2, 2004
Sponsor: Scottish Rite Learning Center of West Texas
Location: 602 Avenue Q, Lubbock, TX
Contact: Doris Haney, 806-765-9150

Event: **Alphabetic Phonics Advanced Course**
Dates: July 12-23, 2004
Sponsor: Southwest Multisensory Training Center
Location: Allen, Texas
Contact: 972-359-6646

The Spotlight Page@ www.altaread.org

Dyslexia students are a very gifted group. Their talents are seen in many areas. They excel at imaginative stories, colorful artwork, creative problem solving, exceptional science projects, designing and building, sports and music, to name a few.

ALTA provides an opportunity for students of our therapists receiving language therapy to display art and writing projects on the web. We feature a new student or two a month. Colorful art displays the best. We have featured crayon drawings, pastels, col-

lage', watercolors, markers and pencil drawings. Subjects range from life-like scenes and favorite pets to creative, contemporary design. Occasionally, an artist writes a story to accompany the artwork. The student's school photo or current snapshot and a brief description of interests, hobbies and future plans are included. Our creative writers have submitted descriptive writing, how-to's, persuasive articles, poetry and prose. A neat hand-written copy or preferably typed articles in an age-appropriate style are what we feature. We do not desire a perfectly edited article.

The excitement for students upon seeing their work on the Internet is a self-esteem booster. One student's class at school viewed the web site together as he read his featured work to them.

Applications at www.altaread.org are ready to download or contact Jean Fortune at fortsearch@aol.com. A parent approval is required along with the therapist's signature.

CEU Calendar

Oct. 21, 2003
Hardin-Simmons University
Abilene, TX
Contact: Collene Simmons
HSU Box 16225
Abilene, TX 79698
**Intersection of 504,
IDEA, & Dyslexia**

Oct. 25, 2003
Argyle, TX
Contact: Valerie Tucker
Multisensory Spelling

Oct. 24-25, 2003
SMU-in Legacy, Bldg. 4
Phonological Awareness
Contact: SMU Continuing
Education

Oct. 29-Nov. 1, 2003
Renaissance Hotel
Austin, TX
Learning Disabilities Ass. of TX
**Creating Stars-Every
Learner Can Shine**
Contact: Ann Robinson

Nov. 3-4, 2003
DoubleTree Hotel North
Austin, TX
Council for Education
2003 Dyslexia Conferences
Contact: Donald Lindsay
(512) 219-5043

Nov.10, 2003
Lover's Lane United
Methodist Church
Dallas, TX
Dallas Dyslexia Information
Group
**Gifted and Learning
Differences**
Contact: Velda Skinner
(214) 357-0565

Nov. 21-22, 2003
SMU-in-Legacy, Bldg. 4
SMU
**Procedures and Measures for
Assessing and Diagnosing for
Dyslexia**
Contact: SMU Continuing
Education

Jan. 15-16, 2004
Moody Gardens Conf. Center
Galveston, TX
Association of Christian Schools
**Gulf States Teacher/
Administrator Conf.**
Contact: Jane Schimmer
(972) 247-6558

Feb. 3, 2004
The Lattner School
Sensory Intergration
Contact: Lynda Hardlogten-Csaszar
(972) 238-7567

Feb. 27, 2004
Southwest Miltisensory
Allen, TX
Verbal to Written Expression
Contact: Dr. Beverly Dooley
(972) 354-6646

May 3-5, 2004
Southwest Multisensory
Allen, TX
**Alpha Smarts and
Quicktionaries**
Contact: Dr. Beverly Dooley
(972) 354-6646

Southwest Academy

**ALTA members are responsible
for maintaining their own personal
CEU records for possible audit.**

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institution open to qualified
candidates of any race, color or
national origin.

Dr. Bennett Shaywitz and Dr. Sally Shaywitz

ALTA is indeed fortunate to have Drs. Bennett and Sally Shaywitz as our morning speakers. They will speak on "The Science of Reading: Overcoming Dyslexia." Dr. Bennett Shaywitz has a long-standing interest in disorders of learning and attention in children and young adults. Recently, he has used functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to discover differences in brain organization and function in children and adults with dyslexia and he is now using fMRI to study how the brain changes as children with dyslexia are taught to read. Dr. Sally Shaywitz is the Founder and Director of the Learning Disorders Unit in the Department of Pediatrics at Yale University. They are currently Co-Directors of the NICHD-Yale Center for the Study of Learning and Attention. Dr. Sally Shaywitz's research provides the basic framework: conceptual model, epidemiology and neurobiology for the scientific study of learning disabilities, particularly, dyslexia. She is the author of the current bestseller, *Overcoming Dyslexia*.

