

UPDATE

From the Virginia Commonwealth University Training and Technical Assistance Center (VCU T/TAC) for School Personnel Serving Children and Youth with Disabilities and Children At-Risk for Academic Failure.



Vol. 3, No. 3
May 2000

Linking People and Resources

Training Focus and Purpose

As the VCU T/TAC winds up another year, we are grappling with questions about the quality and focus of our future services. As you know, our organization has grown. We used to serve professionals working with children ages birth to five and children and youth with severe disabilities in two different parts of Virginia. Now, we serve IEP and IFSP teams, including family members of children with disabilities, and school teams working with young children who are at risk for school failure in Regions 1 and 8.

To help us find our focus, we have reviewed the Virginia Department of Education (DOE) State Improvement Plan (SIP), dialogued with our Planning and Management Team (PMT) members, engaged in continuing dialogue with leaders of at risk programs and DOE, partnered with the Virginia Institute for Developmental Disabilities (VIDD), and reviewed the literature on recommended practices in professional development. What has emerged is clear. We need to be deliberate and purposeful.

Our focus is clearly articulated in the SIP: we are charged with supporting 1) an increase in the school completion rate of students with disabilities in the context of higher academic expectations, 2) enhanced knowledge, skills, abilities, and performance of personnel who work with children and youth with disabilities, and 3) improving meaningful parent/student involvement with special education services. Our at risk component has goals aimed at similar outcomes. You, our consumers, are in agreement with these focuses. Results from our training needs survey indicate you would like training in transition planning, preventing behavior problems and using academic/behavioral supports; assisting students with disabilities in inclusive environments (e.g., to perform well on the SOLs through the provision of modifications, by providing instructional technology); and collaborative teaming.

Being purposeful is two-fold: to build capacity in the schools/programs using recommended practices in professional development. Building capacity involves providing you with much more than a workshop or a classroom visit. Based on your feedback on the needs assessment survey and in workshops, you seem to agree. You have indicated three preferences regarding the format of training we provide. You would like a training series on a concentrated topic, over time, with follow up assistance; full day conferences on a concentrated topic; and school-based workshops. Additionally, many of you have shared that you also need assistance in creating new policies and programs to support the use of recommended practices.

We appreciate the time you have taken to share your needs with us. As you can see, we think there is a good match between your needs and our commitment to being focused and purposeful. We look forward to our continued partnership as we all work to increase the capacity of schools, school personnel, service providers, and families to meet the needs of children and youth.

Tracy Landon
Jayne Bradley

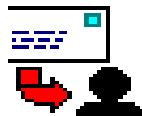
Virtual Access: A New Way of Locating

Today, computers are found in most jobs and homes and have become as critical as a briefcase for the typical business traveler. We can talk to computers, listen to the text spoken back, watch movies and even listen to radio stations through our Internet connections. Computers come in many shapes and sizes but continue to offer the multitude of features that enable individuals to "stay connected" to the virtual society we are fast becoming.

The impact of the Internet and the tools available for its use are phenomenal. Through electronic mail (E-mail) we can contact friends and family in seconds and save hundreds of dollars in phone bills. We can attach and send files to colleagues, enhancing the speed and productivity in collaborative project development. Electronic conferencing, enabled through online chat rooms, listservs and discussion areas, allow us to electronically communicate with others through the computer. The future promise of real time conferencing and video streaming will provide live connections between computers and classrooms, allowing individuals to see and speak to each other simultaneously. These advances are reasons for our increased attention to distance learning opportunities.

The T/TAC at VCU is committed to staying ahead of this technology revolution. Since October, 1999 you've probably noticed some changes to our current website, <http://www.vcu.edu/eduweb/ttac.htm>. In accessing our website, one can find online information about current trainings, our publications, locations of other T/TAC programs and email links to our staff. A comprehensive list of web links is also provided to cover a wide range of disability, technology and service areas. We are currently preparing for another major change in the design and components of our website. We believe that this will become a major vehicle in how we deliver information, correspond with our consumers, and provide resources that can be instantly available online.

