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THROUGH REGGIO EMILIA

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Teaching Philosophy Provides Creative Learning

In this issue, we focus on some of our youngest deaf and hard of hearing students—and on Reggio Emilia, the child-centered philosophy from Italy that we chose as an approach for our Early Childhood Education programs at the Clerc Center.

I learned about the Reggio Emilia philosophy during my first year as director of the Clerc Center demonstration schools. The philosophy was everything one could hope for—child centered, environmentally sensitive, and project based. It matched my own beliefs about children—that they are active creators of their own knowledge and do so through “a hundred languages.”

We resolved to incorporate the Reggio Emilia approach into our own program. This issue shows some of the fruits of our work. In the wedding story, **Steve Benson** describes how a conversation between two children led to all kinds of learning. Similarly, **Julie Longson** observed her students' love of water and launched the “water project” with her class. **Debra Cushner** writes about the importance of the physical environment for active learning. **Julie Mitchiner** and **Sam Weber** address aspects of how children's interests and behavior result in an emergent and negotiated curriculum.

Marcia Freeman describes her adventures in the dance room. **Nancy Topolosky** addresses the importance of involving parents. **Gail Solit** gives an overview of what Reggio Emilia means and how it has been infused into our programs. Implicit in

all of these articles is how our teachers affirm children's sense of themselves and lay the basis for successful literacy development.

In addition, **Lynne Gelzer**, a former Kendall Demonstration Elementary School teacher, writes about her visit to Italy and what she saw in the schools where the Reggio philosophy originated and where it has grown. People from different cultures can enrich each other's perspectives, she notes, and in a profound sense Reggio Emilia is an educational and cultural gift from the people of this town in Italy to our deaf and hard of hearing students in Washington, D.C.

This summer, the cultural and educational exchange continues when hundreds of people from around the world gather at Gallaudet University for Deaf Way II. These participants will bring with them the signed and spoken languages of their native lands. Together, we will continue the enriching process of sharing experiences, information, and insights. As educators, we may use different languages, but we share one goal: We want to affirm and empower our children and enable them to become articulate and successful adults.

—Katherine A. Jankowski, Ph.D., *Dean*,
Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center,
Gallaudet University



On the cover: A portion of a longtime mural by Jim Reilly, teachers aid, captures the spirit of exploration, adventure, and fun that mark early childhood learning at the Clerc Center. Photo by John Consoli.



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PRINCIPLES OF EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING

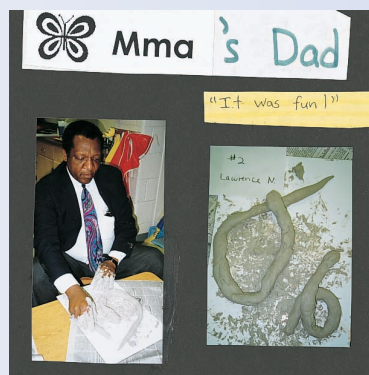
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**LAURENT CLERC
NATIONAL DEAF
EDUCATION CENTER**

bringing a philosophy home

REGGIO EMILIA AND
THE CLERC CENTER

By Gail Solit

*A hundred worlds
To discover
A hundred worlds
To dream
The child has a hundred languages
(and a hundred hundred hundred more)*

—Loris Malaguzzi



Reggio Emilia is an educational model used in infant centers and preschools in the Emilia Romagna region of Italy. The philosophy took root in 1945, when women and men recently freed from fascist dictatorship wanted to change education in order to create a new and more just world.

Loris Malaguzzi, one of the leaders of the Reggio approach, noted that the approach is “a declaration against the betrayal of children’s potential” and “a warning that children first of all had to be taken seriously and believed in.” Initially supported privately, the schools began to be administered by city governments in 1967.

In the early 1980s, visiting U.S. educators became interested. Reggio principles are a natural extension of the work of John Dewey, Jean Piaget, and Lev Vygotsky, writers whose work was familiar to most Americans. The work of these individuals influenced generations in understanding that learning is a social construct and that it is accomplished most effectively through doing. George Forman, a professor at the University of Massachusetts, noted that knowledge is constructed individually and socially, and in the Reggio Approach, the child is viewed as an active constructor.

Photography by Phil Bogdan



Gail Solit received her M.A. in Special Education, with a specialization in Infants and Toddlers from George Washington University. She is the coordinator of Early Childhood Programs at the Clerc Center. She welcomes comments about her articles: Gail.Solit@Gallaudet.edu.

As each community is different—in geography, history, personality, and culture—each preschool will infuse Reggio differently. Each program may find, as we did, that the parameters of time, budget, and staffing mean emphasizing selected portions of Reggio initially and postponing others for a later time. After three years, we still feel like we’ve just begun. The principles of Reggio, codified under Malaguzzi and listed on the following pages, remain the goal to which we aspire.

The Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center structures its early childhood programs into two settings. The Early Childhood Education team works with 65 deaf children, from birth through kindergarten, including deaf and hearing children who have deaf family members. The teams at the Child Development Center, serve 60 deaf and hearing children whose parents are students, faculty, and staff at Gallaudet University and individuals who live in the surrounding

Washington, D.C., community.

Both programs are located within Kendall Demonstration Elementary School on the Gallaudet University campus, and several children attend both programs. In every class there are deaf and hearing teachers and staff, and all use American Sign Language and English with the children.

MATERIALS AVAILABLE

Access for All: Integrating Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Hearing Preschoolers, a manual and videotape written by the author of this article and other individuals who worked at the Clerc Center, outlines a successful model for integrating deaf and hard of hearing children in early childhood education.

Issues in Access: Creating Effective Preschools for Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Hearing Children is a book that addresses specific strategies for use in the classroom. For more information, visit the Clerc Center Web site: <http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/>.

Above: Jum Reilly works with students on an art project. In Reggio, children are active constructors of their own knowledge.

principles of early childhood learning

FROM REGGIO EMILIA

By Gail Solit

Here are the principles of Reggio Emilia, as defined by Lella Gandini in Foundations of the Reggio Emilia Approach and an explanation of the way they influenced programming at the Gallaudet University Laurent Clerc National Deaf Center Early Childhood Education programs.

The Image of the Child

Children are seen as powerful, as constructors of their own knowledge. This approach embodies a great deal of respect for children and their worth. Children are taken seriously, listened to, respected, and appreciated in their uniqueness. This has a profound impact on how teachers start, conduct, and end projects. This principle is especially important for those who work with deaf and hard of hearing children who may have been taught that deaf children are at a disadvantage because of their deafness. Deaf and hard of hearing children, like all children, have “preparedness, potential, curiosity, and are interested in establishing relationships” (Gandini, 1997, p.16).

Children’s Relationships and Interactions Within a System

Children need to be seen within the context of their family and home culture, other children, their school, and their community. As educators, we do not work with children in isolation but as part of a larger whole; each child is influenced by and influences all parts of his or her world.

The Three Subjects of Education: Children, Parents, and Teachers

All of these subjects—children, parents, and teachers—are seen to have rights. Children with disabilities have special rights to accommodations, services, and attitudes that facilitate their learning. At the Clerc Center, educators continually strive to offer children a high quality program. Parents are encouraged to be as involved in the programs as they want and can. Professional development is highly regarded, and time is made for various kinds of training and study.

The Role of Families

Parents are seen to have a role of sanctity in Reggio Emilia, and at the Clerc Center, family members are seen as competent and encouraged to take an active part in their children’s learning. Teachers work with families to determine the various ways that parents and other relatives can be involved. Teachers arrange for parent meetings, where they share information about what the children are doing, ask parents to add to and expand on their children’s ideas and

work, and ask for ideas for improving and developing curriculum. At the Child Development Center, an advisory council of interested family members helps with fund-raising activities and field trips. At Kendall Demonstration Elementary School, the Early Childhood Education team has family members involved in the home-school organization, fund-raising, attending sign language classes, and holiday events. Educators involve families in the curriculum and the planning of educational activities.

The Role of Space: An Amiable School

At the Clerc Center, every adult has thought about every aspect and every detail of the school space, ensuring that the environmental backdrop of all we do exudes the message that our school is warm, welcoming, and beautiful. The environment stimulates children’s exploration and encourages relationships between people of all ages.

We are excited by the Reggio principle that we “make the learning visible.” Children’s work is documented and displayed. Personal expression is encouraged; each setting reflects the families and the cultures of the children and adults who learn and work there. Plants have been added along with occasional fresh flowers as a special treat. Mirrors, mobiles, and children’s artwork are displayed to make classrooms and public areas more beautiful. Conversations about environment and space occur often as teachers critique what we have and speculate about positive changes.





Left: As their hearing aids are fitted and adjusted, children explore the anatomy of the ear. Photo by John Consoli.

The Value of Relationships: Children in Small Groups

Loris Malaguzzi suggests that adults initiate settings where small groups of same-age children can interact. In early childhood, a homogenous age-group helps communication as children undertake the tasks of planning and decision making, and favor the emergence of constructive cognitive conflicts that can initiate a process in which children construct new learning and development.

The Role of Time and the Importance of Continuity

As they studied Reggio Emilia, our teachers views of time and schedules changed. Scheduling is important as deaf children receive support services—occupational, speech, language, physical, and/or counseling services—as specified in their Individualized Family Service Plan. Yet children are given longer blocks of time to explore and play, and we try to allow children to engage in an activity as long as they want. In recognition of the Reggio concern that teachers remain with their young students for a period of three years, children who are in the nursery, prekindergarten, and kindergarten of the Early Childhood Education team stay with the same teachers for two years. At the Child Development Center, where the concept of continuity has been harder to implement, our goal is to have a teacher remain with the class of newly three-year-old children when they move up from the two-year-old class each fall.

Teachers as Partners

Teachers constantly observe and document what the children say and do. These observations are shared, as teachers use their observations to determine how and about what they will dialogue with children and what they will add to the environment. Teachers see themselves as researchers and learners. Teachers listen to children and then learn, reflect, and work with other teachers.

Centrality of Cooperation and Collaboration

Conversation—between teachers, coordinators, parents, and staff—is critical. There is a great effort and commitment by the teachers and staff in the early childhood programs to work together as a team, to share ideas, and to support each other. This occurs through weekly team meetings and classroom teacher meetings. In addition, teachers and staff meet regularly to discuss documentation of the children's work and interests.

The Many Languages of Children: The Visual Arts

Children are encouraged to express themselves in many mediums. Art is seen as something integral to the learning process; drawing is a way for children to explore a topic and express what they know about it. In most Reggio Emilia schools, there is a teacher who is trained in the visual arts; in the Clerc Center, the Early Childhood Education team has an art teacher, who works closely with the teachers and the children. At the Child Development Center, teachers consciously incorporate art in their classes.

The Power of Documentation

Teachers and parents keep transcripts of comments and photographs of children as they go about the process of learning. The documentation aids in communication with parents. It helps the children see

their own work and have opportunities to reflect on it and to continue to explore it. It also helps the teachers understand what the children are learning about and doing. The documentation is saved in portfolios, placed on documentation boards or on classroom walls, and displayed in halls. Each week, teachers send home newsletters replete with comments, photographs, and drawings of the children.

The Emergent—or Negotiated—Curriculum

The curriculum used in the Reggio Emilia schools is not created in advance. Instead teachers begin the year with general goals and work with students to establish the direction of their learning. For many of our children, the goals are incorporated into an Individualized Family Service Plan as required by law. These plans and the Clerc Center's priorities of literacy, transition, and family involvement guide our curriculum planning. After seeing how the children respond to these goals, teachers change, add, and design the next steps for study with the children.

Projects

Projects are the core of the children's learning experiences. Our students learn by doing and by reflecting on the experience in group discussion. Projects give children opportunities to become researchers and explore a problem, question, or topic that is of interest to them. Lasting just a few days or continuing over several months, our projects have covered all areas of learning from literacy, the arts, science, social studies, and math. Some of the topics we have covered include homes, water, wheels, weddings, tigers, fish, Thailand, and boats.

Much of this information is adapted from Gandini, L. (1997). Foundations of the Reggio Emilia Approach. In J. Hendrick (Ed.), First steps toward teaching the Reggio way. New York: Merrill/Prentice Hall.



HOW TO MAKE A SNAKE

parent involvement as inspired by reggio emilia

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National Deaf Education
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By Nancy Topolosky

Unlike parents of children in schools in Reggio Emilia and in most preschool and kindergarten programs in the United States, our parents are not part of the surrounding community. In fact, most of the children in our Early Childhood Education programs at Kendall Demonstration Elementary School are bused to school. The families come from many cultures and socio-economic backgrounds. With some parents, English is not the language of the home. We provide interpreters at meetings and social events and provide translations of our newsletter and communication between home and school. In many families, both parents work outside the home.

An additional challenge, one that many programs face, is that having a deaf child is a new experience for most of our families. Our families put much thought, time, and energy into learning about deafness. Many are well versed in the choices in deaf education.

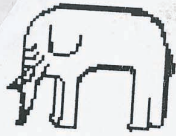
Many try to learn how to sign. This means that they attend sign language classes in the evenings or on weekends, participate in our school's Shared Reading Project through which tutors visit weekly and read to them in their homes, and attend our parent-school organization meetings and events. In addition, they participate in discussing, reviewing, and writing goals for the child as part of the Individualized Family Service Plan and make time for other appointments at school. All of these tasks are well beyond those of parents of other preschool-aged children.

The challenge, then, is to ask ourselves the questions, "How much more involvement can we expect of parents who seem to have a full plate as it is?" "How can we make their involvement purposeful, respectful, and valued?"

When I began my journey of learning all that I could about Reggio Emilia, I decided to begin small. I decided I would sit back and become more observant of what the children were doing and communicating about; from this I would glean the *how* and the *what* the children were thinking. I saw immediately that the children hypothesized, tested, and discovered.

I was so excited about my discoveries! I wanted to share my findings.

Right: Learning the
Reggio Emilia
Approach through
experiencing it,
parents crafted snakes
from markers, clay, or
other materials,
explored their feelings
about the process,
and saw the event
captured on a
documentation board.



Cody's Mom



Jennifer



"I picked clay because I am a lousy artist."
"we (Steve and I.) both used clay, but our snakes
were different... mine was flat, and his coiled upwa

Learning by Doing Bringing Reggio to Parents

The challenge was not to just tell the parents about my discoveries, and not to just show them through all the documentation I had on the walls, but to somehow involve them in a way that would bring them to their own understanding.

