

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

This month's topic: Gifted Education

Upcoming Statewide Events

Autism Essentials Across the School Day- DPI Two Day Conference

In addition to reviewing the essential core strategies to assist students with autism, this is a great training to invite general education teachers, new special education staff, paraprofessionals, families, and other staff working with students with autism to receive a general overview of autism and autism-related teaching strategies. This will address specific questions participants have in relation to behaviors which they find challenging and also in learning teaching strategies which help meet some basic needs for children with autism.

Dates: January 13 -14, 2015

Location: Johnson Creek, WI

[Information & Registration Link](#)

Teaching New Behaviors—DPI Two Day Autism Conference

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 opportunity given to participants to work in groups to develop support strategies and Behavior Intervention Plans. In addition a model to work with escalating behaviors will be presented.

Dates: February 17 - 18, 2015

Location: Johnson Creek, WI

[Information & Registration Link](#)

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IMPACT

Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover

By Wendy Overturf

The holidays are fast approaching! There are decorations to be put up, special family celebrations to be planned, and there are presents to be wrapped. How many of us often try to wrap presents in a manner so that the receiver doesn't know what might be in the box?

Sometimes, that happens with our students as well. We do not always know what gifts and talents a student might possess. A conversation I had with a teacher who taught in an alternative school program illustrates this point. Not knowing what avenue his students might decide to pursue for post-secondary education, he had all his students take the ACT college entrance exam. Shortly after the results were reported to the school, the school counselor told the instructor that one of his students had scored one of the highest scores in the school. The counselor was questioning the validity of the result. This young man, who had been identified with an emotional-behavioral disability, had

been placed in the alternative program due to his inability to follow the rules of the traditional classroom as well as his failing grades in most classes.

The counselor said that surely Eddy could not have scored that well on the ACT without some type of "assistance" on the test. In other words, Eddy must have cheated in some manner. The instructor was quite dismayed with the conversation. Obviously, the counselor really didn't know or understand Eddy and was just making preconceived judgments based on outward behaviors. The instructor showed some of Eddy's class work and projects to the counselor. The counselor was amazed at the high quality of work that he viewed. The instructor told the counselor that Eddy was indeed an extremely gifted and talented young man. Eddy did learn in some non-traditional ways, but when the learning was presented in an engaging and relevant manner, and when Eddy felt comfortable,

accepted, and respected, he was capable of learning at high levels.

Given his high ACT score, he obviously had been learning when he was in the general education program, even if his behavior and actions were contrary to accepted classroom norms.

Shortly after this conversation, Eddy was encouraged by the counselor to enroll in some of the Advanced Placement Courses that were offered. Eddy was now being viewed in an entirely different perspective. While this was a positive for Eddy and a tribute to of the effectiveness of the alternative education instructor, it is also a reminder that all students have potential gifts and that one should never just "judge a book by its cover." It is all our responsibility as supporters of all children to assist in discovering and bringing to the forefront the hidden talents and attributes of our children and students. They don't deserve anything less from us.



Upcoming Statewide Events

Wisconsin Transition Conference
Dates: February 18-20, 2015
Location: Kalahari, WI Dells

Keynote speakers will discuss research based strategies that improve post school outcomes for students with behavioral challenges and national employment initiatives and current employment outcomes and strategies for students with disabilities in transition. Participants have the opportunity to choose from many sessions and will be able to visit the Exhibit Hall to learn more about transition services and products, meet our entrepreneurs with disabilities and network during breaks! [Early registration prices end 12/19/2014.](#)

[Conference Schedule, Information & Registration Link](#)

Rtl and Family Engagement
Date: March 4, 2015
9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Location: CESA 1 Pewaukee

This no-cost workshop is intended for parents and family members who want to learn more about Response to Intervention (Rtl). School staff members and administrators are welcome to attend as well.

[Information & Registration Link](#)

Autism Society of Wisconsin Annual Conference
Dates: April 30-May 2, 2015
Location: Kalahari, WI Dells

This 3-day conference includes a keynote address from renowned speaker Temple Grandin, a full-day literacy workshop, and an update on important research on the impact of ASD on individuals and the family across the lifespan. A variety of breakout sessions covering topics important to the autism community will be offered on Friday and Saturday. [Early registration prices end 12/19/14](#)
[Information & Registration Link](#)

RESEARCH TO READ

Being Twice Exceptional: Gifted Students with Learning Disabilities

Buică-Belciu, Cristian, and Doru-Vlad Popovici. "Being Twice Exceptional: Gifted Students with Learning Disabilities." *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences* 127 (2014): 519-523.