**Mark your
Calendars
ALTA Spring
Conference
April 17, 2004**

ALTA Training Centers

Spend an exciting afternoon in breakout sessions featuring representatives from many of ALTA's accredited centers as they share the latest in instructional philosophy and techniques for the remediation of dyslexia. The afternoon sessions promise to be filled with opportunities to explore strategies to inspire you and maximize the success of your students.

2004 ALTA Conference Pre-Registration

(Please print clearly)

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Phone: H() _____ W() _____ ALTA member ___ Parent ___ Professional ___

pre- registration on site registration

ALTA members.....\$50.00.....\$65.00.....\$ _____

Non-Members.....\$65.00.....\$80.00.....\$ _____

Check enclosed Purchase Order enclosed Please charge to my credit card: MC Visa

Name of Cardholder: _____ Acct. #: _____ Exp. Date _____

Mail Pre-registration to ALTA National Office, 13140 Coit Road, Suite 320, LB 120, Dallas, TX 75240

Location: The Shelton School, 15720 Hillcrest, Dallas, TX. Please check the ALTA Newsletter or visit www.altaread.org for hotel information and conference updates.

Milestones

WELCOME,

NEW STUDENT MEMBERS:

Rosa Bochas, Janet Bontke, Janet Brooker, Linda Jo Brown, Patty Cunningham, Jeanette Davis, Kelly Davis, Jaci Ekern, Patricia Gallaher, Dana Griffith, Leslie Haas, Jennifer Kapavik, Rene King, Dara LaForce-Skelton, Mary Langdon, Alexis Mavridis, Alana Neustein, Michelle Parkman, Lucia Peynado, Marcy Schnelle, Cynthia Sloan, Kimberly Story, Jill Sullivan, Roberta Wolff and Paula Woolfolk, Sarah Wright.

WELCOME,

NEW ACTIVE MEMBERS:

Melinda Bankston, Jene'e Barnes, Benita Belsley, Caroline Bezner, Penny Bigbie, Jewell Borjes, Peggy Brooks, Alta Davis, Ann Douglas, Debra Edwards, JoAnn Handy, Kay Jackson, Linda Laswell, Cindy Looney, Gayla McKnight, Treasa Owens, Laura Parker, Nancy Patton, Jennifer Price, JoAnn Sibley, Janet Sorbello, Patricia Tejada, Rosann Thomas, Laura Tiedemann and Judith Wieser.

WELCOME,

NEW QUALIFIED INSTRUCTOR

Sue Young Rodgers.

ALTA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BRANDI SILVA and husband Tony have a new daughter, Loren Kelly Silva, born Saturday, September 20. Everything is fine for the new family. While Brandi is on maternity leave, contact Madeleine Crouch at the ALTA office, extension 204 if you have ALTA-related questions.

THE SCOTTISH RITE LEARNING CENTER OF AUSTIN is

proud of the 55 educators who successfully completed the Introductory and Advanced courses of Basic Language Skills this summer. The Learning Center now has 50 teachers in the certification process to become Academic Language Therapists. The training was held in Pflugerville ISD, since the Learning Center still struggles with its growing pains and finding enough space to accommodate any number of participants. Trainers were impressed with the classes' dedication, even when faced with no air conditioning and the whelping of two puppies during the last day of the introductory class! Attendees ranged from



Bee Photo with caption: "Southwest Multisensory Training Center instructor Peggy Brooks receives a special bumblebee award from her class."

18 school districts, two private schools, and five private practioners, with interest ranging from pre-kindergarten through the adult level. Even though the workload was rigorous, the educators' comments were quite positive, realizing the importance of their learning and how it could be applied to their particular teaching situation. This group represented the third summer of training for the SRLC of Austin.

THE SOUTHWEST MULTI-SENSORY TRAINING CENTER

completed introductory training in June, with a class of over a dozen students representing several private schools and those interested in private practice. An advanced training class completed its coursework in July. Joy Quigley from Eureka Springs, Arkansas, received the "trainee traveling the farthest distance" award.

Southwest instructor Peggy Brooks also traveled to San Angelo to work with an introductory class at the James Phillips Williams Memorial Foundation. A theme used at the training center is the story of the bumblebee. He is not supposed to be able to fly because his body is too big and his wings are too small, but he flies anyway because nobody told him he couldn't.

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