My co-workers, Helen Sweetney and Jum Reilly, and I decided to hold a potluck dinner meeting to share with the

parents some of the projects the children had been involved in that school year. Even though our documentation panels filled halls and classrooms and their children's portfolios spilled over with information, we still wanted to do something more. We decided that they would experience Reggio through an activity.

After the formal introductions and a little socializing, the parents were told to select any of the materials in the classroom and "make a snake." Some of the parents went right to it, one choosing clay, others choosing paper and markers. Others observed a while, then chose their materials to work with: One



choose the materials you did? What were you thinking during the process?

Then two live baby Ball Python snakes were brought into the classroom, along with books and photos of snakes, real snakeskin from a very large boa, and photos of their children observing and handling the snakes. Lively questions and conversations ensued, with expressions of fear and fascination. Some watched, some stepped back, and some handled the snakes. Their observations and questions spurred more comments and questions. Some of the parents looked to the books for more information.

Then the parents were asked again to draw or make their own snake. It suddenly became quiet in the room. The parents became very focused on their work. Some

chose clay; the other, plastic dominoes.

When they completed their task, they sat with their snakes in front of them and were asked to reflect on their experience: What you were feeling as you did this activity? Why did you

parents chose the same medium to represent their snake; others chose a different medium than their first time. They were again asked to reflect on the experience and to share their reflections: How does your first representation compare to your second

10 Steps for Exploring the World

1 Observe

Observe children's conversation and play.

What do children talk about?
What are they interested in?

2 Reflect

Consider interpretations or hypotheses about what underlies children's interest.

3 Discuss

Discuss children's actions, conversations, photos, and work with others. Share their ideas and your interpretation. What do others think interests the children?

4 Reflect Again

In light of these discussions, consider possible projects and available resources.



5 Talk with small groups of children

Ask open-ended questions to help children create theories and share their own ideas about possible topics and projects.

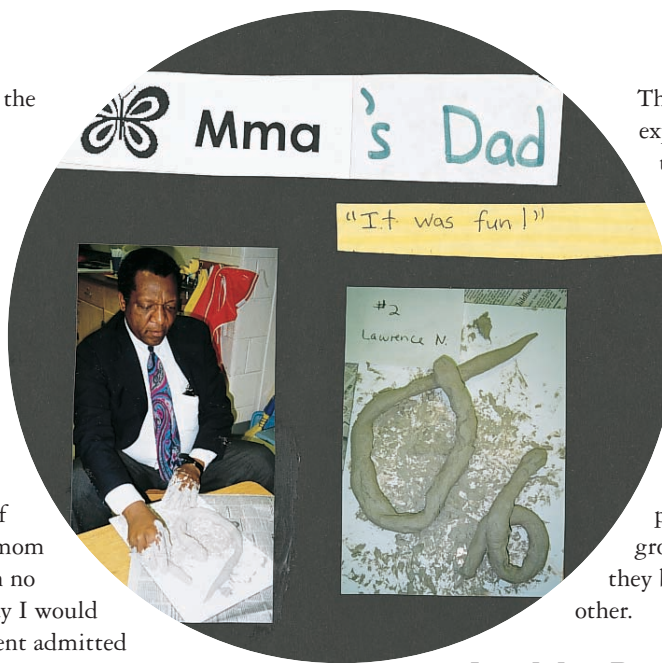
6 Share ideas with the large group of children

Bring the ideas from small group discussions into a large group discussion where new hypotheses are created. Ask children: how can we prove this? How can we solve this problem? How can we learn more?



attempt? Why did you choose the same or different materials or medium? What were you feeling and thinking?

Some parents said that they felt more comfortable and competent the second time around. One dad explained, "The first time I drew the snake. The second time, I chose clay to make my snake because I felt it had more life to it, and I was better able to show the movement and feel of the snake through clay." One mom explained, "I drew myself with no hands because there was no way I would handle those snakes." One parent admitted not only that she was extremely fearful of snakes, but that she felt that she was not at all creative and quite inept at drawing. After observing the other parents, so involved with the materials, and thankful no one was pushing her to do anything, she surprised herself by choosing to draw the snakes.



The process allowed the parents to experience art as a tool for thinking. As they made snakes, watched others make snakes, and discussed their experiences, they had a chance to think, reflect, and revise their own theories—just as their children do throughout the day.

At the end of the evening, the parents were very excited about what was happening in the classroom, and they were more knowledgeable of the learning process and aware of their own child's growth and development. In addition, they became more comfortable with each other.

Involving Parents Can Mean Changing Plans

One year, our Nursery class did not take our usual trip to the zoo because of one family's strong opposition to caged animals. We did take a trip to the Gallaudet TV studio, as per request

In a Reggio-Inspired Preschool

7 Explore, test, and learn

Investigate ideas with children or allow them to explore independently in small groups. Bring in outside experts. Take field trips.

8 Document

Document the children's work, comments, actions and play. Display documentation to use as a resource for revisiting ideas and further learning and discussion.

9 Showcase & Display

Select an aspect of children's studies and showcase it. Make a book or do a presentation for other children or parents. Don't forget a final

documentation board showing the entire process.

10 Bring It Together

As children continue to work on their projects and play alone and together, continue observing, reflecting, discussing—with parents, other teachers and interested adults, and with the children themselves. New projects, explorations, and activities will continue to evolve.

—Gail Solit and Nancy Topolosky





from another parent whose child was fascinated with television. To the children's delight, they were transposed into one of their favorite books, live on television!

Last year in my prekindergarten class, where deaf and hearing students attend class together, we set up a parent meeting. We made it late in the afternoon so parents could come directly from work, and arranged child care, food, and activities for the children. We wanted to begin collaborating immediately on a possible project. We called the project Similarities and Differences, and we were planning to base it on the children's curiosity of the "hearing-deafness" in the classroom.

Unexpectedly, some parents objected. In fact, some of the parents of the deaf students became very vocal, fearful that this topic would open up feelings of inferiority and rejection. Although, as teachers, we felt that each group of students brought special advantages to our classroom, we followed the parents' suggestion of pursuing the Similarities and Differences topic by focusing on one of the several ethnic cultures represented in the class instead. Thus began our study of Thailand, culminating in a Thai luncheon and performance in which 100 percent of our families participated.

In the end, talking about projects with parents—and getting their support and participation—proved far more important than pursuing any one project.

Parent Participation Can Make Class Better

Participation in classroom activities is always welcomed, and having parents share their own skills, interests, and cultures is an added bonus for the children and for us. For example, when the children decided that our rabbit, Zinger, needed a better cage, two dads helped us build it. After weeks of role playing, demonstrating, looking at cages in books, and discussing possibilities, the children designed the cage. We took a trip to Home Depot and, with a dad orchestrating, we bought the necessary materials and built a bigger and better cage for Zinger based on the children's design.

Another time, the children became intrigued with the colorful photos of children, families, and customs in Africa. One of our students was from Senegal, a country on the west

coast of Africa. We invited her mother and grandmother to come to class and to share something of their native country. They cooked a native dish, yassa chicken, with the children and let them try on their beautiful, colorful headaddresses. They were so excited about the children's excitement that, on their next trip to Africa, they brought back several pieces of beautiful

African fabric, along with jewelry and artifacts for us to use in the classroom. Thus began our study of Senegal through music, dance, art, cooking, and dramatic play.



Fostering Communication A Style for Every Family

In prekindergarten, I continued regular communications between home and school; however, the means of that

communication varied depending on the individual preferences of the parents. Finding the method and frequency of communication that was most effective in reaching each parent was important. Methods of communication included writing in a notebook that traveled between home and school, phone conversations, e-mail, site visits, occasional after-school home visits, and a weekly newsletter. The content of that newsletter evolved into a focus on the process of children's thinking, how projects were initiated or chosen for study, and the progress of the project or activity.

Reflecting, Evolving Looking Toward Our Future

Just as my definition of "me as teacher" in relation to the children has evolved over the years, so has my definition of "me as teacher" in relation to the parents. As a Reggio-inspired teacher, I am learning how to better collaborate with the parents and the children, not only for ideas, but also for the directions in which those ideas take us. I try to encourage parent involvement, not only as fund-raisers or as participants on field trips, celebrations, and holiday events at the school, but also as resource experts and co-constructors in the educational process of their children. Finding each parent's interest and skills for supporting projects and valuing their opinions, beliefs, and cultures are important goals for us. I hope to get parents excited about the wondrous being that is their child. Our parents are becoming active participants and co-planners in their children's education.

jum reilly giving form

TO CHILDREN'S DREAMS

In the halls of the Child Development Center where the youngest children gather each morning, cheerful murals fill the walls. The artist is Jum Reilly, a teacher's assistant who has worked with young children—deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing—at the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center for 15 years. Reilly uses art to develop children's skills in thinking and communication.

Working with deaf children is different than working with hearing children, she said, and perhaps more important.

"Hearing children generally have a wider exposure and more confidence," said Reilly. "They know how to engage in conversation. They may ask questions. Then they paint, draw, color, or build with clay. They just go ahead. With the deaf children, you proceed a bit more slowly."

Deaf preschoolers usually arrive in the classroom with less experience. The first time a deaf preschool child picks up paints, he or she may grab the first available color and smear it onto paper.

"That's okay," said Reilly. "You don't correct them. You just watch. You continue to give them more experiences with paint. Often I encourage them to paint real objects. Then, after a while, I may look at their work and ask, 'What is this?'"

Soon the children begin selecting colors. After that, shapes emerge. Finally human figures are recognizable. Eyes, noses, and mouths appear.

Reilly notes that clay provides a good introductory medium for children. "It keeps them focused and helps them build their attention span," she said.

Reilly works with children in nursery and kindergarten. When Reggio Emilia, the child-centered philosophy from Italy, was adopted here, she was impressed. It fits with her own philosophy, she said.



"Teachers set up the activities," said Reilly. "Then the children begin working in small groups. I sit alongside the children at the table. I model, and I ask children to talk about their work. I encourage reflection and discussion."

Reilly came to the United States from Thailand 16 years ago with her husband, Chip Reilly, a researcher at Gallaudet University. Born deaf with hearing parents and two deaf sisters, she attended the Thai School for the Deaf in Khon Kaen. Instruction was through speech and lipreading, but in the dorms and on the playground the school's 300 students used Thai Sign Language.

As a student, Reilly dreamed of teaching, she said, but in those days graduates of the school were not permitted to teach. Here she lives a part of her dream—and inspires dreams in her young students.

emergent curriculum

FOLLOWING THE LEAD OF THE CHILD

By Julie Cantrell Mitchiner

Julie Cantrell

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For several days the child entered the classroom and went directly to the shelves where the toy school bus stood. He picked up the bus. He held it above his head and looked at its underside. He pushed the bus back and forth on the floor and carried it with him everywhere he went.

When the day ended, he saw the school buses rolling to the front of the building and pointed to them excitedly. “B-U-S!” he fingerspelled to the other children. “B-U-S!”

For teachers at Kendall Demonstration Elementary School (KDES), events such as this are exciting. In Reggio terminology, they constitute a provocation—an event or series of events that reflects the interests of the child and therefore provides an opportunity to guide and implement meaningful learning experiences.

The teacher might ask the student about the bus. Does he ride on it? Do his friends ride on it? Does he see other buses in the city? What makes the bus move? What kind of parts does a bus consist of? Depending on the student’s answers, the teacher may want to consider the event as the impetus for a Reggio learning experience. If so, the teacher may bring the situation to the attention of his or her teaching colleagues. They may brainstorm ways of setting up the experience. They may wish to set up a corner of the classroom to learn about school buses. The teacher may explore ideas about the medium through which to explore school buses, for example, drawing pictures or making buses out of clay.

At KDES in the Early Childhood Education programs, we often get together, brainstorm ideas, and develop webs of our children’s interests. We find that drawing is often a useful first step because it is a medium accessible to everyone. Children can use it for their own exploration, and teachers can look at their work and see what the child knows. Other ideas and activities might be suggested, such as exploring a parked bus, going on a field trip to visit the lot where the buses are parked overnight, visiting a transportation department, creating pretend play around driving a school bus, or interviewing the school bus driver.

As the provocation evolves into projects, teachers document their children’s work. This does not mean simply displaying the final products or hanging pictures on a wall. It means taking photographs while the children are at work developing the project. For example, if children decide to explore a parked school bus, photos can be taken as they enter, turn the

Photography by John Consoli

Right: Children play in the classroom sandbox as their teacher watches.



steering wheel, look under the seats, or kick the tires. Comments about the exploration are often written as captions to the pictures, giving students an early exposure to print and focus on literacy.

Flexibility is important. The curriculum is developed based on the teacher's knowledge of the children's development levels and observations of children's interests. In this sense, teachers follow the children's lead, finding ways to enhance and deepen their learning. In the preschool years, children learn from play and the active exploration of their own interests. Teachers have goals for each child, but they do not decide what each child will do next.

This approach is especially useful for children who arrive in our classrooms with inadequate language skills. For example, a young boy who arrived last year from El Salvador had little spoken or signed language and was almost eerily quiet until we discovered his interest in airplanes. Once we discovered this, his expression and signs became animated. He wanted to communicate. Soon that desire extended to other subjects.

Getting to know our children is essential because we want to focus on the process rather than the products of their learning. During the first weeks of fall, we had a finger painting activity every day. We wanted the children to experience the

sensation of mixing colors and spreading paint on paper. Most children are also fascinated by nature. Insects, leaves, light, water—all of these natural elements provide enrichment in our classrooms.

Routine is important, too. Just like other schools, we have a set time for literacy focus, outside play, small and large group activities, meals, and naptime. We design our schedule with blocks of free time included to ensure that children have time to explore in depth inside the classroom and out.

When we find something that interests the children, we develop webs to brainstorm ideas and figure out possible directions of exploration based on the children's ideas. For example, if children are interested in hammering, it can lead to actual construction experiences. Next we develop an activity web that lists, hypothetically, what children can do with this particular interest.

Curtis and Carter (1996) lay out a four-step plan for teachers to follow:

Provision the environment. Set up the environment according to the children's interests. Floor maps, trucks, toy cars and buses, and road signs give our nursery class the theme of transportation.

Sustain children's play. Teachers do this by observing the children and how

they react to the materials provided.

Enrich children's play. This may mean a field trip to a transportation department or adding a real steering wheel or tire to the corner of the classroom where transportation items are presented for exploration and play.

Represent the experience. This means displaying children's thinking and the evolution of the project with teacher comments about what and how they learned. Learning can be illustrated through pictures, artifacts, and comments.

The emergent curriculum evolves into possibilities that could never have been considered during the initial planning process. The highlight is the children. Their lives become the curriculum. Their interests lead them into exploring, gaining knowledge, and developing skills that will be the basis for the rest of their education and their adult lives.