[Article Link](#)

Abstract: Gifted students with learning disabilities are a heterogeneous group of children, often described as twice exceptional students. They exhibit puzzling patterns of behavior, higher-level intellectual abilities, advanced vocabulary, and exceptional comprehension of abstract ideas and concepts intertwined with poor reading and writing skills, and poor phonemic awareness. Current identification procedures fail

on certain children because of the "masking" effect (due to the compensation process). Some controversial issues regarding identification of gifted students with learning disabilities are discussed, as well as some common intervention strategies.

How Can Such a Smart Kid Not Get It? Finding the Right Fit for Twice-Exceptional Students in Our Schools

Yssel, Nina, Mike Prater, and Deb Smith. "How Can Such a Smart Kid Not Get It? Finding the Right Fit for Twice-Exceptional Students in Our Schools." *Gifted Child Today* 33.1 (2010): 54-61.

[Article Link](#)



The purpose of this article is to present parents' perceptions of educational and social-emotional difficulties their twice-exceptional children experience. The snapshots of twice-exceptional middle school students are interspersed with views and research findings from existing literature. Finally, a few successful strategies are described, and recommendations for the classroom are included (Yssel, et.al pg. 55)

STATEWIDE PARTNERSHIP



The Wisconsin Association for Talented and Gifted (WATG) is a non-profit organization of parents, students, educators, business and industry personnel, and other interested persons who are dedicated to fostering a climate in the home, school, and community that allows each individual to reach his or her unique potential. WATG maintains a statewide Board of Directors, representing educators, school administrators, parents, business, and higher education. The organization was formed in 1993.

WATG exists primarily for the purpose of raising public awareness about the unique needs that gifted individuals

have. To accomplish this, WATG has set several primary goals:

- Increase public awareness of and understanding for the needs of gifted individuals and their potential contributions to society.
- Strengthen channels of communication among all those interested in the developing and nurturing of high potential.
- Offer a variety of relevant educational opportunities which meet the needs of our various constituencies.
- Provide referral services for persons seeking professional consultation regarding concerns related to giftedness and talent development.

- Facilitate the sharing of research data and resources which support multiple facets of gifted/talented education.

- Foster effective programs which maximize the development of talent in all individuals including involvement in technological advances.

- Promote political action on local, state, and national levels.

The [WATG website](#) has a wealth of information related to gifted and talented education. Also on the website is a link to join WISGIFT-L which is a statewide list serve that shares resources, expertise and energy in the field of gifted education in Wisconsin.

ONLINE RESOURCES: GIFTED & TALENTED



Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

This site has information regarding statutes related to gifted and talented education in Wisconsin.

[Web Link](#)

National Association for Gifted Children

The website has information related to national efforts to improve gifted education as well as links to resources for families and school staff.

[Web Link](#)

United States Department of Education

This website provides links to organizations that provide information or assistance related to gifted children.

[Web Link](#)

Hoagies' Gifted Education Page

This website is full of resources, articles, books and links to help and support parents, teachers, and gifted children alike.

[Web Link](#)

SENG

SENG - Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted, is an organization that wants to help ensure that gifted children are understood, accepted, nurtured, and supported by their families, schools, and workplaces.

[Web Link](#)

Davidson Institute for Talent Development

The website contains a variety of resources related to gifted education. Also includes information on twice-exceptional students.

[Web Link](#)

Uniquely Gifted

This website contains a multitude of resources and information related to gifted children with special education needs (twice exceptional).

[Web Link](#)

The Association for the Education of Gifted Underachieving Students (AEGUS)

This website provides a forum for ideas and interventions aimed at helping twice-exceptional students reach their full potential.

[Web Link](#)



Universal Design for Learning Tip – Readability

Readability is a free web and mobile app available to anyone. It will turn any webpage into a clean, comfortable reading view. To learn about Readability please visit the [WI DPI Website](#).

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Support Groups

Urban Support Group

(for all disabilities)

Where: WI FACETS
600 W. Virginia St., Suite 501
Milwaukee, WI 53204

Date: 1/17/2015, 11 a.m-12 p.m.

