

# FAMILY ENGAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

Topic of the Month: Learning Disabilities



## Upcoming Statewide Events

### Children First Conference

This event is for those caring for, working with, or concerned with the well-being of children and young adults with social, emotional, and behavioral challenges. Some scholarship funding will be available for parents/primary caregivers who would otherwise be unable to attend.

**Date:** November 16 & 17, 2016

**Location:** Glacier Canyon Lodge, Wilderness Resort, WI Dells

[Information and Registration Link](#)

### Teaching & Supporting New Behaviors

Behavior which interferes with the learning of a student or others is often the result of a context that is not adequately supported. Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) will be taught along with the opportunity for participants to work in groups to develop sup strategies and Behavior Intervention Plans. In addition, a model to work with escalating behaviors will be presented.

**Date:** November 30-December 1, 2016

**Location:** Comfort Suites-Green Bay Conference Center & The Rock Garden

[Information and Registration Link](#)

### Helping Children Cope with Anger

Children who take responsibility for their actions, behavior, and anger, and learn effective strategies, are able to regulate their emotions and deal effectively with life's disappointments. Through this presentation, Dr. Langley, from Clinical Psychology Associates, will provide adults with strategies to help their children become emotionally competent and manage their anger in healthy ways. No cost event- pre-registration required.

**Date:** December 1, 2016 6-7:30 pm

**Location:** Aurora Wellness Center, 300 McCanna Pkwy, Burlington, WI

[Contact Lori Radtke](#) 262-763-0180

## Parents as Part of Decision-Making Groups

By Wendy Overturf

In December 2010, Wisconsin adopted a new rule for determining eligibility for specific learning disabilities (SLD). As of December 1, 2013, IEP teams must consider data from progress monitoring following general education interventions to determine "insufficient progress." Under Wisconsin's SLD rule a public school student, upon initial identification, may only be found to have an impairment of SLD if the IEP team finds, after analysis of data, that:

1. The student demonstrates insufficient progress in one or more of eight academic areas. In determining "insufficient progress", IEP teams must consider data from progress monitoring following intensive general education interventions.
2. The student demonstrates inadequate classroom (academic) achievement, using a valid and reliable standardized achievement test administered following intensive general education interventions.
3. The student's insufficient progress and inadequate classroom achievement are not primarily caused by one or more exclusionary factors, such as limited English proficiency or whether the student received appropriate general education instruction in the area(s) of concern.

In order to more accurately, efficiently, and effectively implement the new rule change many school districts implemented a Multi-Level System of Support (RtI). This is a system change from the previous discrepancy model of identifying students for SLD. For system changes to be the most effective, input from all stakeholders is required. This includes administrators, teachers, parents, students, and community.

Given that this was a major change in SLD identification, a parent with a child identified as having a learning disability wanted to become involved in her school planning process so that she could better understand the change. Such participation would also allow her to assist other parents in understanding the new model. She asked to be part of team that the district was forming to develop a RtI model. The district welcomed this involvement and the parent was involved with all phases of the planning and implementation of RtI. Furthermore, she continues to be involved when the team reviews the progress of the model. She expressed that being on this decision-making team was a very valuable experience. Not only did she gain understanding of the changes, but felt that she developed a truly collaborative relationship with the school staff.

Involvement on school-wide decision making groups is one type of parental engagement. Joyce Epstein of Johns Hopkins University has developed a framework for defining six different types of parent involvement. This [framework](#) assists educators in developing school and family partnership programs. "There are many reasons for developing school, family, and community partnerships," she writes. "The main reason to create such partnerships is to help all youngsters succeed in school and in later life." Evidence shows that, when parents and family members are involved in a child's education, the outcome is positive: higher test scores, increased attendance, better behavior and social skills, higher rate of graduation and increased drive to pursue post-secondary education.

On the Epstein model, participation on decision-making groups is considered a "type 5" level of parental involvement. Often times parents who have not had this type of involvement have benefitted from participating in training to help them to better understand this process. WIFACETS has developed a guidebook and trainings that will help assist parents in this process. To learn more about this visit the ["Serving on Groups" website](#).