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developing an emergent curriculum

By Sam Weber

An emergent curriculum is one that develops in response to children's interests and needs. In developing this curriculum, teachers engage in continual observation, reflection, and discussion. For deaf and hard of hearing children in the United States, all of this emanates from and influences the goals incorporated in each child's Individualized Family Service Plan, required by law under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Photography by John Consoli



Observation

Teachers observe the children in class and the classroom setting, as well as in conversation and at play. Through play, children construct knowledge and develop their abilities and skills.

Reflection

Teachers think about their observations. How do these observations relate to their understanding of child development and the child's underlying interests? How does this information enable the student to learn and grow?

Discussion

Teachers get together to reflect and discuss their observations. They talk about children's interests. They share their own ideas.

INDIVIDUALIZED FAMILY SERVICE PLAN

With deaf children, goals must be incorporated into the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). Here are several examples of how we use the IFSP goals.

- **Learning to share.** Learning how to share is an important developmental task for many two-year-old children. For example when a small group of children learn the properties of water, we support the concept of sharing by filling a tray with water using a single measuring cup. All children are fascinated by water and all can play in it, but the children have to share the cup.
- **Learning to take turns.** By the age of two, children are ready to learn how to take turns, a concept and skill that they will use throughout their lifetime, and this goal frequently appears on our children's IFSP. During our project on buses, we promoted this skill by taking turns painting car tires. The children rolled a tire through paint changing its tread to a bright color. This was an opportunity for the teacher to explain that each child gets a turn to roll the tire and that each child's turn would come soon. We also teach the concept of waiting for our turn.
- **Learning to recognize their names through fingerspelling and print.** For many of our children, recognizing their name through fingerspelling and in print is a goal, and everyday activities lead children toward achieving this goal.
- **Learning to develop and maintain eye contact.** Obviously important for deaf children, this goal is often developed by teachers and parents. Children learn to maintain eye contact with each other and their teachers. Small group project works in which communication is essential lends itself to this goal.
- **Building skill in American Sign Language.** This means working on vocabulary, handshapes, movement, and turn taking. This goal is pursued as children work on projects.

classroom environment

a teacher in progress

By Debra Cushner

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Creating a stimulating, inviting, and calming learning environment is at the heart of the Reggio Emilia approach. Even the smallest adjustment to the environment can make a substantial impact not only on students, but also on parents and families. At Clerc Center, our experience has affirmed a principle at the heart of Reggio Emilia—that after teachers and parents, the environment is a child’s “third teacher.”

We are continually challenged to observe each aspect of our environment with fresh eyes. We keep certain criteria in mind: What is the intent of each area in the room? How do we best take advantage of the beautiful or positive aspects of the room? How do we best compensate for the weaknesses? How do we make each space aesthetically pleasing? How can we add a greater sense of home and comfort? How can we incorporate nature? How can we make the spaces reflective of our families’ and staff’s cultures? How do we make learning visible?

At the suggestion of coordinator Gail Solit, artist and teacher’s assistant Jum Reilly and I observed classrooms, entrances, common areas, hallways, and even bathrooms. We found that each space, large or small, had its own identity and purpose and could enhance learning. We met with the teachers and staff and asked what they envisioned for their children, what they liked and disliked about their spaces, what areas of the room seemed to get the most use, and what their children liked to do. We also asked which areas of their rooms they felt did not appear stimulating for the children, about their satisfaction with their current floor plan, and if they felt there was enough natural light. We wanted big spaces for group time/building and motor development and smaller, cozy spaces for reading, reflection, and conversation.

These were not easy discussions. It is often difficult to let go of traditional ideas of the way a classroom is “supposed to look” and the materials a classroom is “supposed to have.” How many chairs do we really need? How many tables and shelving units? Does one really need one more bookshelf or would a natural wicker basket hold the books just as well?

One of our first changes was to eliminate excess furniture. It was shocking to see how much furniture ended up outside the classroom. We wanted to furnish each area simply and to place each item with care and purpose.

Photography by John Consoli





Guiding Principles

Beauty, Nature, and Children's Work

As we continued to learn more about the Reggio Emilia experience, the children's exploration and love of nature became another area that we wanted to develop and expand for our children. The areas we designed to explore the natural environment were near the windows to allow for natural light.

We placed prisms, magnifying glasses, seedpods, shells, animals, and plants in rooms. Clipboards and markers were readily available to record observations. Mirrors were added to encourage everyone to see from a different perspective. More books and resource materials were added.

We also wanted to see our children develop and expand their ability to build and create three-dimensional works. Building areas were established with platforms where work could be

share stories with friends. Small twinkling white lights were suspended from the ceiling in the bathroom of the parent-infant class. This provided a degree of enchantment to babies who lay still to have their diapers changed.

It became imperative that our environment reflect the cultural diversity of our families. As different classes investigated new topics, our parents joined in to volunteer and share their expertise.

The more we thought about our environment, the more ideas began to surface. We felt energized. One idea would lead to another, and we soon began to compose "wish lists" for the administration and parents. We asked for baskets, plants, more mirrors, area rugs, and clear containers. We began to visit each other's classrooms more and share more ideas and materials. We shared our thoughts about the changes in how the children



created and stored for further development. Writing materials were provided nearby so that three-dimensional buildings could be transformed to two-dimensional drawings. Again, placing mirrors in the area allowed for the building to be seen from a new and different perspective. Books related to architecture and skyscrapers were placed nearby.

The exploration of light, dark, shadow, color, and perspective were also important. We began to search for materials that would allow children to experience these concepts in a hands-on way. We set up light tables, overhead projectors, and shadow screens and encouraged everyone, including parents and staff, to try to use them in a new way. Prisms, crystals, and colored cellophane—and rainbows and colored shadows—began to appear near the windows. Our children documented what they experienced with paper, markers, ink, paint, and clay.

The mood and tone of a classroom can also change in response to lighting. We began to think about the overhead lighting and whether it, too, needed to be changed. We brought in table lamps and added them to the writing area. We found large paper lanterns and suspended them from the ceilings. When lit, the lanterns provided the perfect light in which children can

played and used the materials. The children themselves remarked on the changes. It was wonderful to see their thoughts.

Reflection and Discussion:

Presenting Documentation

Reflection and the ability to revisit past experiences are important and the environment is the place where we display our children's work and our documentation of their process of investigation.

We wanted each child's work hung in a respectful and beautiful way. At the same time, we wanted to add documentation. We added more photos of our children throughout the program. As our children see their work and ideas displayed, it allows them to "re-visit" past experiences and share them with new people.

We have been inspired to view our environment as a work in progress. It will never be completed. Everything will never be perfect and exactly in the right spot. Our children and our work evolve. Our environment reflects the changes that happen around us. Our journey continues.

the water project

By Julie Longson

Water offers an infinite amount of learning on an infinite amount of topics, incorporating science, math, reading, writing, and health. It's also fun!

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Provocation: Children observed to be fascinated by a nearby pond

Teaching: The properties of water and how to investigate any subject

Projects: Multiple

The afternoon weather was so nice that we, the teachers of the nursery class that integrates deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing 3-year-olds, decided an activity for the day would be to go outside and repot our classroom plants. A small pond lies behind our school. We saw it as a lovely location for repotting, where we would be able to observe plants in their natural environment and not have to worry about spilling dirt.

Once we arrived, however, our focus changed. Water is like a magnet with young children, who seem to feel an irresistible pull to explore it. Sure enough, the minute the pond came into view, the children ran to its edge. I urged them to come back and work on their plants, telling them we could look at the pond afterward. Before studying the Reggio Emilia philosophy, I might have prevented them from going entirely. It wasn't in the lesson for the day. I didn't have anything prepared for it. And water usually requires a lot of cleanup. But respecting children is an important principle in Reggio Emilia, and I've become more aware of the role and importance of teachable moments. This means an increased flexibility in my agenda and responding to observations.

So I walked over to the pond, too. What part of it really fascinated my children? Was it the pond, the water, the waterfall, or the fish? How would I take this experience and enable the kids to create meaning from it? This was my struggle.

I like splashing through the water. I don't mind getting dirty and really exploring things. Growing up, my days were spent exploring, experimenting with things we found, and inventing games with my brothers. Of course as a teacher, I'm faced with more challenges. How do I make sure I include developmental skills children need to know?

In a school there are schedules. Time is important. However, ongoing challenges are a part of life and teaching. And now was time for learning.

Photography by Alexis Tompkins

Right: Water—in its gloriously different forms—was explored when a teacher saw her children drawn to a nearby pond.

The children and I began exploring. First we noticed the characteristics of the water. It was very clear, but when we put a stick in our hands and stirred, it became very cloudy. Like any good scientist, we experimented. If a leaf blew into the water, it floated on the surface, but a rock or a stick with just a little toss sank to the bottom. We categorized our findings: clear or cloudy, float or sink.

Back inside the classroom, we reenacted our experiments. Replication, scientists would call it. We filled bottles with water and added sand, sticks, rocks, and leaves. When we shook the bottles, the water became cloudy, and when left to settle, it became clear again. We gathered various objects from around the classroom and tried to predict if they would float or sink.

With such a successful experiment behind us, another visit to the pond was inevitable. This time a waterfall fascinated us. A discussion began. Much could be done with a waterfall, the children noted. The birds could bathe in it. Buckets could be filled by it. We wanted to learn more about the waterfall.

We asked Trudy Haselhuhn, in our maintenance department, to show us how the waterfall worked. She met us at the pond with her waders. To the children's fascination, she walked into the pond and pointed out a pump. Then she showed us how the water flowed inside of it.

This was incredible—but there was more to come. The following Monday, we put on boots donated by our speech therapist and team member, Bettie Waddy-Smith. As soon as they saw them, my students knew what they were for and they were thrilled! Now we would go into the pond ourselves. Walking through the pond offered all kinds of new information. The water was very cold. The bottom was slippery and uneven. Near the sides the water was very shallow, but as we moved towards the center the bottom sloped down and the water became deeper. Then there was the property of water that causes it to spray when its surface is sufficiently ruffled. This enabled us to splash through it and at each other.

After this escapade, we went to the library and found books on ponds and waterfalls. We borrowed the books and brought them to our



classroom so that we could study them. We investigated other places on campus where there was water. The president of Gallaudet University, I. King Jordan, welcomed us to his fishpond. We walked across campus to his house, bringing our notebooks. We drew pictures of his pond, the big gold fish that Jordan explained was a koi, and the small frog-shaped fountain that spouted water from its mouth.

These experiences added a new dimension to our study. Water could move in a variety of ways.

The children began to generalize. We found that water could be poured from cup to cup, emphasizing the concepts of full, empty, and overflowing. Eyedroppers could make drops of

water or squirt it. If colored water was used, we could observe the drops running together, mixing colors to create new ones. Bottles with big holes punched in them became mini-fountains that flowed water similar to the waterfall in the pond. Pin-sized holes made small spray fountains like the ones we had seen across campus. This time we controlled the mini-fountains by changing the pressure with which we squeezed the bottles.

One morning, we discovered a layer of ice in our sandbox. The ice was hard, cold, and smooth. We talked about the evening of rain and the cold temperatures that followed and how and why this resulted in the ice. Then we broke off big slabs of ice and brought them inside. We added them to our sand table. As we explored the ice, it began melting.

Eventually we had just sand and water. Now we knew that water turned to ice when it was cold, but what happened to it when it became hot? To find out we made hot chocolate. As we held our hands over our cups we could see and feel the steam rising from them. But the hot chocolate was too hot to drink. "Use ice to cool it off," the children said. So we did. As the ice melted to water, we again saw the cycle of water.

Our water project continues. We still have unanswered questions. Luckily we have a community that supports us in our studies. One of my most important lessons from the water project has been that our final product will be less important than the journey we take along the way.



they do & did!

CONVERSATION LEADS TO WEDDING CELEBRATION

By Steven Benson

Steven Benson

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Weddings, like many celebrations and ceremonies, fascinate children. They also provide opportunities for learning—especially when children stage their own.

Provocation: Children seen discussing a wedding

Learning: Customs, diversity, and literacy

Projects: Reading about weddings, making clothes, planning receptions, making a cake, writing invitations, and role playing wedding ceremonies

One of our most delightful projects began from a simple conversation between two students. The children, five and six years old, were discussing weddings. It was apparent that one of the children had just seen a wedding and found it fascinating. The wedding conversation continued for several days.

Realizing the children's interest, teachers brought in magazines and books about weddings and placed them in our classroom library. The response was immediate. The children enjoyed looking at the photos of clothing, rings, and, especially, wedding cakes. Some of the children indicated that they would like to make a wedding cake and decorate it elaborately, as they had seen in the magazines. It was decided that the cake would be papier mâché. For the next few days, five students undertook the making of the cake. They decided on a shape, color, and design. When it was finished, the cake was white and covered with colorful flowers and bows. We placed it in our dramatic play area for everyone to enjoy.

Then our speech pathologist, learning of our new interest, lent us a videotape of her daughter's wedding. The children loved watching it. When dancing began on the video, they joined in. Soon they were role playing their own

The boys' opinion of the wedding projects changed as students fashioned—and role played—a bride and a groom. Documentation boards record the children's work and display printed vocabulary.

Photography by Brenda Perrodin



wedding receptions, with the serving of the cake a central feature. As the role playing continued, more students began to join in the fun.

During one of our morning meetings, the class discussed possible options and expansions for their wedding project. Some students felt that special wedding outfits were needed. Weddings, we learned, were different in different cultures. We searched for fabrics and materials to incorporate the students' various cultures—African American, Italian, Jewish, and Thai—and we discussed how the weddings of deaf and hearing people might be different. A few of the boys, who initially had pronounced weddings a big “yuck,” were now interested in having their own “boy” outfits.

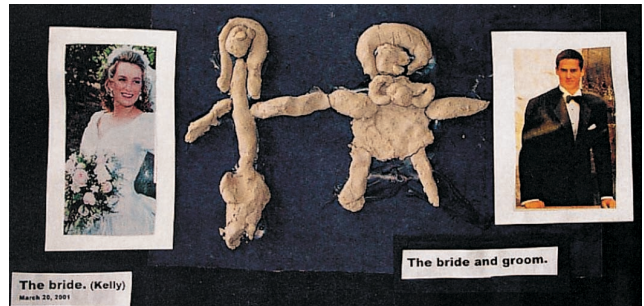
Each child had a personal vision of what he or she wanted to wear. Each drew a picture of a costume and selected fabrics. With some adult help they cut the material, fastened it together with Velcro or staples, and made their own wedding clothes.

