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AMERICAN RE-EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

AREA News

In This Issue

LISA M. SHEPARD, AREA ADMINISTRATOR

“One of the important early ideas in Project Re-ED was that there should be no orthodoxy, no fixed explanations, no set ways of doing things, no dogma. There are, to be sure, certain pervasive concepts that inform Re-ED programs. The concepts are not so much fixed principles as they are working hypotheses about how to help disturbed children and their families.” (Hobbs, 1978)

The agencies highlighted in this issue of our newsletter are current examples of the diversity of programming that has grown up out of the rich and fertile soil that is Re-ED. Hobbs and his colleagues eschewed rigidity of thinking and prescribed ways of interacting and intervening with children with challenging behaviors. They proposed a dynamic approach to treatment instead, one guided by principles and “pervasive concepts” rather than prescriptions and “set ways of doing things”. This dynamism, coupled with an abiding faith in the practitioners of Re-ED to discover what works with individual children and groups of children, has given rise to a plethora of programming extensions and ensured a bright future for organizations who embrace the Re-ED philosophy.

In this issue of our newsletter we celebrate those who bring the philosophy of Re-ED - Trust, Competence, Experience and Joy--to children living with autism and other pervasive developmental disorders. While these children were often visible in our day treatment programs, the need to specialize services for this population has become clear in recent years. In doing so these highlighted agencies, and others in our AREA community, have brought a new dimension to both autism services and Re-EDucation. Each time we provide a new service to a new population and root our efforts in the nourishing Re-ED soil, we reaffirm Re-ED’s dynamism and Nick Hobbs’s vision of Re-ED “reinventing” itself. We look at the strengths of children and families, not pathology. We look to the moment and try new things rather than looking at past at what didn’t work. We invent and create and we don’t accept the status quo. Through it all we embrace the challenges of all those in need.

President’s Corner

CLAUDIA LANN VALORE, CHIEF PROGRAM OFFICER, POSITIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

As out-going president of AREA, I’d like to use this last message to thank all of the membership. Re-EDers are an extraordinary group of people, and I can honestly say that you have shaped the lives of many, including my own. I will be forever grateful for the forces that led me to an interview at PEP in the 70’s for a teaching job. Little did I know that I was walking into a career that would grab hold of my heart and never let go.



Heaven knows, we work hard at very hard work. We have exhilarating highs and heart-breaking lows. We joyfully celebrate the former together and support each other in the latter. We balance on the cutting edge, usually working within conditions of ‘just manageable difficulty.’ But we are ‘spotted’ by our teammates and we keep on learning individually and together. We value inquiry and reinvention, so we are open to change, and never get stagnant. We harness change to grow, to better our professional practice, to build and hone our skills, and to respond to our challenges.

When people find out what we do for a living, we’re often told that we must be very patient. I’ll bet you’ve heard that. I don’t know if that’s true. I think that we are actually impatient to change the lives of those we serve, and so we ‘stick’ with kids and families through their highs and lows. We rarely admit defeat. We stay committed to our tried and true principles, using them to ground us in our purposeful, daily, endeavor.

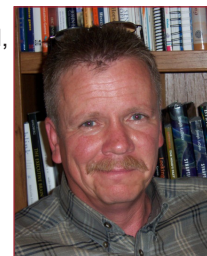
Those are Nicholas Hobbs’ words – ‘purposeful endeavor.’ I think they sum up our Re-ED work. He challenged us to help troubled and troubling young people to grow up strong in body, quick of mind, and generous in spirit. As we work to that end, I think we do the same for ourselves. It’s work that takes a lot out of us, but gives back in return.

So, thank you all! You make up an extraordinary community of colleagues and friends. I’ve been honored to serve, and will continue to strive along with you as we take the final stretch towards reaching Re-ED’s 50th Anniversary. I’ve often said to others, “If it’s a match for you, it’s the hardest job you’ll ever love.” I honestly believe that. To be part of the Re-ED family, to have connected with so many kindred spirits, to help carry on the legacy of Nicholas Hobbs so that we may keep on helping kids is why this career has held my heart.

In-Coming President’s Message

MARK A. STROTHER, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER, CAL FARLEY

Hello, my name is Mark Strother and I am the in-coming president of AREA. I feel very honored, extremely excited and more than a little on edge as I say this. I am a bit on edge with the very



thought of following the likes of Kit Kryger and Claudia Lann Valore with a “redneck yahoo from Texas.” This transition comes in the midst of very challenging times. While our agencies are faced with their own unique obstacles, most, if not all, are facing serious financial challenges and still the work we do with troubled and troubling children and youth doesn’t get any easier.