## Upcoming Statewide Events

### **Building the Heart of Successful Schools**

This conference will highlight cutting-edge prevention, health, and wellness strategies in order to create positive school climates that build resilience and support students' behavioral and mental health. Specific emphasis this year will be placed on building trauma-sensitive schools and advancing school mental health infrastructure. The pre-conference on December 7 is on Strategies to Support Resiliency and Address Trauma Among Youth.

**Date:** December 7-9, 2016

**Location:** Wilderness Resort, WI Dells  
[Information and Registration Link](#)

### **Wisconsin State Reading Conference**

Three days devoted to expanding literacy in Wisconsin through workshops and sectionals, including the Young Readers Conference! More information will be posted at a later date.

**Date:** February 9-11, 2017

**Location:** Wisconsin Center, Milwaukee, WI

[Information and Registration Link](#)

### **Wisconsin Transition Conference**

Sessions will be appropriate for beginning, intermediate and advanced level learners. Participants have the opportunity to attend sessions and visit the Exhibit Hall to learn more about transition services and products, meet our entrepreneurs with disabilities and network during breaks.

**Date:** February 9-10, 2017

**Location:** Kalahari Resort and Convention Center, WI Dells

[Information and Registration Link](#)

### **Autism of Society of Wisconsin Annual Conference-Save the Date!**

Temple Grandin will be the keynote speaker on April 28, 2017. In this special presentation backed evidence-based research, Dr. Temple Grandin will provide a look into her personal experiences; intervention, problems with sensory and over-sensitivity. She will also discuss the thinking process, the importance of developing strengths as well as the importance of work skills.

**Date:** April 27-29 2017

**Location:** Kalahari, Wisconsin Dells  
[Information and Registration Link](#)

## Instructional Trends



**Response to Intervention (RtI)** is a process for achieving higher levels of academic and behavioral success for all students through high quality instruction, continuous review of student progress, and collaboration. In [Wisconsin's vision for RtI](#), the three essential elements of high quality instruction, balanced assessment, and collaboration systematically interact within a multi-level system of support to provide the structures to increase success for all students. Culturally responsive practices are central to an effective RtI system and are evident within each of the three essential elements. In a multi-level system of support, schools employ the three essential elements of RtI at varying levels of intensity based upon student responsiveness to instruction and intervention. These elements do not work in isolation. Rather, all components of the model inform and are impacted by the others.

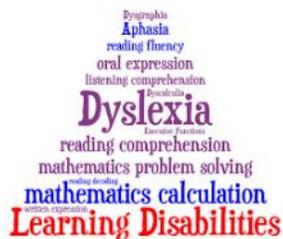
**Successful implementation of this framework in Wisconsin is based upon the following seven principles:**

- RtI is for ALL children and ALL educators.
- RtI must support and provide value to effective practices.
- Success for RtI lies within the classroom through collaboration.
- RtI applies to both academics and behavior.
- RtI supports and provides value to the use of multiple assessments to inform instructional practices.
- RtI is something you do and not necessarily something you buy.
- RtI emerges from and supports research and evidence based practice.

**As outlined on the Wisconsin RtI Center website, the basics of RtI include:**

- Wisconsin's RtI program is built on the foundation of national RtI programs that have been proven to work for students, based on scientific, research-based instruction.
- RtI programs use frequent assessments to measure how students are doing in the basic areas of reading, spelling, mathematics and/or written language.
- Three times a year, school personnel review records of students' performance on these assessments to determine which students may be at-risk or need additional challenges within their curriculum. This is called a "universal screening."
- If a student does not respond well to the adjustments in curriculum and is under-performing in academics, additional help will be provided on varying levels. These levels of additional instruction are called "interventions."
- Students who are selected to receive interventions are then continually assessed throughout the intervention time to determine if the change in curriculum is positive impacting their educational experience and academic performance. This is referred to as "progress monitoring."
- If a student does not respond well to the adjustments in curriculum and is under-performing in academics, additional help will be provided on varying levels. These levels of additional instruction are called "interventions."
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A RtI model is often used in special education evaluations for Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD). With a SLD rule that requires the analysis of data following intensive intervention, there are often questions about its use in the process. The [Wisconsin RtI Center](#) has many resources related to this topic.