The wedding outfits, too,

role play their own weddings and receptions. We also began to videotape the students, and soon they were able to watch themselves on a daily basis.

We incorporated literacy experiences. The children read books about weddings and drew and wrote daily about them in their journals. Some of the children made wedding books. After looking through their parents' or teachers' wedding albums, some of the children decided to make their own using magazine photos, colored markers, and fancy paper. Parents became involved in the project, too. One parent brought in her wedding album and wedding dress. She and her daughter shared them with the class.

One of the boys brought in a cake, and we decided to have a “special wedding reception snack.” The children dressed up in their wedding outfits, ate the cake, and danced. Another parent brought in a presentation and an album of a bridal fair at a local mall. All of the parents were curious, excited, and involved in



were placed in the dramatic play area of our room with the other wedding items. By now, several more videotapes of weddings had been donated by parents and other teachers. Every day children wanted to watch parts of various tapes and then

their children's experiences. One of the students decided that we needed a wedding arch. She described exactly how she envisioned it. Two or three other students expressed interest and helped her to construct, paint, and decorate the arch. The arch became the central place the children performed their wedding ceremonies. Dancing and the serving of a beautifully decorated cake followed each ceremony.

After the project continued for more than two months, it felt like a good time for a special event. The children wanted to invite their parents and friends. They made invitations by drawing, writing, or using the computer. We purchased food for our reception. Everyone joined in dancing that day. It was a festive finale to our rich wedding experiences.

But it wasn't the end. The children's experiences continued through documentation. We documented with photos, children's comments and artwork, and videotapes. Documentation panels—some on an adult level and others on a level that children could enjoy—were placed in the classroom and the hallways. We created a class wedding album to share with our visitors and to read with each other. For a long time, the children perused photos, drawings, and text. They continued to reflect on their experiences with their friends.

This year I am in a different class. Every morning as the sun rises, a rainbow appears briefly on our classroom floor. The children have noticed this and they are fascinated. Perhaps their fascination will again lead to a Reggio project. The joy of the moment and the children's delight and curiosity in it are always worth validating and exploring.

the language of dance

ENVIRONMENT, COMMUNICATION,
AND PLAY ARE AT THE
HEART OF LEARNING

By Marcia Freeman

Marcia Freeman, M.A., a teacher/ researcher of movement arts, works with prekindergarten students on the Early Childhood Education team at the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center at Gallaudet University. She welcomes comments about this article: marcia.freeman@gallaudet.edu.

I dance!!

I move.

I grow.

I explore.

I love surprises.

I love beauty.

I communicate.

I want to know you better.

My body talks—

Hands, face,

Arms, legs.

I play.

This is my credo, my underlying philosophy as I teach the children in my two pre-kindergarten classes. I based this credo on some of the main principles of the Reggio Emilia philosophy, as they apply to my teaching of dance. Learning is a celebration of life and I like to call life “a dance.”

Within the Reggio philosophy, the teacher poses questions and engages in a meaningful dialogue with the children. I liken what I do to the process of a dance improvisation class. There are clear “provocations,” or suggestions of something to explore, but no movement is right or wrong. I observe with all my senses in order to facilitate a satisfying experience in each class.

Environment

SOMETHING TO FIND AND CREATE

At the beginning of this school year, I was faced with the lack of an appropriate space in which to teach the prekindergarten children. Dance requires room in which to move and, of the two spaces available, one was too small and the other too far from the children’s classrooms. One afternoon, feeling a bit desperate, I poked into a conference room right next to the school auditorium. It was full of adult tables and chairs but was almost the perfect size and I knew it was rarely used.

My hopes up, I met with Don Mahoney, the program

Right top: A line-up of happy flowers.

Center: Hands make interesting patterns with projectors.

Right: Snakes followed bats and spiders as a project.

manager, who was supportive and arranged for me to use the room.

I immediately began to transform my newly acquired space into a child-friendly, flexible movement and sound studio. After some cleaning and disposing of furniture, I brought in props: two cheap, colorful exercise mats; a big soft ramp for rolling on, jumping up and down on, or sliding on; several soft stools that could be moved together or separated as chairs and could also be used as places to hide or perch; some simple costumes—dance skirts, hats, scarves, and vests; and large pieces of fabric, lace, and chiffon.

I also brought in rolls of masking tape, essential for marking out areas on the floor and for child-generated ideas. Like most dance teachers and Reggio true believers, I cannot stand a cluttered studio.

The Props

FROM PROJECTORS TO PLACE MATS

An overhead projector, an invaluable tool in creating many different moods and environments, provided an extra touch. Free to select among colored gels, opaque fabrics, variously shaped objects, string, clear plastic place mats—especially one shaped like a spider web—and many hand shapes, the children can come up with their own effects. I added environmental print to identify where things belong—shoes, drum, costumes, art supplies. There are several places where the children's artwork is displayed, including the four doors.

For the sound environment, I keep a standard-size snare drum in the room, along with two drumsticks. I occasionally introduce other percussion instruments depending on the kind of activity we are doing. The students and I use them to accompany movement or to initiate it. I also set up a boom box and play music every day, as many of the children enjoy moving to a rhythm. I use many different styles of music, again making selections that support an activity. I will, at times, emphasize a specific speed or quality of movement, but usually allow the children to move in a way that is comfortable to them.

The Teaching

FOLLOWING THE CHILDREN

I begin a typical 40-minute class with a brief review of what we did in the previous class, encouraging comments from the children. I then introduce any new things in the room. Students can choose to start on the drum, use the overhead projector, or help set up the space. Costumes must be shared. A child's preferences quickly emerge and must be negotiated within the group. Some children want to dance, while others want to manipulate the environment.

In prekindergarten, children should be able to plan together and assign roles. In the Reggio philosophy, each child has rights—and those with multiple needs have special rights—so I try to identify and build on each child's interests and strengths. I feel happy whenever the children succeed in working together, even for a minute, and ecstatic when, on very magical days, they somehow create a group symbiosis on their own.

The Projects

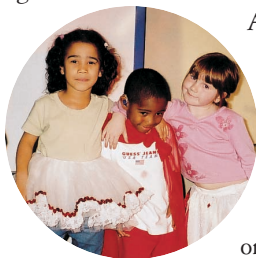
WEBS, FLOWERS, AND FISH

As a focus of Reggio class, my children and I have produced many projects. Our longest running projects include:

WEBS, SPIDERS, AND BATS. Around Halloween, students were naturally fascinated with everything that creeps, crawls, and flies. I brought in the place mat shaped like a spider and a web. When projected onto two walls and the ceiling, this shape caused all of us to feel the sense of being caught in a web, and the children reflected on how easily a spider moves around the web to catch its food. One boy used a roll of masking tape to imitate a spider's sticky thread. He began taping furniture together and then wound the tape around himself. This highly tactile activity was very popular, and we could have used many, many rolls of tape!

FLOWERS. A few of the girls loved drawing flowers and often wore clothing with a floral design. First, we became moving flowers using fabric of different colors. We then went to see an art exhibit of impressionistic flowers. We met the artist and took photographs of our favorite paintings, displaying them later. I also showed the children a "flower" made of common cockleshells glued together, which I had painted red.

FISH, SHELLS, AND THE OCEAN. Each prekindergarten classroom had an aquarium, so the children were used to observing and feeding fish. Initially, I used many props, including a family of small beanbag fish; some laminated fish drawings which "swam" on the floor and the wall; and a large, realistic fish pillow. We created a beach environment using the large ramp as sand, the blue exercise mats as water, and various lighting effects. I brought in cockleshells so the students could make their own flowers, fish, or other objects.



Request for Dialogue

I also teach in the parent/infant room, in the two nursery classrooms, and have a daily group with the kindergarten class. I would very much like to dialogue with other teachers who are using dance or creative movement in their Reggio programs. I would also welcome visitors or volunteers who want to share their skills with our special children. Please feel free to contact me via e-mail on page 24.

INTERVIEW

deaf & hearing together

MANAGING AN INTEGRATED PRESCHOOL

When anything involves the whole class, we make sure we get all of the children's attention simultaneously.

It is nap time at the Child Development Center, the early education and child care facility on the Gallaudet University campus. Inside the classroom, the lights are turned off. Small children, deaf and hearing, wriggle or sleep on their respective mats. Outside of the darkened room, teachers Janell Bunn Verdin and Mary Nelson-Ferguson pull up a set of chairs by the doorway. Bunn Verdin is deaf and Nelson-Ferguson is hearing. Here is an interview.

ODYSSEY: *How long have you worked here?*

Bunn Verdin: I began in 1989, worked eight years, then left—first to become director at another facility and then to stay at home with my children. I have been back here as a teacher for seven months.

Nelson-Ferguson: I came in 1995. We worked together then, and we have worked together since Janell has been back.

ODYSSEY: *Janell has her master's degree in early childhood education from Gallaudet University and surely expected to work with young deaf children. Mary, how did you come to work with deaf children?*

Nelson-Ferguson: I grew up near Gallaudet, and I was always interested in this place. The only deaf person I

knew was the boyfriend—and then husband—of a friend. He and I used to write notes back and forth.

ODYSSEY: *How did you learn to sign?*

Nelson-Ferguson: There were classes, and Janell taught me.

ODYSSEY (to Bunn Verdin): *What was that like—having to teach the new person sign language?*

Bunn Verdin: Oh, I'm used to that. I was the single deaf person in my family. I am used to teaching signs! When someone new arrives, at first you are curious, maybe a bit apprehensive. But Mary is great.

Nelson-Ferguson: Janell has made me very comfortable. She still corrects me—which I appreciate.

Right: Janell Bunn-Verdin, right, and Mary Nelson-Ferguson on the job with their children.



ODYSSEY: *What would a typical class be like for you?*

Bunn Verdin: In a recent class, we worked with two-and-a-half to three-and-a-half-year-olds. Twelve of them were hearing and four were deaf.

ODYSSEY: *What are some of the systems that you set up to handle deaf and hearing children together?*

Bunn Verdin: When anything involves the whole class, we make sure we get all of the children's attention simultaneously.

Nelson-Ferguson: I use my voice and Janell flashes the lights.

Bunn Verdin: We don't continue until all the children are looking at us.

ODYSSEY: *Is it important to get all the children's attention at the same time?*

Bunn Verdin: It depends. If it is something that involves the whole class, yes.

Nelson-Ferguson: What is important is that, if you are calling the class to attention, you don't do it first with your voice for the hearing children and then go

over and touch or wave to get the attention of the deaf children.

Bunn Verdin: It isn't right to make the deaf children the last to know.

ODYSSEY: *Is it important to have a team of hearing and deaf teachers?*

Nelson-Ferguson: Yes, the hearing children sign to Bunn Verdin and voice to me. Some parents enroll their hearing children so that they will learn sign language.

Bunn Verdin: It's important that deaf children have a deaf role model for communication and cultural awareness.

Nelson-Ferguson: I can hear if a child is speech-delayed or needs therapy.

Bunn Verdin: But if Mary is sick, I may have all the children; if I am sick, she may have all the children. We have an aide with us as a substitute. And we each do fine.

ODYSSEY: *What are some of the "props" that you have to make deaf children feel comfortable in the classroom?*

Nelson-Ferguson: We have a play TTY.

It's hooked up to a phone. All the children love to play with that.

Bunn Verdin: We have pictures of signs, and blocks that show the alphabet in fingerspelling and the *I love you* sign. Sometimes when we are playing with the children, we will ask them, "Show me the sign for...."

Nelson-Ferguson: And the Raggedy Ann doll. Somehow a Raggedy Ann doll was left in the playroom. It was in a closet for a while, then Janell pulled it out. She cut off the sleeves so that she could insert her own arms, and she used the doll to tell stories in American Sign Language.

Bunn Verdin: The kids loved it.

ODYSSEY: *What about showing movies?*

Bunn Verdin: Hearing preschoolers love movies, but movies for the youngest deaf preschoolers are hard. Children can't be expected to read captions—and it is only through captions that the deaf children have access to the dialogue. Older preschoolers are sometimes interested if a deaf person stands next to the movie and interprets it in sign language.

ODYSSEY: *How do you work on developing literacy skills?*

(Bunn Verdin pulls out a book, *The Mitten*, to demonstrate. Two fuzzy white mittens, sized to fit a giant, are attached).

Bunn Verdin: We will tell *The Mitten* and act out the story.

Nelson-Ferguson: We will use small toy animals to illustrate, and sleeping bags, shaped like mittens, to represent the white snow. The next day, the children will retell the story themselves.

ODYSSEY: *And how do you infuse Reggio Emilia in your teaching?*

Bunn Verdin: We document more now and we pay more attention to the environment. But we feel we've been doing many aspects of Reggio Emilia all along. We just didn't have a name for it before.

Nelson-Ferguson: It's nice to have a name for what we do!

from italy with hope

A MODEL FOR TEACHING OUR VERY YOUNG

By Lynne Gelzer

Lynne Gelzer, a former teacher at Kendall Demonstration Elementary School, is director of Regional Development at the Abilities Network/Epilepsy Foundation of the Chesapeake Region, an organization dedicated to assisting people of all abilities to achieve their maximum potential by being fully included in their communities. She welcomes comments on this article at: lgelzer@abilitiesnetwork.org.

Last spring, I went to Reggio Emilia. My colleague, Frances Rollins, executive director at the S.E. Children's Fund, Inc., and I wanted to find out why educators in the United States were so inspired by the philosophy and practice of this small city in Italy. I had observed programs at the World Bank Children's Center and the Child Development Center at Gallaudet University and attended workshops about Reggio Emilia, sponsored by the National Association of the Education for the Young Child. I marveled at the incredible depth of inquiry and stunning nature of the children's projects presented in an exhibit called "The Hundred Languages of Children."

Still, I couldn't grasp how it all fit together. I wanted to go to Italy to see for myself. I booked my reservation through Angela Ferrario, the United States Liaison to Reggio Emilia, who coordinates visits from the United States. After a week visiting Florence, Rome, and Venice, we took the train from Florence and rode south to the city of Reggio Emilia. There we joined 120 people from all over the world who had come for the same reason we had—to learn about the Reggio Emilia's infant/toddler preschool programs.

We visited eight schools and attended seminars. Some of the schools were in the relatively affluent downtown neighborhoods, where stretches of small shops and vegetable stands opened onto piazzas, where elderly Italian men congregated after church each week, and families with children of all ages played soccer, ate ice cream, and caught up on the latest news. Other schools were in the outlying areas, reflecting the architecture and culture of the people living in the surrounding neighborhood. We were entranced by the beauty and design of the interior of each school as each was an aesthetic feast of music, art, language, geography, math, and architecture.