But, then I am especially intrigued by the fact that Re-ED was Nick Hobbs’ response to the serious challenges presented in the 60’s. While we most frequently quote Hobbs’ principles and bits of wisdom regarding the direct work with young people, it is with less frequency that I hear reference to his broad, systems approach to the challenges of the day. It was his vision that Re-Education remain ever fluid, never dogmatic. Indeed, Hobbs said he wanted us to re-invent Re-ED every day.

Since my first exposure to Re-ED through a presentation given by Dennis Koenig and Clark Luster followed by a propaganda siege by Mark Freado I have been inspired by the Re-ED principles. However, in my own personal experience, the first and most powerful attraction is the incredible group of people who make up AREA. Again, I find it an honor to support all of you in continuing Nick’s goal to “change the world, one child at a time.”

PEP Capital Campaign Raises Funds For Autism Center

POSITIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM, CLEVELAND, OH



In April of last year, Positive Education Program publicly announced Creating a Spectrum of Hope, a \$4 million capital campaign for the PEP Prentiss Autism Center. The campaign is nearing completion and is only \$250,000 away from its goal.

PEP Prentiss Autism Center (PEP Prentiss) houses PEP's program that serves children with autism and other complex developmental disabilities. This program has been in existence since the mid-1980s, long before autism became a high-profile disorder. The new building opened its doors to students at the start of the school year in August 2010.

The new facility is named to honor the generosity of the Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Foundation which gifted \$1 million to the campaign. This grant marks the largest gift in PEP's history and the largest amount awarded by the foundation last year.

Formerly an office building, all 33,000 square-feet of the new facility has been completely renovated and designed around the needs of the special population served there. Dedicated spaces have been created to fully support PEP's specialized curriculum. Sound barriers; indirect, full spectrum and natural lighting; soothing colors and comfortable spaces create a calm environment to nurture learning and growth.

This certified green building houses 14 classrooms and allows room for expansion and future program growth. PEP Prentiss includes two sensory rooms, two life skills rooms, a motor activity room, a therapeutic arts room, numerous small group instructional rooms and enclosed green space.

PEP Prentiss includes a modern training center that facilitates research and learning in direct proximity to where service is being delivered. This space creates opportunity for collaboration between PEP's school district partners, medical experts, other education professionals and parents.

Staff and students alike are energized by the amount of physical space and the functionality of dedicated spaces throughout the building. Staff has freedom to implement the program's various and diverse methodologies in their classrooms and in numerous small group instructional spaces throughout the building.

Karen Frank, the mom of a PEP Prentiss student, shared these words at the building's grand opening:

"I am so very proud that it is here where Jeremy and children like him will be prepared for the future. This new building has all of the amenities that are necessary to make the hopes and dreams of families affected by autism come to fruition.

This new building feels like a much needed hug. It is as if someone recorded my personal vision and possibilities for all children and placed them all in one nurturing, therapeutic and beautiful campus. Thank you so very much for being an integral part of our lives."

To learn more about PEP Prentiss Autism Center and Creating a Spectrum of Hope, visit www.pepleve.org.

Pressley Ridge School for Autism Relocating and Expanding Services

PITTSBURGH, PA

Pressley Ridge, an organization serving the needs of children and families in the Pittsburgh area for the last 180 years, will be expanding its services to children with autism by relocating its education program to Holy Family Institutes main campus in Emsworth, PA. There it will implement a new model of education services based on the most current research developments in the field.

Pressley Ridge has been providing services to children with autism for more than 20 years. They will move their School for Autism into a 15,000 square foot state of the art facility specifically designed for educational purposes. Pressley Ridge's goal is to expand their School for Autism from 50 to 100 plus students for the 2011 school year. With the new facility and additional space, the organization will look to expand their Extended School Year (ESY) and Therapeutic Social Group programs as well.

The following will be provided at the new site:

- Social skills instruction
- State of the art sensory room
- Anger/stress management counseling
- Vocational training (horticulture, retail, office support, and culinary)
- Sensory friendly classrooms
- After school social groups and ESY (Extended School Year)

Autism continues to be an urgent and growing national public health concern. One in every 110 children has an autism spectrum disorder (American Academy of Pediatrics October 2009). The Autism Society of America declared that autism is the fastest growing developmental disability. Statistics from the U.S. Department of Education confirm that autism is growing at a startling rate of 10-17 percent a year.