In addition to our website, we are fortunate to have access to a distance learning software program at VCU known as *Web Course in a Box*. This is a courseware product that offers structure to professors and other educators in designing and delivering courses online. For those who live in faraway locations, this new method of course delivery eliminates barriers, to enrolling in courses. The VCU T/TAC is also beginning to consider ways that we can benefit from these strategies to provide more resources to our consumers. Over the next month you will see some these strategies woven throughout our website in the shape of discussion forums and online versions of our newsletters. We trust this will be of benefit to you and we welcome your comments and thoughts as we continue to perfect our online presence. If you have comments, questions or suggestions, please direct them to our webmaster, Fran Smith, fsmith@edunet.soe.vcu.edu.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Educational Approaches to Autism -- 21st Annual TEACCH Conference

Sponsor: TEACCH Division, University of
North Carolina
Date: May 25-26, 2000
Location: Chapel Hill, NC
Contact: (919)966-4126



Finding a Clinical Comfort Zone in the Management of Voice Disorders

Sponsor: Continuing Education Programs
of America
Date: June 9-10, 2000
Location: Philadelphia, PA
Contact: Linda Neilson
(309) 263-0310



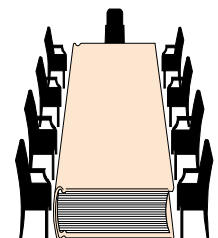
Black Hills Seminar 2000: Life Space Crisis Intervention -- Youth in Crisis Training

Sponsor: Life Space Crisis Intervention
Institute
Date: June 17-22, August 15-20, &
September 30 - October 5, 2000
Location: Spearfish Canyon Lodge,
Spearfish, SD
Contact: 800-647-5224
(605) 336-4620

The Virginia Branch of The International Dyslexia Association: Summer 2000 Content Enhancement Workshop

(This workshop is a follow-up to the Feast & Forum Content
Enhancement Sessions)

Sponsor: VBIDA
Date: June 21, 2000
Location: Northstar Academy,
Richmond VA
Contact: Pat Parrott
(804) 744-0931



Stuttering Therapy: Practical Ideas for the School Clinician

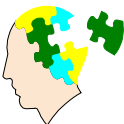
Sponsor: Stuttering Foundation of America and
the University of South Carolina
Date: July 9-10, 2000
Location: Hilton Charleston North Hotel, SC
Contact: Stuttering Foundation of America
800-992-9392



TEACCH Classroom Training Program -- Training for Professionals who Work with Students with Autism

(Weekly sessions held for these age groups: Preschool &
Early Elementary; Elementary & Adolescent)

Sponsor: Division TEACCH, University of North
Carolina
Date: July 10-14; July 17-21; July 24-28; July
31 - August 4, 2000
Location: Chapel Hill, NC
Contact: Alice Wertheimer
(919)966-4127
Alice_Wertheimer@med.unc.edu>



Fostering Children's Creativity through MUSIC AND ART

(A one-day workshop for Early Childhood Educators)

Sponsor: Resources for Educational Training and
Development
Date/
Location: August 1, 2000 -- Philadelphia, PA
August 2, 2000 -- Baltimore, MD
August 3 & 4, 2000 --
Washington, D.C.
Contact: 1-800-408-6778



Oral Motor Assessment and Intervention I & II

Sponsor: Morton Plant Mease HealthCare &
Milestones Therapy Center, Inc.
Date: September 8-9, 2000
(Oral Motor I)
Location: Charlotte, NC
Contact: (727)541-2091



Long Term Technical Assistance Sites: Planning for Continuation in 2000-2001

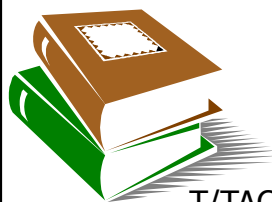
Long Term Technical Assistance projects in Halifax,
Amelia, Brunswick, and Henrico counties have been
in place throughout the 1999-2000 year. Teams in each
of these sites have worked as partners with teams of
T/TAC Program Specialists to bring about major
systemic improvements for students. Because we know
that it takes about three to five years (sometimes
longer) for major changes to take place and for new
practices to become established, these projects will
be continued in the 2000-2001 school year.

The T/TAC will be accepting applications for new and
continuing Long Term Technical Assistance projects in
early 2001. New and continuing projects that are
selected to receive long term technical assistance will
receive intensive support for the 2001-2002 and 2002-
2003 school years. Be on the look out for information
about the application process in T/TAC publications
next fall!