In the Reggio programs, the children played with recycled materials donated through a central recycling center. The teachers made use of everything—computer parts, metal gadgets of all shapes and sizes, discarded paper, tubing, remnants of fabric, cardboard containers, and packing materials. Clay figurines representing the themes of the children's projects, both current and from past years, filled the shelves and told many stories about the depth of investigation the children undertook with each project.

All of the schools had an atelier, an artist in residence. The atelier worked with the children and teachers to support the children and to document what they were learning

Right: A visit to the schools of Reggio Emilia, the town in Italy, yielded insight and pleasure. The author was not permitted to photograph the children, and the photographs at right are of children in the Clerc Center's program. *Photography by Phil Bogdan.*



work and to their children. Their hours were long, and teaching appeared to be the center of their lives. Families were equally invested, and their participation in each school was evident everywhere. Again, one sensed an equality of purpose and mutual respect between the professionals and the families.

Although I did not meet a deaf child while I was there, I inquired about how they worked with deaf children and other children who had learning differences or “special rights,” as they say in Italy. When I asked about sign language, I was told that it was one of the 100 languages and that any child who needed it to learn would have access to it.

While this perspective is different from the American perspective in which sign language is considered part of deaf culture, they embraced a commitment to “inclusion” absent in many other places where I have traveled. I saw for myself that children who had “special rights” were fully included in every school. They were given extra support when it was needed in the form of additional staff or equipment, and the families and their children participated in the life of the school in every way.

Of course, Reggio is not a panacea. On the playground, we watched as children competed, squabbled, and sometimes fought—just as children do everywhere. Amelia Gambetti, our guide, told us during our orientation that we could not expect to reproduce these programs when we returned to our respective countries. She explained that the Reggio philosophy grew out of the culture and history of Italy and in particular the culture as it expressed itself in the town of Reggio Emilia.

We could all be “influenced by Reggio,” Gambetti noted, but our programs would have to spring from our own cultures, histories, families, and teachers. As with any culture, if you are not born into it, you can only borrow from it, be next to it, learn from it, or live near or with people from it. The United States has much to learn from the people of Reggio Emilia.



through all forms of art, the symbolic languages. In one infant/toddler program, the toddlers, too young to make figures from the clay, climbed up and slid down on a mountain of it found in the middle of a piazza. In the preschools, the children worked with paint, wire, photography, ceramics, wood, metal and fabric, crayons, magic markers, and colored pencils to chart the course of their inquiry into a topic. Mobiles created by the children of every material and shape were suspended from

the ceilings. Natural light from windows, mirrors, prisms, and other kinds of lighting created changing shadow and colors throughout each school.

Just as impressive was the attitude of teachers and staff members. Cooks and maintenance staff were as important as the teachers and other adults. Everyone participated in the planning and documentation of the children’s relationships and their learning. The teachers were totally devoted to their

using fun as a teaching tool

By John Luckner

John Luckner,

Ed.D., is a professor in the Division of Special Education at the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley. He welcomes comments about this article: john.luckner@unco.edu.

The Case for Putting More Fun into Teaching

The whole art of teaching is only the art of awakening the natural curiosity of young minds for the purpose of satisfying it afterwards; and curiosity itself can be vivid and wholesome only in proportion as the mind is contented and happy.

—Anatole France

When you came into this world, Glasser (1985) says, you arrived with five basic needs: to survive, to belong and love, to gain power, to be free, and to have fun. These needs are built into our genetic wiring; all five are equally important and all five must be reasonably satisfied. Glasser observes that the more students are able to fulfill their basic needs while they are in school, the more they will apply themselves to learning.

In a similar vein, Woolfolk (1995) suggests that people feel most motivated to learn when they are curious, interested, and enjoy what they are learning. Enjoyment gives birth to our desire to learn as surely as the absence of enjoyment snuffs it out. When the joy of learning is absent, would-be learners operate hesitantly, grudgingly, and fearfully—at only a fraction of their potential.

Resourceful teachers can use fun not only to make learning more pleasurable, but to make it more productive as well.

Let Fun Begin with Me Make an Effort, Lighten Up

Before you can begin using fun as a teaching tool, you need to look into yourself and find out if fun is a regular part of your own life. Benson and Stuart's three "don'ts" (1992) can provide a useful starting point for this self-assessment:

- Don't take yourself too seriously.
- Don't set perfectionist standards for yourself.
- Don't overidentify with one facet of your life.

Photography by John Consoli



Above: Phyllis Ballenger, right, Patti McIntyre and their students know that learning doesn't mean not having fun.

When we forget one of these “don'ts,” we set ourselves up for failure. But if we learn to lighten up and pull away from these “don'ts,” we are more likely to experience greater pleasure in life.

If we want fun to seep into the fabric of our daily lives, we need to plan for fun and respond spontaneously to fun moments. Examine how you spend your time and evaluate what you can change to enliven the spontaneous spirit within yourself. Make a list of all the activities, people, and things that bring you fulfillment. They can range from the seemingly mundane to the downright meaningful: ordering a double latte instead of a small house blend, taking a drive on a favorite stretch of country road, calling up a treasured friend far away who only seems to get e-mail from you anymore. Plan on scheduling one of these wellsprings of fun into tomorrow's schedule. Fun is serious business, so be stern with yourself: Treat this appointment with all the sense of responsibility you'd bring to a parent conference or a medical appointment.

Pay Attention to Students Build on their Likes and Dislikes

You can observe a lot by watching.

—Yogi Berra

Our similarities are different.

—Dale Berra, on being compared to his father

Once you've taken some time to listen to yourself and learn—or relearn—some of the little things that can make your personal and professional routines go a little easier, you'll be in a better position to focus on the likes and dislikes that motivate your students.

Everyone has a unique set of likes and dislikes. Yet for all the attention we lavish on our students, we teachers often don't take the time to identify the specific interests, activities, people, and objects that energize them as individuals. Too often, we project our own preferences and aversions on others and attempt to motivate behavior with reinforcers that are not desirable to the student and, therefore, lack the power to advance our pedagogical objectives.

How can you figure out what motivates or discourages your individual students? One way is simply to watch them. In their unself-conscious interactions, they will disclose a lot about their individual preferences. Another way is to ask them (or their family members, if the opportunity arises).



Here are some questions you might try:

- What are your favorite games?
- What do you like to do after school?
- What are your favorite toys?
- What books do you like to read?
- What are your favorite indoor activities?
- What are your favorite outdoor activities?
- What places do you like to go?
- Who are your best friends?
- What are your favorite foods?
- What are your hobbies?
- What do you like to do at school?
- What is your favorite TV show?

The process of gathering this information benefits you and your students at several levels. First and foremost, it requires that you have conversations with your students. Conversation, especially with an adult such as a teacher, gives students practice with the functions of communication and the use of language as a social tool (Kretschmer & Kretschmer, 1995). Also, the information you gather can be incorporated into content subjects such as mathematics, reading, health, and social studies. For instance, students are always more motivated to solve math word problems when their names and interests are included. (For example, “If the Rockies played 81 home games this year and Lorena went to 18 of them, what percentage of Rockies home games did she attend?”)

Integrate Fun Materials Lighten the Teaching Environment

Tell them Groucho sent you.

—Julius Marx

Your work environment and the things you do to break up the day can have a great effect on your attitude. For instance, you can infuse some fun into your teaching setting and schedule by acquiring some props that will enliven your spirit and signal to your students that they can learn and still have fun. Unexpectedly donning Groucho glasses—complete with a big nose, bushy mustache, and eyebrows—at a moment when the lateness of the hour or the tedium of the material is causing your students to slip away can respark alertness or dissolve frustration. In general, setting aside short blocks of time during

the day or at the end of a lesson for fun activities can be very energizing for everyone.

Specific times that are perfect for focusing on fun are when you have a minute or two before the class goes to lunch or an assembly, or before they head home for the day. Starting homeroom or the first class of the morning with a fun activity can also help students feel engaged.

That’s All, Folks... The Magic Ingredient

*Teach me half the gladness
that thy brain must know.*

—Percy Bysshe Shelley, from “To a Skylark”

Fun is a magic ingredient we can insert into our lesson plans to dissipate boredom and apathy. If you are willing to incorporate fun into your teaching, you will find that it provides a new set of tools for building rapport in the classroom—not only among students, but also between you and your students.

Note: I wish to thank Vincent Ercolano for his excellent editorial assistance.—The Author

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Teaching Suggestions: Not Just for Fun

Integrating fun activities into your teaching strengthens students' communication skills, builds their self-confidence, and instills a greater appreciation of alternative forms of education, such as humorous literature. Here are some fun activities you can introduce into your classroom routine.

Tell Funny Stories

"I'm not making this up..."

Being able to "tell a funny story" is not merely a charming talent. Learning to relate events in a sequence that will mean something to other people—the essence of good joke-telling—bolsters communication skills and self-esteem.

Collect Headlines

"Take a Stand on Water"

Late in the Civil War, a Southern newspaper optimistically reported that Confederate general Gideon Pillow was in close pursuit of William Tecumseh Sherman. The headline read: "Pillow on Sherman's Rear." People have long enjoyed collecting newspaper headlines that—accidentally or otherwise—use word play and double meanings to attract attention. A few, more recent, examples: "Pants Man to Expand at the Rear," "Iraqi Head Seeks Arms," and "Drought Turns Coyotes to Watermelons." Try introducing one of these humorous headlines to your students and asking them to explain what they think the writer really meant.

Play Games

"Is '6.02 x 10²³' your final answer?"

Use games to help students review information and skills as well as learn new material. Students usually pay close attention when playing games, and opportunities to reinforce social skills are always present. Make up your own games or use the format of well-known games to integrate material that is appropriate. For example, adapt games such as Jeopardy, Trivial Pursuit, and even Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?

Use Deaf Literature

Pizza's fattening, anyway

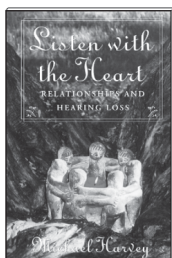
Introduce culturally relevant and accessible materials such as *Deaf Culture Our Way* (Holcomb, Holcomb, & Holcomb, 1996), *Deafinitions for Signlets* (Glickman, 1986), *Deaf Culture as Seen Through the Eyes of a Deaf Humorist* (Glickman, 1993), and *ABC Stories* (1992) into your unit on deaf studies. In *Deaf Culture Our Way*, for instance, the Holcombs (a father and two sons) have collected humorous anecdotes about some of the small but maddening perplexities of deaf life, such as oversized centerpieces on restaurant tables and pizza delivery people who can't figure out doorbells that flash instead of ring. This book is also useful in English class.

—John Luckner

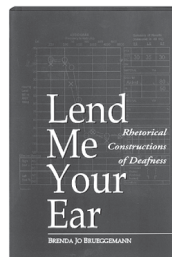
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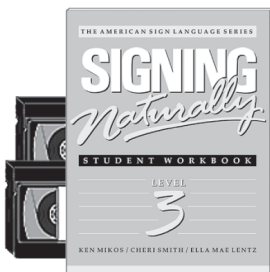
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MSSD Students Win Awards for Leadership

By Susan M. Flanigan



Clara Germany and Geoffrey Mompremier, winners of the DCABDA Iva Johnson award, with attorney Claudia Gordon, center.

homecoming queen. Currently Germany participates in the Presidential Classroom, serves on the yearbook committee, and is a peer mediator, and a cheerleader.

Mompremier, a junior from Miramar, Florida, is president of the Junior National Association of the Deaf, a member of the Student Body Government cabinet, a peer mediator, a contestant in this year's Junior National Black Deaf Advocate Pageant, a volleyball manager, and a varsity basketball player. Mompremier served as this year's homecoming chairperson and is the chairperson for the prom.

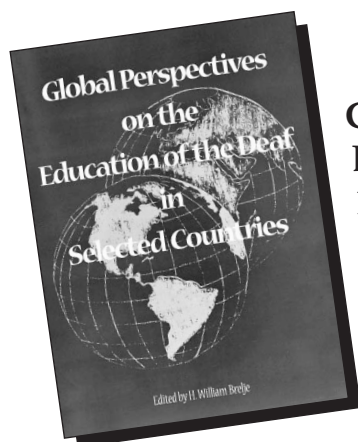
DCABDA was the first of the 27 chapters that the National Black Deaf Advocates, Inc. (NBDA), established across the United States. It was founded to promote the well-being, culture, and employment of African American persons who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Ciara Germany and Geoffrey Mompremier, students from the Model Secondary School for the Deaf (MSSD), have won the Iva Johnson Award from the District of Columbia Area Black Deaf Advocates (DCABDA). DCABDA made the announcement at the 20th Anniversary Black Tie Gala held in October. The Iva Johnson award is given to deaf juniors or seniors in high school of African heritage for their academic, social, and leadership skills.

Germany, a senior from Cleveland Heights, Ohio, served last year as junior class president, junior dorm representative, and secretary for the Student Body Government as well as Miss MSSD 2000. She served as Homecoming 2001 assistant chairperson and was



Visit our exhibit
at Deaf Way.



Global Perspectives on the Education of the Deaf

Edited by H. William Brelje
A comprehensive look at the education of the deaf and hard of hearing students in selected countries around the world.

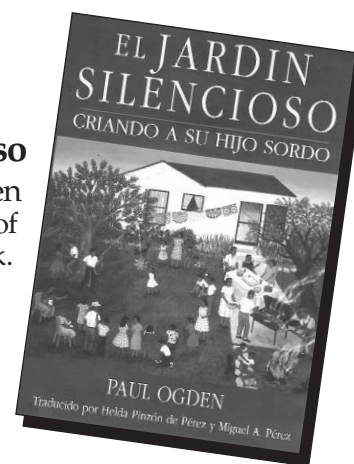
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For Katie Byrnes: Crossing Communication Bridges

By Pamela Eubanks

Pamela Eubanks received her master's degree in Religious Education from Cincinnati Bible Seminary.

She is site coordinator of the Shared Reading Project at the Deaf Institute in Cincinnati, Ohio.

She welcomes comments about this article: eubanksp@juno.com.

As site coordinator of the Shared Reading Project (SRP), I am blessed to help build bridges of communication between family members and tutors and walk alongside them as they venture out on those bridges. The Byrnes family, our first family as we instituted the SRP, provides a good example.