Pressley Ridge is dedicated to continuing to provide the highest quality of services to children with autism. The utilization of this state of the art education facility will provide Pressley Ridge the ability to expand those quality services to the children and families in need.

Autism Awareness Celebrated

SOUTHEASTERN COOPERATIVE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS (SECEP), NORFOLK, VA



In an effort to promote Autism Awareness, staff and students in Ashley Colon's classroom at John F. Kennedy Middle School in Suffolk, Virginia created a bulletin board for Autism Awareness Month. Using the Interwrite board, the class researched and discussed famous people with Autism. Staff and students printed pictures, assembled posters, and created a work of art! John F. Kennedy Middle School students spontaneously stopped by the bulletin board while changing classes, read the information, and made comments to each other such as "I didn't know she had Autism".

Classroom staff used those moments to further educate the students and provided detailed explanations about living with Autism. Hats off to the staff (Ashley, Cary, and Travis) for promoting Autism Awareness in their building and to the students for all of their hard, exemplary work used to create the bulletin board.

Re-ED Interpretive Art

HELEN ROSS MCNABB, KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE

In July 2010, case managers from Helen Ross McNabb's Children and Youth Center in Knoxville, TN participated in an interactive Re-ED training. The target of the training was to increase staff's awareness of Re-ED and how to apply it to the children and families they serve while completing experiential activities. As Nicholas Hobbs (1982, p. 103) pointed out, "The first goal of a training program, then, is to provide an orientation to philosophy and to procedures in order that the teacher-counselor may not only work in harmony with her colleagues today but also help share the course of Re-ED tomorrow." As part of the training, the case managers were asked to complete an interpretive art activity as they learned the Re-ED principles. The only direction that was given was to interpret and paint their vision of each specific principle. What emerged was a vibrant and diverse collage representing the integration of Re-ED principles into the perspective of teacher-counselors.

The artwork is now displayed at Helen Ross McNabb's Children and Youth Center to encourage and remind all those that pass through the doors that children and families can be impacted by the process of Re-ED when the hearts and minds of those serving these children are joined in the philosophy of Re-ED. As Hobbs (1982, p. 103) stated many years ago, "Teacher-counselors have invented Re-ED as it is today, and teacher-counselors will be responsible for its redefinition in the future." Time is an ally, and available for the ongoing advancement of Re-ED for those engaged in the process of serving children and families.



SECEP Executive Director Retires

The Southeastern Cooperative Educational Program (SECEP) has provided educational services to our region's students for over 30 years. For 28 of those years, SECEP has been directed by the steady hand and leadership of Dr. Judith Green. Her strength, humility and willingness to let others gain recognition has created a working environment which has allowed both staff and students to thrive. After much reflection, Dr. Green has announced her retirement. We will greatly miss her wise counsel and steady hand in leading us through these interesting times.



Pressley Ridge Names Susanne Cole President and CEO

On June 7, 2011 -- The Board of Directors of Pressley Ridge appointed Susanne L. Cole as the social service agency's president and chief executive officer.

Ms. Cole, an employee of Pressley Ridge for 21 years, has risen through the ranks, serving in progressively more responsible roles. In 2010, she was promoted to executive vice president and chief operating officer responsible for overall operations and staff. In addition, she was appointed Acting Chief Executive Officer in January 2011, following the retirement of the CEO.



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AREA Announces Rico Pallotta Inovation Grant Winners

The AREA Board of Trustee's gathered in Chicago for a board meeting on April 8th-9th. It was during this meeting that the Rico F. Pallotta Innovation Grant applications were reviewed. It is my great pleasure to announce the 3 winners

- Mike Cavanaugh - Centerstone for his proposal to support the PASTL program. Prompting Artistic Strengths through Logic brings together community leaders, law enforcement, and graffiti artists and youth inside communities to create a historical mural to enhance pride and promote cultural awareness within their neighborhoods. Community Leaders were willing to match funds for this request.
- Mollie Wirtz- Renton Academy WAREA for her proposal to enhance and improve and the Renton Academy Community Garden and Outdoor Learning Center. A student driven, organically grown kitchen garden for students to learn and experience the natural world. The money will help with supplies and resources needed to continue the work and assist the efforts of the kids and staff.
- Laura K. Broughton – Positive Education Program for her proposal to assist students with reading. The teachers have made great progress teaching literacy and reading skills to the kids in their Hopewell Day Treatment Center. The money will be used to purchase books in a variety of genres for the students to enjoy as there currently is no library in the center.