## ONLINE RESOURCES

### Center for Parent Information and Resources (CPIR)

This website has a variety of links to resources related to learning disabilities. Use both “learning disabilities” and “SLD” on the website search box to obtain information. [CPIR website](#)

### Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

This website provides guidance for implementing Wisconsin Criteria for Specific Learning Disabilities as well as links to other information related to learning disabilities. [WI DPI website](#)

### Learning Disabilities Association of America (LDA)

Since 1963, LDA has provided support to people with learning disabilities, their parents, teachers, and other professionals with cutting edge information on learning disabilities, practical solutions, and a comprehensive network of resources. These services make LDA the leading resource for information on learning disabilities. This month (Oct.) in recognition of Learning Disabilities Month, LDA America has "30 days of LD" – a calendar which offers free webinars, links to great apps, and a wealth of information not only about learning disabilities, but additional resources that could be helpful. [LDA website](#)

### AdLit

AdLit.org is a national multimedia project offering information and resources to the parents and educators of struggling adolescent readers and writers. [AdLit website](#)

### Get Ready to Read!

Get Ready to Read! is designed to support educators, parents, and young children in the development of early literacy skills in the years before kindergarten. Intended for use with all children, the resources and information provided on this site promote skill-building, communication between adults, and ways to address concerns. [Get Ready to Read!](#)

### The National Center for Learning Disabilities

The mission of The National Center for Learning Disabilities is to improve the lives of all people with learning difficulties and disabilities by empowering parents, enabling young adults, transforming schools, and creating policy and advocacy impact. Website has information on learning disabilities, resources, as well as link to newsletter. [NCLD](#)

**The International Dyslexia Association (IDA)** is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, scientific, and educational organization dedicated to the study and treatment of the learning disability, dyslexia as well as related language-based learning differences. The purpose of IDA is to pursue and provide the most comprehensive range of information and services that address the full scope of dyslexia and related difficulties in learning to read and write. Website has links to research, interventions, as well as newsletter. [International Dyslexia Association](#)

### The Wisconsin Reading Coalition

The Wisconsin Reading Coalition is a grassroots movement of parents, educators, advocacy organizations, health professionals, and business leaders committed to bringing scientifically-based reading instruction and intervention to all Wisconsin students. Website has link to research, videos, and interventions. [Wisconsin Reading Coalition](#)

### Understood

The goal of the website is to help the millions of parents whose children, ages 3–20, are struggling with learning and attention issues. It provides information to empower parents to understand their children's issues and relate to their experiences. With this knowledge, parents can make effective choices that propel their children from simply coping to truly thriving. Website is very parent-friendly and offers links to information related to learning difficulties. Archived webinars are also available. [Understood](#)



The Wisconsin Response to Intervention (RtI) Center is a product of collaboration between the Cooperative Educational Service Agency (CESA) Statewide Network and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI). The center was created to assist Wisconsin's educational systems to build capacity, adopt and implement high quality practices, make informed decisions, ensure sustainability of efforts and increased success for all students. The Wisconsin Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Network operates within the Wisconsin RtI Center with a specific focus on behavior.

The Center's mission is to build the capacity of Wisconsin schools to develop and sustain a culturally responsive multi-level system of support to ensure success for all students. The Wisconsin RtI Center provides professional development and technical assistance to help schools operationalize implementation of culturally responsive multi-level systems of support. The center offers statewide trainings on the components in order to establish consistent foundations upon which schools should build their system.

The website also has a section for parents and families. There is an extensive “Response to Intervention and Family Engagement Online Module” as well as links to many other resources related to RtI.