Good bye Howard

Even though Howard Garner retired from his faculty
position at VCU last year, the T/TAC has been fortunate to
have him continue to serve as Co-director this year. As the
old saying goes, however - All good things must come to
an end. Howard is retiring from the T/TAC on June 30.
VCU, students with disabilities and those at risk for school
failure, and professionals in schools and early intervention
programs have benefited from Howard's leadership in
training and technical assistance for nearly 10 years. He
served as Director of the Severe Disabilities TAC from
1991 to 1996, and then as a founding Co-director of the
current T/TAC for Regions 1 and 8. Although Howard will
be sorely missed, we wish him the best of luck as he perfects
his golf game and continues to pursue the coveted title of
Best Grandfather in the Garner family!



NOTICE!

T/TAC Library Materials Are Due

If you have any materials on loan
from the T/TAC, please return them
no later than June 1.

THANKS!



VCU
LOGO

T/TAC Region 1

School of Education
VCU Box 842020
Richmond, VA 23284

T/TAC Region 8

Learning Center Campus
P.O. Box 309
Lawrenceville, VA 23868

T/TAC Office in Region 1 T/TAC Office in Region 8

School of Education
VCU Box 842020
Richmond, VA 23284
(804) 828-6947
800-426-1595
TDD (800) 828-1120
FAX (804) 828-7495

Learning Center Campus
P.O. Box 309
Lawrenceville, VA 23868
(804) 848-6575
877-383-1199
FAX (804) 848-6333

For more information concerning T/TAC workshops, professional development opportunities, or the services we provide, please call 1-800-426-1595 or contact the T/TAC office nearest you.

VCU T/TAC WEBSITE:
www.vcu.edu/edunet/ttac

The T/TAC Staff

Project Co-Director	Howard Garner
Project Co-Director	Evelyn Reed-Victor
Program Specialist	Jayne Bradley
Program Specialist	Linda Ingleson
Program Specialist	Sharon Jones
Program Specialist	Pam Kinney
Program Specialist	Tracy Landon
Program Specialist	Linda Oggel
Program Specialist	Fran Smith
Program Specialist	Jo Smith Read
Program Specialist	Debby Wesson
Program Specialist	Sandy Wilberger
Program Specialist	Kathe Wittig
Information & Dissemination Specialist	Jerri Cash
Library Specialist	Victoria Walden
Program Support Technician	Sarah Clevinger
Office Services Specialist	Paul Robertson
Graduate Assistant	Rebecca Dawson

The Training and Technical Assistance Center (T/TAC) at Virginia Commonwealth University is one of a network of regional T/TACs funded by the Virginia Department of Education.



VIRGINIA
INSTITUTE FOR
DEVELOPMENTAL
DISABILITIES

TECH+KNOWLEDGY 2000

Assistive Technology Workshop Series

November 16-17, 2000, Sheraton Park South, Richmond, VA

Sponsors: Hospital Education Program

Training and Technical Assistance Centers at VCU, ODU and JMU
Children's Hospital, Richmond, VA

FEATURED SPEAKERS:

Pamela S. Elder

Pamela Elder is a Speech-Language Pathologist specializing in augmentative communication evaluation and treatment. In her practice in Birmingham, Alabama, she has consulted with numerous state, national and international agencies providing augmentative communication services. Ms. Elder is the founder and coordinator of the Southeast Augmentative Communication Conference held yearly since 1980. She has authored the *Semantic Compaction Competency Profile* (Elder, Goossens' and Bray, 1992), *Engineering Training Environments for Interactive Augmentative Communication, Strategies for Adolescents and Adults who are Moderately/Severely Developmentally Delayed* (Elder and Goossens', 1994) and *Communication Overlays for Engineered Training Environments, Books I, II, III, and IV* (Elder and Goossens', 1996). Ms. Elder has lectured extensively on augmentative communication to both national and international audiences.

Joanne Cafiero, Ph.D.

Dr. Joanne Cafiero is a faculty member of Johns Hopkins University Graduate Division of Education. She co-designed the graduate program "Teaching Students with Autism" and designed and teaches "AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication) and Autism" and "Classroom Programming for Students with Autism" in that program. Dr. Cafiero is a member of the National Academy of Sciences Committee on Educational Interventions for Students with Autism. She is conducting extensive research on autism and AAC.

As a private consultant, Dr. Cafiero developed two AAC-based public school programs for preschool and primary aged children with autism. Through her workshops, Dr. Cafiero has brought AAC to children with autism in the Philippines, Italy, the Netherlands and Sweden.