The recipients were all awarded the full grant amount of \$1, 0000.00. Congratulations to all three for their innovative submissions.

Director of Renton Academy Receives National Award

Dr. Lisa Hoyt, Director of Renton Academy, (Renton, WA) is being honored by the Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders* (CCBD) with the Outstanding Professional Performance Award. The purpose of this award is to honor an outstanding practicing professional who works directly with children and youth with severe behavioral disorders. Dr. Hoyt was nominated for the award by her peers because of her "excellence and energy she brings to her work everyday, both as a program leader and a member of the professional community, as well as her ongoing dedication to students with significant academic, behavioral and emotional challenges."



West Virginia Child Care Association Annual Conference

Suicide; bullying; dropping out of school...these are some of the most critical issues facing the professionals who work with children and teens. These difficult issues inspired the theme, "Falling Through the Cracks – Prevention Strategies for Kids at Risk," last year's West Virginia Child Care Association (WVCCA) Fall Conference. The conference was held at the Waterfront Place Hotel in Morgantown, WV on October 28-29, 2010.

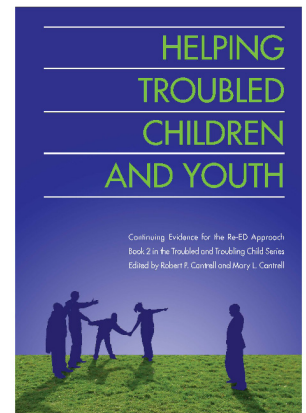
In early 2010, WVCCA conducted a state-wide survey of child-serving professionals about risk factors that impact West Virginia children. Teachers, counselors, probation officers, early childhood specialists, child care workers, and parents answered the survey - 440 respondents in all! The responses to the survey shaped the content of the 2010 conference. Risk factors reported by over 70% of respondents that they and their organization deal with on a regular basis: learning, emotional, and behavioral problems (76.8%); abuse and neglect (74.5%); substance abuse (72.7%); poverty (72.7%).

Respondents believe parents (85.2%) and teachers (70.5%) are the most important people to train to respond to high risk behavior. Sixty-three percent of respondents report they would like community and business leaders to become more involved in preventing at-risk behavior. The question posed at the conference: How can you engage your community?

"Rather than reacting to problem behaviors, we are leading a culture shift that seeks to prevent problem behaviors or vulnerable situations before they occur," said Tricia Kingery, WVCCA Executive Director. "Through national research, state at-risk needs assessment and innovative thinking, WVCCA is striving to champion prevention strategies and resources that will comprehensively address various ways to successfully prevent at-risk behavior in youth," she continued.

WVCCA's 2011 annual conference is scheduled for September 21-23, at the Bridgeport Conference Center in Bridgeport, WV. This year's keynote speaker is Charlie Appelstein, MSW, author of "No Such Thing as a Bad Kid." For more information, contact tkingery@wvcca.org or 304-541-7553. Please join us!

WVCCA represents companies throughout the state of West Virginia that operate a wide variety of behavioral health and child welfare programs statewide for the most vulnerable and difficult children in West Virginia - children who have experienced abuse, neglect, emotional and behavior disabilities, substance abuse and/or delinquency.



The Re-ED book, *Helping Troubled and Troubling Children: Continuing Evidence for the Re-ED Approach* is now available. Visit www.re-ed.org for ordering instructions.

Have you been told that you have a great idea to improve the lives of the kids and families that we serve? Then have you been told that there is no money in the budget to implement your great idea. AREA may be able to help in a small way. The American Re-Education Association provides two \$1000.00 grants each year to a deserving Teacher/Counselor that has an idea to implement in their program. The grant is called The Rico Pallotta Innovation Grant. Go to www.re-ed.org for details and the



The AREA Newsletter will be published quarterly. If you do not see your article in this issue, look for it in the next issue. If you have an interesting story about your work or your colleagues' work with children and families, please submit your articles to Lshepard55@gmail.com. We'd love to hear your story, and will help you develop it into something that your peers across the country will learn from and enjoy. We can't wait to hear from you!