Katie Byrnes was born with Goldenhar syndrome, a rare condition probably caused by a temporary cessation of blood flow during pregnancy. As a result, Katie had hydrocephalus and scoliosis, and she was deaf. Still, at four months old, she began getting her thoughts across—communicating for the first time by wiggling her eyebrows at her daddy.

Katie's parents, Jayne and John, made sure Katie had everything for her development, including a connection between Katie and the rest of the deaf community. When Katie was 18 months old, our son Nathaniel, then 11, became the first deaf person she met when our family brought a "Gifts of Hope" bag, developed by our Deaf Institute for families of deaf children, into the Byrnes's home. At this time Katie already knew many signs thanks to Aimee Kasperski, the teacher who made home visits from the Ski-Hi Program, an early intervention program out of Dayton.

Steve Bright, head draftsman at a local engineering firm and a deaf individual, was the first tutor who signed up to work with the SRP. He began visiting with the Byrnes family and sharing stories from books on a biweekly basis when Katie was 4 and a half. When asked what benefits came from these sessions, Katie's preschool teacher reported a noticeable improvement in Katie's attention to the interpreter during story time. She was the only deaf child in a class of 12 students, six of whom had special needs, and she was the only one demonstrating reading skills. Yet the most important benefit from the family's perspective was the special relationship that developed between Katie and Steve.

Katie always made sure Steve had a 7-Up and cookies before each session began. Jack, Katie's older brother, noticed how Katie's face lit up every time Steve visited. Steve shared meals with the family and made a special effort to visit Katie when she was in the hospital. They even enjoyed a performance of *Beethoven by Heart*, by the National Theatre of the Deaf, last year.

Last year, when Katie had many operations and stays in the hospital, the doctors and nurses knew that they couldn't work with her until they showed her their name badges and she had a chance to fingerspell their names. They were amazed at how many deaf people came to visit her.

Three days after our second SRP workshop last spring, Katie died. Her shunt had failed. Although we knew Katie was physically vulnerable, her death felt sudden and unexpected. As I drove Jack from the hospital to my house that day, he said, "Well, at least Katie accomplished one thing in her life." I asked, "What's that?" He said, "She learned how to read!"

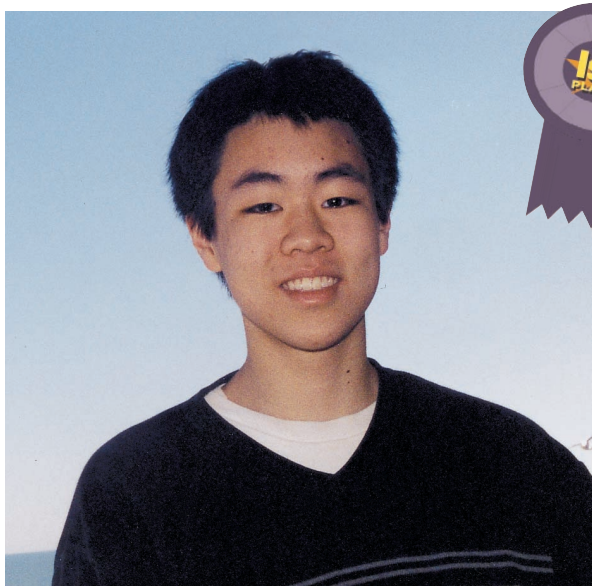
The Byrnes family hosted a "Thanks-Giving" party to celebrate Katie's life near her birthday. Teachers, interpreters, doctors, nurses, and friends filled their home. During the evening Katie's mom pulled out a favorite book, *Goodnight, Gorilla*, and begged Steve to sign the story for everyone. Deaf and hearing, children and adults, we all enjoyed Steve's storytelling. I felt joy in watching communication barriers

successfully surmounted, even in Katie's absence.

Many gifts have been sent to the Deaf Institute in memory of Katie. We are using some of the funds to develop Bible Reading book bags for families interested in sharing Bible stories with their children. Ten deaf children and their families are involved in the SRP. Steve is ready to begin working with another family, and we all miss Katie.



Katie Byrnes
1995-2001



Sympathy? Special Treatment? No Thanks!

WINNING ESSAY BY JONATHAN LAI

I can still remember it vividly.

It was late when my parents came to kiss me goodnight. They shuffled solemnly into the room, single file, and looked everywhere except at me. Instead of turning off the lights, my parents pulled up seats to my bed and quietly took out two sheets of creased paper from a manila envelope that they carried. At the sound of rustling paper, I roused myself from a dreamy

doze and laughed, thinking that my parents were playing a new game with me. And, yet, even at the height of that contagious sound, I can remember something struck me as odd. My parents did not laugh with me.

Taking me by the hand, my father eased me into bed and presented me with the two documents from the manila envelop. Pointing at the first sheet, the results of a recent

hearing test, and then the second sheet which depicted normal hearing. My father gently explained to me that I had been diagnosed with a moderate hearing loss, my right ear had a 30 db loss, and my left ear, a 45 db loss.

I was not overly disturbed. It took an additional ten years for me to realize the ramifications of those two documents that my father had pressed into my squirming hands.

Along the way I gradually, albeit painfully, learned to adapt and to survive in a world built for people with normal hearing. I find now that one of my chief difficulties lies not in the hearing disability itself, but with the way that others—normal hearing people—treat me. These people seem to feel some sort of obligation to give special treatment or render some form of aid. As if following an invisible commandment set in stone since the beginning of time, normal hearing people change their behavior when encountering a hard of hearing individual.

Here are a few of the most common responses I have received when I mention that I happen to be hearing impaired.

– “Gosh, I didn’t know.

“Along the way I gradually, albeit painfully, learned to adapt and to survive in a world built for people with normal hearing. I find now that one of my chief difficulties lies not in the hearing disability itself, but with the way that others—normal hearing people—treat me.”

CAN YOU HEAR ME OKAY?” (shouting the last question)

– “Wow, should I talk sloooooower? Is thiiiis tooooo fast?” (said sloooooowly and loudly)

– “Are you serious?” (followed by stunned silence)

– “Hold on, I think I have a sign language dictionary here



Jessica
Fletcher



Tawnysha
Lynch



Sean
Demoss



Carle
Broadnax



Jessica Ann
Kellerman



Rebekah
Thibault



Jordan
Auckland



Nicole
Hart



Danielle
Monnier

somewhere.”

I am not trying to be ungrateful, but most special “assistance” is unnecessary and even counterproductive.

Once I was passing through the metal detectors at the airport when my hearing aids naturally caused the detectors to go off. I was hauled off to the side for individual inspection. There I attempted to explain to the lady what had happened. However at the mere sight of my hearing aids, she rolled her eyes and muttered under her breath about “another one of those.” Then so loudly that the passengers in line behind me stopped to observe the proceeding, she yelled “HOLD YOUR ARMS OUT STRAIGHT! GOOD! PUT THEM DOWN! TAKE YOUR HAT OFF! TURN AROUND!”

Careful enunciation, a slowed conversational pace, or a raised voice help me understand better, but unfortunately people are either not aware of this or tend to exaggerate it. Why this incurable need, this unwavering automatic assumption that a hearing impaired person needs help to function normally? I do not know why, but somehow it is this assumption that leads the clerk at McDonald’s to repeat

the total three or four times after seeing my hearing aids—despite the fact that I am already taking money out of my wallet.

Most of us have found ways to adapt to our hearing disability. Hearing aids, lip-reading, a keen observation of sentence context, and a deliberate effort to hear have become part of our lifestyle.

As a 17-year-old student, I believe that this is one of the most important things that people with normal hearing can know about deaf and hard of hearing people. Each and every one of us is capable of standing on our own feet. Learning to respect hearing impaired people will be one of the first steps toward a more accepting human society. The Random House *Webster’s Dictionary* defines respect as “proper courtesy...to refrain from intruding upon.” While there are many issues in the relationship between the hearing and the hearing impaired, I believe a foundation of equal respect would do much to resolve and ameliorate existing difficulties.

—Jonathan Lai
St. Paul’s School
Concord, New Hampshire

As They See It...

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students Explain What Hearing People Should Know

Equal treatment, not special treatment, is what deaf and hard of hearing students believe their hearing counterparts should show them. This was a common theme in the 100+ essays received from deaf and hard of hearing students around the country as part of the fourth annual Gallaudet National Essay Contest for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students. The theme of the contest was “What Hearing People Should Know About Deaf People—and Why.”

Jonathan Lai, from St. Paul’s School in Concord, New Hampshire, received first prize—a \$1,000 scholarship, which doubles should he decide to attend Gallaudet University—for his essay titled “Sympathy? Special Treatment? No Thanks!” in which he wrote about how he “learned to adapt and to survive in a world built for people with normal hearing.”

Tawnysha Lynch, from A Beka Academy in Pensacola, Florida, won second place for “Listen to Me.” **Jessica Fletcher**, from Abraham Lincoln High School in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, won third place for “More Alike Than Different.”

Honorable mention winners were: **Jessica Ann Kellerman**, of Hoke County High School in Lumber Bridge, North Carolina; **Danielle Monnier**, of Rockville High School in Rockville, Maryland; and **Robert Christian**, of Northeastern University in Boston, Massachusetts. Commendable award winners were: **Elizabeth Tricase**, of Bishop Grimes High School in Syracuse, New York; **Quishauna Harrison**, of W. T. Woodson High School in Falls Church, Virginia; **Jordan Auckland**, of Ellensburg High School in Ellensburg, Washington; and **Rebekah Thibault**, of the Accelerated Reading Lab in Worcester, Massachusetts. Editor’s award winners were: **Carle Broadnax**, of the North Carolina School for the Deaf in Morgantown; **Nicole Hart**, of Woodburn High School in Woodburn, Oregon; **Alysha Nuttall**, of the Learning Center for Deaf Children in Framingham, Massachusetts; and **Sean Demoss**, of Riverdale High School in Gladstone, Oregon.

All winners, pictured at left, will receive a copy of *Douglas Tilden: The Man and His Legacy*, the biography of a deaf artist whose sculptures still stand in San Francisco, graciously donated by the Mildred Albronda Memorial Trust. Contest judges were **Al Van Nevel**, grand president of the National Fraternal Society of the Deaf, **Trudy Suggs**, former editor of *Silent News*, and **Angela Laguardia**, an English teacher at the Model Secondary School for the Deaf. For information about next year’s national essay contest, contact: Cathryn Carroll, Gallaudet University, 800 Florida Avenue, NE, Washington, DC 20002-3695; 800-526-9105 (V/TTY); 202-651-5708 (FAX); essaycontest@gallaudet.edu.



Elizabeth
Tricase



Quishauna
Harrison



Alysha
Nuttall



Robert
Christian

Creative Teachers Win Drawing Earn Digital Cameras

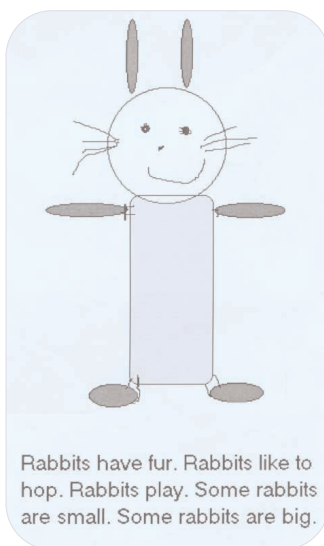
By Rosalinda M. Ricasa

Three teachers “clicked” in a Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center Internet contest when their names were selected at random to receive digital cameras for their creative use of digital media in their classrooms. **Vicky Scott**, from the North Carolina School for the Deaf, and **Jenny Ignacio**, from Echo Horizon School in Culver City, California, were among the teachers and staff who submitted their activities to a new Clerc Center classroom technology database and thus entered a drawing to win the Olympus Camedia D-510 Zoom digital camera. **Mary Ellsworth**, a science teacher/researcher from the Model Secondary School for the Deaf, won the internal Clerc Center drawing.

Scott and her third grade students wrote a script and drew illustrations for an animal slide show. Ignacio and her students also created a slide show using text and graphics to help her students develop their creativity and speaking and writing skills. Ellsworth used technology to access satellite data that enabled her students to evaluate phytoplankton.

“I am so excited about winning one of the cameras,” said Scott. “I am already planning how to use it in the classroom—and I’m sure my students will be very excited and motivated to use it as well.” Scott started teaching this year at the North Carolina School for the Deaf after

teaching for eight years in public schools. She uses technology with her deaf students to research topics and questions on the Internet and through the on-line encyclopedia. She said that her students enjoy logging on to



Above: Bunny and description were among the slides done by students for the show developed by teacher Vicky Scott. Students drew the images, wrote the script, and produced the show.

Kidbrain.com to practice their math and reading skills. The slide show, which used Kidpix to create pictures of animals and write captions describing their characteristics, was their first one.

Ignacio, a teacher of oral deaf and hard of hearing children in a mainstream program, works with students on their speech, language, auditory, and academic skills. Her students adapted *Brown Bear, Brown Bear*, by Bill Martin, into a

Halloween slide show. The students used Kidpix for captions and illustrations, and recorded their voices for each of the characters.

Ellsworth, from the Clerc Center, had her students use the same data as research scientists to analyze the spread of phytoplankton. In an exercise designed to get students to “observe and think,” Ellsworth had them consider questions about sea temperature as reflected in the proliferation of phytoplankton.

Phil Mackall, director of Information Systems and Computer Support, established the digital camera contest to launch a new database of classroom applications for as part of a TecEds project that has been under way at the Clerc Center for two years.

New Internet Database Provides Tech Help for the Classroom

When teachers discover—or seek—technology-focused activities that benefit their students, they can share these activities with other teachers through a recently established database. This database, part of the Clerc Center’s Technology in Education Can Empower Deaf Students (TecEds) project, enables teachers to submit and search out activities and ideas related to the use of technology in the classroom. At last count, 88 ideas for students from kindergarten through high school had been submitted to the database.

TecEds project leader Phil Mackall, director of Information Systems and Computer Support, said, “We believe that this interactive database builds a valuable resource for teachers and staff

working with deaf and hard of hearing students—prekindergarten through grade 12—around the country.”

Finding and Using a Database

- To find the TecEds database, go to the Clerc Center homepage: <http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu>. Under “Integrating Technology,” click on: *Activities Database*.

Teachers and those who use the database are encouraged to register. However, registration is not necessary to search the database. Examples of submitted activities include: “Computer as Dialogue Journal,” “Inspiration [software] and the Writing Process,” “Digital Art,” “Geography Through Virtual Travel,” “Life Cycle of Stars,” and “Computer Mad Libs.”