[Wisconsin RtI Center website](#)

## UPCOMING WEBINARS

Information & registration for WI FACETS free workshops and webinars :

[www.wifacets.org/events](http://www.wifacets.org/events)

By phone, contact Sandra: 877-374-0511

Via email: [smcfarland@wifacets.org](mailto:smcfarland@wifacets.org)

Programa de Educacion Individualizado (IEP) Parte 1

(Telephone Workshop)

Date: November 18, 2016

Presenter: Martha Lechuga, WI FACETS

Spotlight on Reading: What Parents Need to Know

Date: November 29, 2016

Presenter: Cheryl Ward, North Shore Ctr

Fostering Independence with the Use of Supportive Technology for Special Learners

Date: November 30, 2016

Presenter: Elizabeth Langteau, OTR

WSEMS: Mediation

Date: December 5, 2016

Presenter: Jan Serak, WI FACETS and Nissan Bar-Lev, CESA 7

Preschool Options

Date: December 6, 2016

Presenter: Emilie Braunel, WI FACETS

Programa de Educacion Individualizado (IEP) Parte 2

(Telephone Workshop)

Date: December 9, 2016

Presenter: Martha Lechuga, WI FACETS

### Latino Autism Support Group

Grupo de Autismo: Es su Hijo Un Blanco de Intimidacion y Acoso?

Date: November 19, 2016 10-12 pm

Location: WI FACETS, 600 W. Virginia St. Suite 501, Milwaukee.

Contact: Martha Lechuga (414) 374-4645, ext 224

Grupo de Autismo: Celebracion de Fin de Ano

Date: December 17, 2016

Location: To be determined

Contact: Martha Lechuga (414) 374-4645, ext 224



## HOME-BASED LEARNING

### Literacy at Home

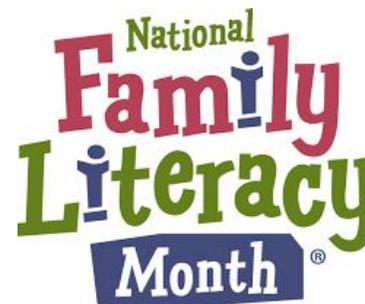
November is Family Literacy Month! Check out this activity calendar with [30 days of family learning](#).

Check out these free books from [United Library](#), available with English or Spanish text, and a variety of narration languages.

Learn valuable [strategies](#) and phrases to use when your child is struggling to read. Or, check out these [6 fun ways](#) to build reading skills for students who struggle.

Practice literacy skills by having your children fill out these [Thanksgiving Gratitude Cards](#) for friends and family. Print this copy, or design your own!

Check out the Reading is Fundamental calendars for November for children [ages 0-5](#) and [children 6+](#). Lots of fun literacy-related activities related to November holidays, fall fun, and more.



### Home Math Strategies

Practice some fall themed [word problems](#) to get your child's brain moving!

Here are some printable fall math activities. Try the [pumpkin pie fractions](#) activity on page 16.

Cooking is a great way to practice math skills with children. Check out these [math tips for cooking](#) that you can use at Thanksgiving or any meal.

Check out some tips for parents whose children struggle with math on [using games](#) to help your child with math. Here are [7 games](#) that can help younger children increase math skills.

DreamBox has a [math calendar](#) from a past November with activities for most days that you can connect to math learning!



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## RESEARCH TO READ

### Identifying and Supporting English Learner Students with Learning Disabilities: Key Issues in the Literature and State Practice

Burr, Elizabeth, Eric Haas, and Karen Ferriere. ". REL 2015-086." *Regional Educational Laboratory West* (2015).

[Article Link](#)



**Overview:** This review of research and policy literature distills several key elements of processes that can help identify and support English learner students with learning disabilities. It also describes current guidelines and protocols used by the 20 states with the largest populations of English learner students. This report informs education leaders who are setting up processes to determine which English learner students may need placement in special education programs as opposed to other assistance.

### Teaching Social Studies to Upper Elementary Students with Learning Disabilities: Graphic Organizers and Explicit Instruction

Ciullo, Stephen, Terry Falcomata, and Sharon Vaughn. *Learning Disability Quarterly* 38.1 (2015): 15-26.

[Article Link](#)

**Abstract:** The authors report the effects of a single-case, multiple-probe design investigation for students with learning disabilities (LD) in Grades 4 and 5. Seven students classified as LD and with persistent difficulty with informational-text comprehension from two elementary schools participated. The study compared social studies learning across two conditions: a text-based summarization baseline and a treatment that used graphic organizers and explicit instruction. Results suggest the manifestation of a functional relation for all students on daily content quizzes and minimal performance overlap between conditions. On a pre/post social studies measure, students at both schools improved, but students at School B made greater gains at posttest. Results suggest that treatment components that have been effective for students in secondary school are promising for enhancing learning with social studies text in students with LD in Grades 4 and 5.