Richard Wanderman

Richard Wanderman has been working as a technology consultant, presenter, trainer and teacher for the past 20 years. He has made hundreds of presentations and has led students, teachers, parents, administrators and other professionals through hundreds of workshops concerning technology and learning disabilities. He taught high school and college courses on using computers in a variety of capacities—from writing and organizational skills to software design and production. He publishes a number of resources for the learning disabilities community and maintains a site on the worldwide web devoted to learning disabilities.

Linda Burkhart

Linda Burkhart is a nationally known pioneer in the field of simplified technology for children with severe disabilities. She has developed numerous adapted switches and innovative applications for using these devices with children. She has had vast experience teaching children with severe and profound disabilities. She has also taught a preschool "total augmentative communication classroom" for children who are pre-verbal or non-verbal. In addition to teaching, she has presented workshops and conducted programs both nationally and internationally. Linda is the author of four revered books in the field.

TECHKNOWLEDGY 2000 AGENDA

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 16

8:00 - 9:00 REGISTRATION

9:00 - 3:30 ALL DAY SESSION FEATURING:

Joanne Cafiero "AAC and Autism: Research to Practice"

12:00 - 1:00 LUNCHEON

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17

8:30 - 9:00 REGISTRATION

9:00 - 12:00 CONCURRENT SESSIONS

WORKSHOP A (FULL DAY): Pam Elder

"Facilitating Interactive Augmentative Communication in Engineered Learning Environments"

WORKSHOP B (FULL DAY): Richard

Wanderman "Learning Disabilities and Technology: Tools, Techniques, Ideas and Advice for Home, School and Work"

WORKSHOP C: Joanne Cafiero

"AAC for Positive Behavior Support"

WORKSHOP D: Linda Burkhart

"Come Join The Fun! Adapting a Birthday Party"

12:00 - 1:00 LUNCHEON

1:00 - 4:00 CONTINUATION OF WORKSHOPS A & B

WORKSHOP E: Joanne Cafiero

"AAC and Autism: The Literacy-Communication Connection"

WORKSHOP F: Linda Burkhart

"Three Billy Goats Gruff—Make and Take"

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Conference Registration Fees:

\$100/one day \$125/two days

Sign up early! Reduced rates prior to Sept. 15, 2000

\$75/one day \$100/two days

Conference Registration Deadline: Oct. 26, 2000

Cancellations must be in writing by Nov. 1, 2000 to receive a full refund. No refunds made after that date.

Hotel Information: Sheraton Park South

9901 Midlothian Tnpke, Richmond, VA 23235 (804) 323-1144

Conference Rates: Single/Double \$78.50

Hotel Reservation Deadline: Oct. 25, 2000

When making hotel reservations, identify yourself as attending the TechKnowledge '00 Conference. If special accommodations are needed, please call the Education Department at (804) 321-7474 x 6096

Recertification points and CEU's available.

TECHKNOWLEDGY 2000

REGISTRATION FORM:

(PLEASE COMPLETE ONE FORM PER REGISTRANT)

Name: _____

Position: _____

Organization: _____

Agesserved: 0-2 _____ 3-5 _____ 6-11 _____ 12-14 _____ 15+ _____

School Division: _____

Other: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Indicate Workshop(s)

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 16

_____ ALL DAY SESSION: AAC and Autism: Research to Practice

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17

_____ WORKSHOP A (FULL DAY): Facilitating Interactive Augmentative Communication in Engineered Learning Environments

_____ WORKSHOP B (FULL DAY): Learning Disabilities and Technology: Tools, Techniques, Ideas & Advice for Home, School & Work

_____ WORKSHOP C: AAC for Positive Behavior Support

_____ WORKSHOP D: Come Join The Fun! Adapting a Birthday Party

_____ WORKSHOP E: AAC and Autism: The Literacy-Communication Connection

_____ WORKSHOP F: Three Billy Goats Gruff—Make and Take

\$30 MATERIALS FEE

Early Registration Fee: \$75/one day \$100/two days

Registration After 9/15: \$100/one day \$125/two days

Total Enclosed: _____

PO# _____

Please return by October 26, 2000

Checks payable to: TechKnowledge 2000-VCU

Mail to: Children's Hospital, Attn: Education Dept., 2924 Brook Road, Richmond, VA 23220, (804) 321-7474x6096

Confirmation & Directions will be mailed to you prior to conference.