“The TecEds project has helped me expand my ideas,” said Vicky Scott, from the North Carolina School for the Deaf. “It is a fantastic technology resource.”

The TecEds project provides training to increase the technology skills of teachers and staff. Last summer, training sessions were offered to 32 teachers and staff working with deaf students at the Clerc Center and across the nation. The goal is to enable them to use technology as an appropriate and effective integrated learning tool. The project is funded by grants from the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation, the Gallaudet University Combined Technology Fund, and Clerc Center funds.

For more information about the TecEds project, visit: <http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/teceds/index.html>.

KidsWorld Deaf Net Virtual Library Grows

By Jennifer Hinger

KidsWorld Deaf Net, the virtual library and communication network on the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education

Center Web site, continues to grow. With support from the AT&T Foundation,

KidsWorld Deaf Net is for parents and professionals involved in the education of deaf and hard of hearing children. KidsWorld Deaf Net has resources related to deaf education, including informational papers, links to other Web sites, and a

forum for ongoing discussion. Two newly

added documents are summarized below. Look for them at: <http://clerccenter2.gallaudet.edu/KidsWorldDeafNet/library.html>.

Early Intervention

Early Beginnings for Families with Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children: Myths and Facts of Early Intervention and Guidelines for Effective Services

Marilyn Sass-Lehrer, Ph.D.

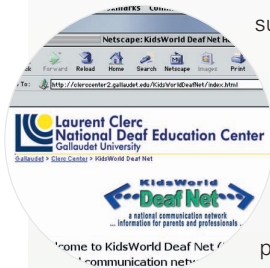
Families in effective early intervention programs can expect positive results in their children's language, communication, and social development. With the support of early intervention, they can expect to develop positive attachments to their child and adapt quickly to their child's special communication needs.

Recommended Practices

We are Equal Partners: Recommended Practices for Involving Families in Their Child's Educational Program

Margaret Hallau, Ph.D.

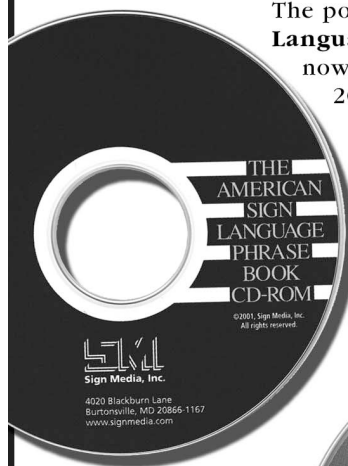
This document describes practices that are used by programs that were selected for a National Forum on Family Involvement held at Gallaudet University. The author summarizes the practices and describes how these practices are put into action in participants' programs. The document is intended to provide service providers insight about the effectiveness of their programs and of their interactions with deaf and hard of hearing children. This document will soon be available in print from the Clerc Center as part of the Sharing Results series.



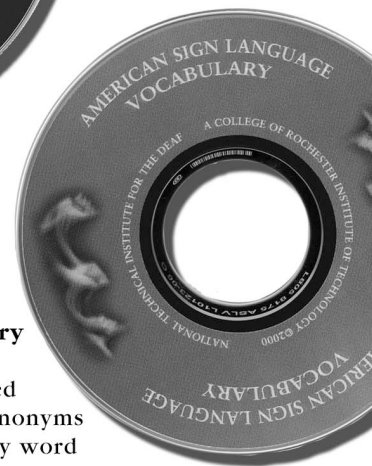
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The popular **American Sign Language Phrase Book** series now offers a CD-ROM. Over 200 ASL sentences, phrases, video clips, and practice exercises make this perfect for beginning signers.



The **American Sign Language Vocabulary** CD-ROM has about 1,850 ASL signs linked with their English synonyms that are searchable by word or phrase.



Find these and other CDs, books, and videos on everything from sign language to deaf culture at Harris Communications.

Visit **www.harriscomm.com** for the latest in products for deaf and hard of hearing people.

DecisionMaker— Transition in a Box

New material soon to be available through the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center provides deaf and hard of hearing students with an opportunity to develop the critical transition skill of planning and decision making. Called DecisionMaker, the program provides a set of materials to actively engage deaf and hard of hearing high school students in the process of learning about themselves and others. It also helps them learn how to set goals, make plans, and solve problems. Based on research that suggests self-determination is a critical factor in successful transition, the program requires that teachers facilitate, rather than instruct, as students explore choices and experience consequences of their choices within the safety of the classroom. Teachers guide the process, helping students to advance their levels of self-awareness and self-confidence.

DecisionMaker includes a teacher/facilitator handbook, lessons, student journals, and other student materials. A teacher orientation videotape, demonstrating materials and techniques for the use of the DecisionMaker teacher/facilitator, is also included. Unit topics include: learning about yourself, learning to generate choices, developing criteria for setting goals, making plans, and evaluating plans. Group and individual projects provide opportunities that allow students to experience making choices and being responsible

Gallaudet University Regional Center Representatives Visit

Administrators from the Gallaudet University Regional Centers (GURCs) recently met with representatives from the Gallaudet community to discuss how to meet the educational, transition, and professional development needs of deaf people from birth through adulthood, as well as the needs of their families and the professionals who work with them. Topics for discussion included future directions in distance education, extension courses, videoconferencing, and developing agreements to assist in the smooth transfer of students from the host institutions to the university.

The GURCs promote collaborative relationships between Gallaudet and the schools and programs in their regions. Through the GURCs, Gallaudet offers extension courses, training workshops, and technical assistance. The meeting emphasized the central role that the GURCs play in Gallaudet's strategic objectives, particularly those focusing on outreach and enrollment. The GURCs are a part of the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center, the Gallaudet unit that has a Congressional mandate for national mission activities.

GURC directors, host administrators are left to right.

Back row: I. King Jordan, president of Gallaudet University; John Peroni, dean of Continuing Education at Northern Essex Community College; Janne Harrelson, director of Training and Professional Development at the Clerc Center; Steve Larew, GURC director at Flagler College; John Morton, provost at Kapi'olani Community College.

Middle row: Katherine Jankowski, dean of the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center; Kathy Vesey, GURC director at Northern Essex Community College; Kim Beardslee, GURC director at Johnson County Community College; Jane K. Fernandes, Gallaudet University provost; Ron Burdett, dean of Deaf Studies and Special Services at Ohlone College. **Front row:** Margaret Hallau, National Outreach, Research, and Evaluation Network; Pam Snedigar, GURC director at Ohlone College; and Nancy Bridenbaugh, GURC director at Kapi'olani Community College. William Abare, president of Flagler College, and Linda Cole, director of Community Services at Johnson County Community College, are not pictured.



PHOTO BY JOHN CONSOLI

for their own decisions

The program covers 14 to 18 weeks if scheduled at least two hours a week. DecisionMaker fits very well with the objectives of secondary level transition and career/work preparation courses. It can also be incorporated into guidance sessions or regularly scheduled seminars. Counselors, residential staff, after-school

program sponsors, child care workers, and support service personnel can adapt DecisionMaker to accommodate less structured after-school sessions.

DecisionMaker is most effective if used in its entirety. The materials and activities may be used in a basic or alternative cycle. In the basic cycle, goals selected by the students can be related to any

area of the student's life. In the alternative cycle, the student-directed goals focus on specific areas, such as development of the student's Individualized Education Program or career plans. Students may cycle through the program several times using different content activities depending on their interests, skills, and knowledge.

Basketball and Books KDES Students Enjoy Reading with Stars

By Jennifer Hinger

Basketball Hall of Famer Bob Lanier and other basketball stars scored big when they showed up to share books and basketball with the students at Kendall Demonstration Elementary School (KDES).

In the "Basketball and Books" clinic, Lanier, basketball Hall of Famer Nate "Tiny" Archibald, Indiana Fever forward Tamika Catchings, Washington Mystics center Tausha Mills, and Mystics guard Markita Aldridge joined Congressman Ray LaHood of Illinois, Gallaudet University president I. King Jordan, his wife Linda Jordan, Provost Jane K. Fernandes, and 75 students from KDES in reading aloud *Strong to the Hoops* by John Coy.

"We use basketball to tingle [student] interest and create the building blocks that lead to success in life," said Lanier.

"Reading is the most important thing we do here," agreed Jordan.

Below, left to right: I. King Jordan, Gallaudet University President, joined basketball star Tamika Catchings in reading to students at Kendall Demonstration Elementary School. Between them is interpreter Jeff Hardison.



Families Count!

The fun of math will multiply this fall when the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center begins distributing its first Families Count! materials to programs and schools with deaf or hard of hearing students.

Families Count! is a program that encourages hands-on practice with math concepts using games, activities, and manipulatives, such as paper cutouts of teddy bears or tangrams. Families Count!, which is signed as "family" and "count/important," is designed to involve the whole family—parents, caregivers, and hearing siblings, as well as the deaf or hard of hearing students—and increase family communication. In addition, it is designed to decrease anxiety about math and to reinforce math concepts, including those involved in numbers, geometry, time, fractions, and measurement. The kits include materials for schools and programs to set up Families Count! evenings and take-home activities for the families.

"It gives everyone the opportunity to have fun with math," said Leslie Page, the Clerc Center family education coordinator who is managing the Families Count! project. "You start playing with the activities and manipulatives and forget you are learning. It's really neat to see the students help the parents and vice versa," she said.

Families Count! started at the Clerc Center in 1993 based on the Family Math program developed in 1981 at the University of California, Berkeley. Families Count! expanded the Family Math program by developing videotapes that explain math concepts in sign language and feature signed stories with embedded math concepts. The Clerc Center has piloted Families Count! at Kendall Demonstration Elementary School, St. Joseph's School for the Deaf in New York, and the Worcester Public Schools in Massachusetts. In addition, 17 schools and programs tested the effectiveness of the administration handbook and orientation videotape.

For ordering information, contact Martea Pitts at 202-651-5240 (TTY/V) or via e-mail: Martea.Pitts@gallaudet.edu.



Above: Teachers talking about one of the workshops that led to the Families Count! materials.

Video Technology Focus of Conference

Videoconference technology and its application, web casting, video interpreting and relay, and making new video technologies accessible are the focus of the third conference on Videoconferencing and Emerging Video Technologies in Deaf Education. The conference will be held on the campus of Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C., from October 13 -15. It will include forums on program and curriculum development and on how to find funding to support technology and programming. Featured presenters will include: Cindy King, executive director of Academic Technology at Gallaudet

University; Michael Baker of

Polycom; and Geoff Freed of WGBH in Boston. There will also be a featured performance by renowned performer Howie Seago.

This conference is sponsored by Gallaudet University, the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center, the American School for the Deaf, and the Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind. For more information about the schedule, visit the conference Web site: <http://academic.gallaudet.edu/vid eoconf2002>.

"Well Worth the Effort!"

Coordinators Reflect on the Shared Reading Project

By Jennifer Hinger

Jennifer Hinger is a writer/editor for KidsWorld Deaf Net Web site, sponsored by the AT&T Foundation and administered by the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center.

She can be reached at jennifer.hinger@gallaudet.edu.

"Dad, I didn't know you could read a book!" one boy, age 4, told his father when his father read to him for the first time.

"It's something I will never forget," said Ami Tsuji-Jones, the former site coordinator for the Shared Reading Project (SRP) at Kapi'olani Community College in Honolulu, Hawaii. Eight years later, the boy loves to read and is doing well in school, she said. "I'm very proud... He was part of one of the original SRP families and I tutored his parents."

The SRP, sponsored by the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center and underway in about 35 locations throughout the United States, relies on deaf tutors who carry storybooks with American Sign Language translations on videotape into families' homes and demonstrate strategies for reading books with deaf children. Following the tutors' lead, families learn to read to their children using American Sign Language and foster a love of literature that enables the development of literacy skills.

"This program helps bridge the communication gap between hearing parents and

their deaf or hard of hearing children, giving the children a terrific foundation for academic achievement and encouraging family sharing," said David Schleper, the Clerc Center's literacy coordinator. Schleper began the SRP with Dr. Jane Fernandes and Doreen Higa at the Hawaii Center for the Deaf and Blind in 1993.

In hopes of giving interested program coordinators an insight into the SRP, *Odyssey* asked a sampling of site coordinators to comment on their experiences. Some of their remarks are included below.

The SRP Advantage

In the SRP, deaf readers are videotaped as they render popular children's storybooks page by page in American Sign Language. Enclosed in plastic book bags, these videotapes and storybooks are carried by tutors into families' homes. The tutors demonstrate how to sign the story and give feedback to family members on their own sign language translations. After the tutors leave, parents and children read the story again and again. A bookmark with tips for reading to deaf children and an

activity guide are also included to guide parents as they explore the book with their children. The following week, the tutor returns with a new book bag and the process starts again.

There are 90 book titles, including 30 books that focus on holidays and cultural celebrations. Bookmarks are available in 12 languages, including Arabic, Somalian, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.

"The community served by an SRP has an advantage over other communities," said Dawnmarie Caggiano, program director at the Deaf Service Center of Pasco-Hernando Counties in Port Richey, Florida. Representatives of SRP programs cite many benefits; foremost, perhaps, is improved communication between parents and children. Caggiano and Tsuji-Jones said the program gave families confidence in their communication skills. Further, Tsuji-Jones said many families reported that prior to participation in the program their children weren't interested in reading, but after participating in the SRP the children love to read and often ask their parents to read to them.

"Overall, I feel that the SRP has not only benefited the families, but also the deaf and hard of hearing children, the tutors, and everyone involved! It is so gratifying to see not only the children blossom, but the families, too," said Tsuji-Jones.

Family Involvement coordinator Tina Pakis, who coordinates the SRP at the

Pennsylvania School for the Deaf (PSD) in Philadelphia, said that the SRP has become a mainstay in her school. In addition to an increased confidence in communication, she noted that parents who participate in the SRP become more involved with their children's education and more comfortable with deaf adults. One of the original SRP sites, the program at PSD was set up in 1997. This year, 20 families, with children ages 2 to 13, are participating.

Eric A. Reed, American Sign Language specialist and the site coordinator at the Northwest Regional Deaf & Hard of Hearing Program in Hillsboro, Oregon, noted that parents reported learning a lot from the tutors. Six families with children ages 14 months to 6 years participate in the SRP in the Hillsboro program which started in September 2001. "It is a good experience," said Reed.

Pam Eubanks, site coordinator at the Deaf Institute in Cincinnati, Ohio, says that the SRP "helps us reach into the deaf community in important ways with long-lasting, positive results." Eubanks, who has been running the SRP since June 2000, noted, "Deaf adults are eager to help families with deaf children... The deaf children are blessed with a role model and special friend."