### When does speech sound disorder matter for literacy? The role of disordered speech errors, co-occurring language impairment and family risk of dyslexia

Hayiou-Thomas, Marianna E., et al. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* (2016).

[Article Link](#)

**Abstract:**

**Background:** This study considers the role of early speech difficulties in literacy development, in the context of additional risk factors.

**Method:** Children were identified with speech sound disorder (SSD) at the age of 3½ years, on the basis of performance on the Diagnostic Evaluation of Articulation and Phonology. Their literacy skills were assessed at the start of formal reading instruction (age 5½), using measures of phoneme awareness, word-level reading and spelling; and 3 years later (age 8), using measures of word-level reading, spelling and reading comprehension.

**Results:** The presence of early SSD conferred a small but significant risk of poor phonemic skills and spelling at the age of 5½ and of poor word reading at the age of 8. Furthermore, within the group with SSD, the persistence of speech difficulties to the point of school entry was associated with poorer emergent literacy skills, and children with 'disordered' speech errors had poorer word reading skills than children whose speech errors indicated 'delay'. In contrast, the initial severity of SSD was not a significant predictor of reading development. Beyond the domain of speech, the presence of a co-occurring language impairment was strongly predictive of literacy skills and having a family risk of dyslexia predicted additional variance in literacy at both time-points.

**Conclusions**

Early SSD alone has only modest effects on literacy development but when additional risk factors are present, these can have serious negative consequences, consistent with the view that multiple risks accumulate to predict reading disorders.

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## Edgewood College: Empowering Parents and Caregivers

Edgewood College is partnering with multiple schools in Wisconsin to empower parents and caregivers as they engage in the special education process. This work, funded in part by the WDPI-SPDG Grant and OSEP, allows faculty and Graduate students to create small-scale professional learning communities (PLCs) in local education agencies to support families. Under the leadership of Dr. Tom Holub, this work has impacted 7 schools to date and 4 more will be working with them in 2016-2017. Activities have included Parent Focus PMs with guest speakers, reading groups, and electronic distance support. If you are aware of a school that may be interested in joining this partnership, you are encouraged to contact Dr. Holub at [tholub@edgewood.edu](mailto:tholub@edgewood.edu).

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# CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER

## Upcoming newsletter topic:

December: **Multicultural Learners**

To submit contributions, you may use either the attached word document for contributing articles, events, or resources. Send submissions to [woverturf@wifacets.org](mailto:woverturf@wifacets.org). If unable to access form, send you may send information in an email.

Deadline for submitting contributions to each month's issue is by the **1st of each month**. For time sensitive training advertisements, the information should be sent a minimum of two weeks prior to the event date; ideally a month ahead of time. Material appropriate for the monthly newsletter include web links to sources of family involvement/parent leadership resources, advertisements for statewide trainings for parents, youth or parent/educator audiences, information about statewide parent agencies, recent research pertaining to family engagement, and family engagement success articles. Family engagement success or impact stories can be written at an individual or family level, classroom level, school building level, district level, county level, CESA level, etc. Your submittal may not be in the final copy of the upcoming month's newsletter if it was in a previous month's email, the event date has passed, the web link doesn't work, or there is already an article in place. Articles and resources will be saved to be used for later newsletters. We reserve the right to edit contributions as needed.

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**This monthly update is provided by the Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training & Support (WI FACETS) to share statewide information regarding parent leadership and family involvement.**

**DISCLAIMER:** Inclusion of information in this newsletter does not constitute an endorsement by Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training, and Support (WI FACETS), the Department of Public Instruction, the U.S. Department of Education, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

**NOTE:** If you would like to receive this monthly update or if you would like to have your name removed from the distribution list, please go to <http://www.servingongroups.org/newsletter-signup> or contact: Wendy Overturf at [woverturf@wifacets.org](mailto:woverturf@wifacets.org).



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