Paul Eichelkraut, WI FACETS staff, will be presenting from 12 p.m.-1 p.m. on Response to Intervention (RtI).

Autism Support Group

Where: WI FACETS
600 W. Virginia St., Suite 501
Milwaukee, WI 53204

Date: 1/17/2015, 12 -3 p.m.

Paul Eichelkraut, WI FACETS staff, will be presenting at from 12 p.m.-1 p.m. on Response to Intervention (RtI).

Grupo de Autismo: Servicios a Largo Plazo para Niños con Discapacidades

Where: WI FACETS
600 W. Virginia St., Suite 501
Milwaukee, WI 53204

Date: 1/24/2015, 10 a.m-12 p.m.

WI FACETS Phone Workshops



Registration for all phone workshops:
Contact Sandra McFarland at 877-374-0511, smcfarland@wifacets.org or online: www.wifacets.org

IEP Part 1

Date: 1/6/2015 12-1 pm
Presenter: WI FACETS Staff

Drop-Out Prevention: Tools and Strategies

Date: 1/7/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: Eva Kubinski, DPI

IEP Part 2

Date: 1/8/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: WI FACETS Staff

Wisconsin Special Education Mediation System (WSEMS): Dispute Resolution Options

Date: 1/12/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenters: Jan Serak, Nissan Bar-Lev

Don't Worry...Be Appy! : ITechnology for Students with ASD (iPads, iPods, iPhones) (webinar)

Date: 1/14/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: Susan Stokes, CESA #6 Educational Autism Consultant

Serving On Groups That Make Decisions (Section 1) (webinar)

Date: 1/15/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: Emilie Braunel, WI FACETS staff

Introducción a la Educación Especial

Date: 1/16/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: Martha Lechuga, WIFACETS

Extended School Year (ESY) Services

Date: 1/21/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: Sarah Houser, School Administration Consultant, DPI

Introduction to Special Education

Date: 1/22/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: WI FACETS Staff

Vouchers, Charters and Open Enrollment

Date: 1/28/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: Jeff Spitzer-Resnick, Systems Change Consulting

Serving on Groups that Make Decisions (Section 3) (webinar)

Date: 1/29/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: Emilie Braunel, WI FACETS

Programa de Educación Individualizado (IEP) Parte I

Date: 1/30/2015, 12-1 pm
Presenter: Martha Lechuga, WIFACETS



HOME-BASED INTERVENTIONS



Reading Strategies



A Reading Spot

Help your child find a place in your home that is his/her favorite reading spot. This would be someplace where he/she can be comfortable and have little distractions. Place a basket or box of books near the spot. To encourage writing, put pens, crayons, markers, pencils, erasers and paper in the basket or box. Every now and then, put a new book or more writing materials in their special basket or box.

Given the gift giving time of year, encourage friends and relatives to give books to your child as gifts. Markers, colored pencils, pads of paper make excellent birthday or holiday gifts.



Math Strategies

Family Games

Develop skills in reasoning: Encourage your child to play games that can be explained within the logic of the system, like checkers, chess, Monopoly, and Clue, which require strategic thinking.

Web Link



Develop skills in counting, grouping, and shapes:

Card games - require counting and score keeping.

Dice games and dominos - learn to quickly recognize groups of dots from 2 to 12.

Board games that involve counting squares, like Chutes and Ladders.

Tic-Tac-Toe and Connect Four - build recognition of rows of 3 and 4 counters.

Tangrams - shapes

Mancala - counting

Web Link

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER

Next month's newsletter topic: *Speech and Language*

To submit contributions, you may use either the [online form](#) or the attached fillable PDF form for contributing articles, events, and resources. Send the PDF form submissions to woverturf@wifacets.org.

Deadline for submitting contributions to each month's issue is by the **20th of each month at noon**. 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.

This monthly update is provided by 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.



This document was produced under U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs Grant No. H323A070022-11. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the Department of Education. No official endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education of any product, commodity, service or enterprise mentioned in this publication is intended or should be inferred. This product is public domain. Authorization to reproduce it in whole or in part is granted. While permission to reprint this publication is not necessary, the citation should be:

State Personnel Development Grant (2014). Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Madison, WI. Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training, and Support, Inc.