"It is a win-win-win plan," she added. "Plan to have setbacks, frustrations, and questions, but [know that] it is a wonderful tool for building healthy relationships between family members, the deaf community, and the school's programs."

SHARED READING

Challenges and Unique Features

Some programs adapted the SRP as they implemented it in response to their community situation.

At the American School for the Deaf (ASD) in Hartford, Connecticut, the program was modified and renamed "Together We Read." While the traditional SRP involves using deaf individuals as tutors, ASD's tutors are mostly certified teachers of the deaf, some hearing and some deaf. Since 1999, when ASD began Together We Read based on the SRP, 33 families, with children ages 3 to 12, have participated. ASD has used videotapes from the Kansas School for the Deaf to supplement the SRP for older students. When a family wanted to participate in the program but didn't have a VCR, the program bought a VCR and loaned it to them.

The Deaf Service Center of Pasco-Hernando Counties, where grants and the United Way fund the SRP, responded to community demand by permitting families with hearing children to participate in the program on the condition that the families pay their tutors' expenses.

In Hawaii, the deaf community is small and the eight island area that the program is designed to cover is so large that tutors sometimes need to fly to visit their families. As a result, tutors visit families every other week and bring two book bags, instead of one, with each visit. "We have been very fortunate that the tutors really care about deaf and hard of hearing children and want them to

succeed," Tsuji-Jones said.

PSD's Pakis said her site had difficulty finding tutors that met all the requirements. "Finding the right combination of skills in the tutors was challenging," she said. "We needed people who were not only skilled in American Sign Language, but who were also good with families, literate in English, and responsible enough to make and keep the appointments and work on their own."

Other challenges cited by coordinators included limited meeting space, storage space, and funding.

"Despite varying characteristics and funding sources, different sites are able to take our training and materials and develop a program that meets their families' needs and creates a positive outcome for tutors, families, and deaf and hard of hearing children," said Schleper.

"There is a lot of work in establishing this program at a

school, but it is well worth the effort," said Pakis.

The Clerc Center offers an on-line discussion forum for site coordinators who have undergone the SRP training to

Children, research, book bags, and SRP sponsors on the SRP Web site:

<http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/Literacy/srp/srp.html>.



share ideas, get support from each other, and get the latest news and materials from the Clerc Center. The Clerc Center also provides information on training and workshops, the 15 Principles for Reading to Deaf

Above: Mom, Anne Sato, reads with her daughter, four-year-old Nikki, and their tutor and American Sign Language specialist Eric A. Reed.

Photography courtesy of Eric A. Reed

Reggio Emilia is Not a Person (and Other Things I Learned While Reading)

By David R. Schleper

David R. Schleper, M.A., is the literacy coordinator at the Gallaudet University Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center. He welcomes comments about this article: david.schleper@gallaudet.edu.

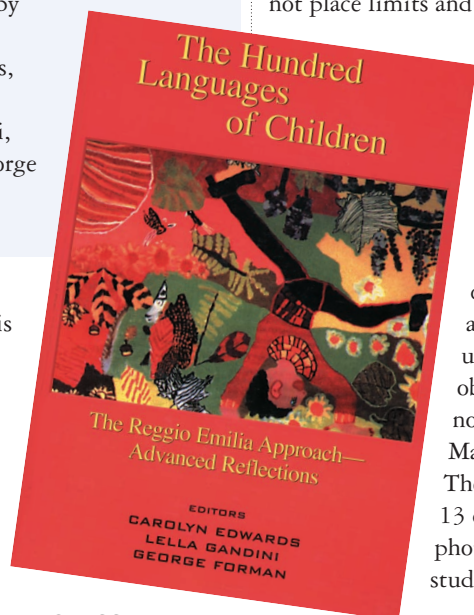
A few years ago, when I first heard about Reggio Emilia, I assumed that this was some person who was really good at preschool teaching. When I heard about the 100 languages of children, I thought, "I think there are more than 100 languages!" Then I saw the influence that this philosophy had on our Clerc Center program for preschool children and I was pleased. So I began reading...

The Hundred Languages of Children: The Reggio Emilia Approach—Advanced Reflections

(2nd edition)

Edited by Carolyn Edwards, Lella Gandini, and George Forman 1998

I began with this book,



considered the bible of the Reggio approach. Reggio Emilia is a town of 130,000 inhabitants in northern Italy where, almost 40 years ago, townspeople conceived and implemented the idea of a comprehensive child-centered preschool program that would spread around the world.

Loris Malaguzzi, one of the program founders, demonstrates Reggio Emilia in action when he describes how children encounter a puddle after a rain storm—and the learning opportunity that is presented. "If the adults do not place limits and instead

play the game, the puddle of water then can become for the children an entire universe to observe," notes Malaguzzi. There follows 13 color photos of students and

teachers observing, describing, and playing in the puddle and the processes implicit in its formation.

There is a wealth of information in this book, including sets of slides on how people in the United States adapted the principles of Reggio Emilia. There are also printed and electronic newsletters, exhibits, and electronic mail contacts and addresses. All of this is helpful for those who are considering or beginning to implement a Reggio Emilia approach in their preschool.



Bringing Reggio Emilia Home

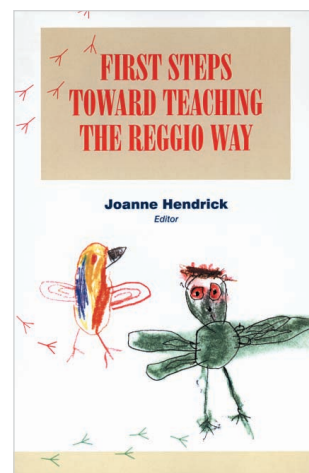
By Louise Boyd Cadwell 1997

Reggio practitioners are adamant that their program is not to be imitated, but used as a model to inspire other individuals to apply its child-focused principles within the context of their own interests, aspirations, values, and communities. *Bringing Reggio Emilia Home* is a perfect book for those who wish to implement a Reggio program in the United States. Cadwell is an American teacher who

spent a year observing the teaching in the schools of Reggio Emilia, Italy, and then spent four years instituting the Reggio philosophy in an American school. Cadwell notes how children experiment, play, and develop knowledge and competence in the media that are designated "languages" by Reggio. These include tempera, paint, watercolor, wire, weaving, collage, natural materials, cardboard/paper construction, and clay, and light, color, and transparency at the light table, as well as words, music, movement, dramatic play, numbers, block construction, and shadow play. When Cadwell says that teachers often talk and teach too much of the time and do not spend enough time observing and documenting the progress of children, she makes an important point.

First Steps Toward Teaching the Reggio Way

Edited by Joanne Hendrick 1997



This is a good book for teachers and soon-to-be teachers who are interested in

REVIEWS

the Reggio approach. In chapter two, Lella Gandini, discussing the foundation of the approach, notes, "All children have preparedness, potential, curiosity, and interest in engaging in social interaction, establishing relationships, constructing their learning, and negotiating with everything the environment brings to them." For teachers of deaf and hard of hearing children, this may mean putting aside the belief that "our deaf children have no language." They don't have "no language." They have more than 100!

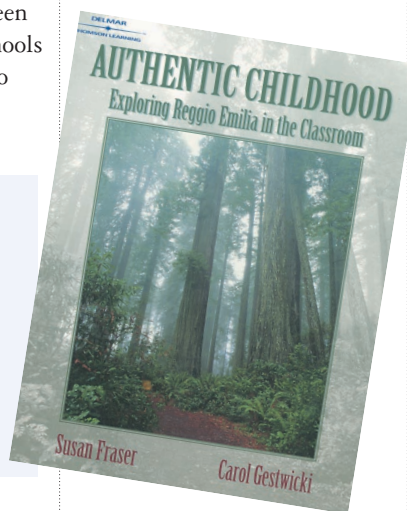
According to Hendrick, many American preschool teachers still "interpret care as being the sort of mothering

that actually robs youngsters of their independence—for example, handing them something when they could reach it themselves, buttoning their sweaters, and answering for children instead of giving them time to respond on their own." Hendrick gives a good table of comparisons between American and Reggio schools that is helpful to those who want to understand the differences in philosophy.

Authentic Childhood: Exploring Reggio Emilia in the Classroom

By Susan Fraser and Carol Gestwicki
2002

In *Authentic Childhood*, Fraser and Gestwicki explain the guiding principles of the Reggio Emilia approach, including the "image of the child" as a competent, strong, inventive learner who has "rights" instead of "needs," and who experiences the



learning environment as a "third teacher."

For teachers who are interested in applying Reggio Emilia, the authors suggest approaching old activities in new ways, exploring the 100 languages, involving parents, reconsidering time, planning for emergent curriculum, and persevering in collaboration with others.

According to Malaguzzi, "The children have a hundred languages (and a hundred hundred hundred more) but they steal ninety-nine. The school and the culture separate the head from the body." Using Reggio Emilia, preschool programs help to keep childhood authentic, the way it should be.

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This five-day training program is designed to prepare site coordinators to establish a Shared Reading Project in their own schools or programs. Of special interest to educators, administrators, and parent leaders, this workshop is based on the highly acclaimed program that matches deaf tutors with families and arranges regular visits to family homes where tutors teach parents and caregivers effective strategies for reading books with their children.

2002

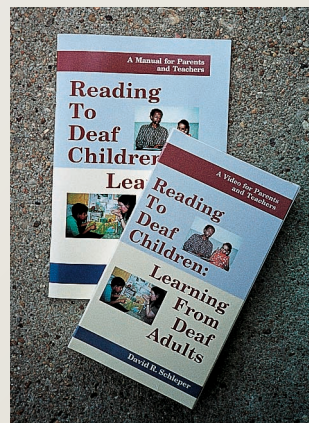
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Reading to Deaf Children: Learning from Deaf Adults

This effective workshop teaches techniques known as “the 15 Principles for Reading to Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children.” These principles were developed through research that identified the successful strategies that deaf adults use when reading to deaf and hard of hearing children. Highly interactive, the workshop is available in a three-hour or six-hour format. This workshop is of special interest to parents, caregivers, and educators.

August 6 San Antonio, Texas
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Read It Again and Again

This workshop teaches participants to incorporate a wide array of learning activities in reading the same book to children over successive days. Reading the same book again and again deepens children’s understanding of text and provides opportunities to improve their reading and writing skills. This workshop is of special interest to classroom teachers and administrators.

August 7 San Antonio, Texas
Midwest Region

TRAINING

WORKSHOPS

Leading from Behind— Language Experience in Action

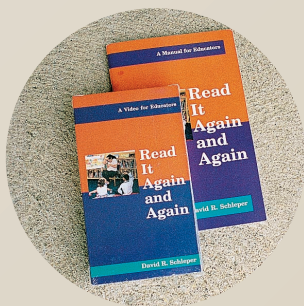
This workshop provides an introduction to using language experience in a student-centered classroom. Interactive and informative, it is designed primarily for classroom teachers and other educators, but parents and dorm staff will also find it of interest.

For Dates and Information. . . . Contact the Clerc Center

Literacy—It All Connects

This workshop provides information about the nine-piece literacy program. These pieces include: reading to students, dialogue journals, shared reading and writing, writer's workshop, independent reading, journals and logs, guided reading and writing, language experience, and research reading and writing.

November 2 Nevada; Western Region



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Upcoming Conferences and Exhibits 2002

June 29-July 2
2002 AG Bell Convention, St. Louis, Mo.
 Contact: Elissa Brooks, 314-448-6155 x208;
ebrooks@agbell.org.

July 2-13
Third Annual National Middlers Leadership and Literacy Camp (NMLLC), Frederick, Md. Contact: Tom D'Angelo; tdangelo@c-s-d.org;
<http://www.c-s-d.org/events/nmllc/>.

July 3-8
46th Biennial National Association of the Deaf (NAD) Conference, Washington, D.C. Contact: Anita B. Farb, NAD Headquarters, 301-587-1789 T, 301-587-1788 V; Fax: 301-587-1791; nadinfo@nad.org;
<http://www.nad.org/conf/>

July 5-7
RID (Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc.) 2002 World Symposium, Washington, D.C. Contact:
<http://www.rid.org/conv.html>.

July 8-12
Association on Higher Education and Disability 2002 Conference, Arlington, Va. Contact: 505-751-1529 T/V; Fax: 505-751-1187;
AHEADconference@aol.com;
<http://www.ahed.org/conference/2002/start.html>.

July 8-13
Deaf Way II, Washington, D.C. Contact: GUKCC 3117, Gallaudet University, 800 Florida Avenue, NE, Washington, D.C. 20002-3695; 202-651-6112 T, 202-651-6064 V; Fax: 202-651-6113; info@deafway.org;
<http://www.deafway.org>.

July 22-26
Extending Expertise for Exceptional Learners, State College, PA. Contact:
 Fax: 814-863-5175;
conferenceinfo1@outreach.psu.edu;
<http://app.outreach.psu.edu/ExtendingExpertise/>.

July 29-August 2
Extending Expertise for Exceptional Learners, State College, Pa. Contact:
 Fax: 814-863-5175;
conferenceinfo1@outreach.psu.edu;
<http://app.outreach.psu.edu/ExtendingExpertise/>.

July 29-August 4
National Convention of the American Association of the Deaf-Blind, Columbus, Ohio. Contact: 301-588-6545 T; Fax: 301-588-8705;
aadb@erols.com.

August 5-9
World Deaf Mission Conference, Kyeong-ju, Korea. Contact:
deafwm@bosanna.net;
<http://www.deafwm.com/>.

August 8-11
National Educational Interpreting Conference, San Antonio, TX. Contact
<http://web.jcc.net/academic/gurc/neic2002.htm>.

August 17
Deaf Fiesta 2002, Orlando, Fla. Contact:
info@deaffiesta.com;
<http://www.fl.deaffiesta.com/>.

September 9-11
National Institute on Recreation Inclusion, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact: Chris Ludwig, 702-455-7517 or 702-385-7486 T.

September 21
Deaf Fiesta 2002, Rochester, N.Y. Contact:
info@deaffiesta.com;
<http://www.ny.deaffiesta.com/>.

September 22-25
American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery Foundation Annual Meeting and OTO Expo, San Diego, Calif. Contact:
<http://www.entnet.org>.

October 13-15
The Gallaudet University Conference on Videoconferencing and Emerging Video Technologies in Deaf Education, Washington, D.C. Contact: Jeffrey Murray, 202-651-6205;
jeffrey.murray@gallaudet.edu.

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