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## Using Family and Community Stories as a Means for Establishing Authentic and Reciprocal Relationships

**By 2010 KITS Summer Institute Presenter  
Sylvia Sánchez**

To create the best possible learning situation for young children who speak English as a second language (ESL), bilingual and ESL teachers should consider the use of family and community stories as a part of their professional practice. Professionals who proactively learn and use these stories can help foster and establish authentic and reciprocal relationships with families.

The stories of struggle and oppression, experienced by ethnic and linguistic minority families enrolled in bilingual education programs, are rarely found in the textbooks used to prepare future teachers. Furthermore, the stories of poor and disenfranchised communities hardly ever make the list of classic children's books. Historically, the "truth" of people with little or no social power has been ignored by publishers and educators. The narratives in traditional textbooks are the stories of those invested in maintaining the status quo, not those of the disenfranchised communities.

According to Fiske (1993), knowledge is never neutral, but rather knowledge is power. The dissemination of knowledge is part of the social distribution of power. Therefore, the stories of the powerless in society are rarely retold in social institutions such as schools. The truth, as seen by these disenfranchised communities, has no systematic institutional outlet. Subjugated knowledge is defined as content that has not been permitted to surface and hold a public position in the mythology or chronicles of a community (Foucault, 1980). The stories of disenfranchised or oppressed communities are not congruent with more



## Kansas Deaf-Blind Project

In October of 2008 the Kansas Deaf Blind Project moved from the Kansas State Department of Education to the University of Kansas. The mission of the project is to maintain the deaf-blind census for the state of Kansas and also to provide FREE technical assistance and training to families and school teams who work with the children on the census. Recently the guidelines for qualification have been changed which can impact the ease with which a team qualifies a learner for the census. Once the child is on the census, teams may apply annually to the Deaf-Blind Fund at the State Department of Education to get materials for students.

In the last two years the project has located over 100 learners in the state with a dual sensory impairment, created a website loaded with quality information to assist educational teams & families, conducted multiple trainings across the state, hosted webinars, and collaborated with the Kansas State School for the Blind (KSSB) and the National Consortium on Deaf-Blindness (NCDB) to provide web based technical assistance to teams across the state.

For more information and to read our current newsletter which highlights the Family Weekend that we had in the spring, please check out the project website at [www.kansasdeafblind.ku.edu](http://www.kansasdeafblind.ku.edu). We would love to hear from and work with you!

—submitted by Megan Cote

## Family Stories continued

well-known narratives, such as the Cinderella or Horatio Alger tales, which espouse a rags to riches myth. They lend support to the theories that normalize class or ethnic differences and ignore societal inequities (Leistyna & Woodrum, 1996). The question, according to Apple (1993), is “whose knowledge is of most worth in this society?”

Traditionally, ethnic, racial, language, class, disability, and gender bias has prevailed in classroom materials. For bilingual and ESL educators, the question remains: Whose stories are our students expected to know and retell, and whose stories find no outlet in the classroom or in the general society? Similarly important is the question: Whose lives, hopes, and dreams do we need to better understand to create authentic relationships and partnerships that can withstand the challenges faced in today’s society? The reality is that children in bilingual classrooms, like all children, need the opportunity to reflect on their own family story so they can make meaning of their reality and make clearer connections to new learnings.

Educators and families also need to listen and reflect on each other’s stories. Family stories are memories of socio-cultural events meaningful to the family. In these stories one can find accounts of how the community, family, and individual coped with the impact of societal issues. Stories shared in communities by ordinary families give insight into who the people are, their hopes, dreams, dilemmas, victories, ways of knowing, and motives (Delgado-Gaitan & Trueba, 1991). According to Rosaldo (1993), these stories not only relate the past, but shape future action. By exploring the cultural themes in the life stories of community members, teachers gain insight into the

social, economic, and political forces that are often left unexamined in their professional preparation programs.

Cultural domination and oppression is a daily reality for some students. When one is the recipient of such abuse, one has no choice but to experience domination and oppression, but if one is not a recipient, one can only experience it through the stories of others. Human thinking develops within a sociocultural-historical context. In order for teachers working with culturally and linguistically diverse families to understand a family’s decisions about their child’s education, they must explore the reality that is faced by the family (Luria, 1982).

Listening to someone else’s story encourages reflection and rethinking of our own stories, and it is in the re-examination of our own stories that we experience the greatest learning (Sánchez, 1999). Without examining our own socio-historical context we cannot hope to understand how a circumstance may have affected a family or community. Other people’s stories have the potential to evoke memories of our own story and these connections and reflections can give us empathy for others. According to Leichter (1996), the potential to create empathy by re-examining our own stories is available to those willing to learn from other people’s stories. Needless to say, it is not necessarily an easy journey.

By being cognizant of the life events and circumstances that have shaped our student’s lives, bilingual educators can more effectively build partnerships with families. These partnerships can help educators build coalitions that include natural allies inherently committed to the education of bilingual chil-

*Family Stories concludes on page 8*

# The Collaborative Calendar of Events

View at [kskits.org/training](http://kskits.org/training)

DATE	EVENT	CONTACT
9/9-10/10	<i>Kansas Multi-Tier System of Supports Symposium</i> , Wichita, <a href="http://guest.cvent.com/EVENTS/Info/Summary.aspx?e=c5efd71c-4d1f-4bf8-88f4-8de2a0231e87">http://guest.cvent.com/EVENTS/Info/Summary.aspx?e=c5efd71c-4d1f-4bf8-88f4-8de2a0231e87</a>	Kathleen Richman, 435-752-0238 x 26, Kathleen.Richman@usu.edu
9/24/10	<i>Guns A'Blazing: How Schools and Parents of Children with ASDs Can Work Together—Without a Shot Being Fired</i> , various locations	<a href="http://www.KansasASD.com">www.KansasASD.com</a>
9/30/10	Birth to Five Administrators Summit: <i>Connecting the Pieces: Using the Kansas Early Learning Standards to Support School Readiness</i> , Junction City	<a href="http://ksde.org">ksde.org</a>
10/1/10	<i>Early Intervention &amp; Autism: Creating a Supportive Transition Process, Moving from Part C to Part B</i> , Wichita	<a href="http://www.KansasASD.com">www.KansasASD.com</a>
10/1-2/10	<i>Parent Leadership Conference</i> , Topeka	Natalie Schweda, 866-711-6711, nschweda@kpirc.org
10/12-13/10	<i>RTI Early Childhood Summit</i> , Kansas City	DEC, 406-543-0872, dec@dec-sped.org
10/14-17/10	<i>DEC 2010: The 26th Annual International Conference on Young Children with Special Needs &amp; Their Families</i> , KC, Missouri	<a href="http://www.dec-sped.org">www.dec-sped.org</a>
10/21-22/10	<i>Kansas Association of School Psychologist Fall 2010 Convention</i> , Wichita	Keely Persinger, 620-341-5290, keelypersinger@yahoo.com
11/3-5/10	<i>Governor's Conference for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect</i> , Topeka	<a href="https://www.kcsl.org/training_conference.aspx">https://www.kcsl.org/training_conference.aspx</a>
11/4/10	<i>The Tri-State Special Education Law Conference</i> , Omaha, Nebraska	<a href="http://www.ksde.org">www.ksde.org</a>
11/8/10	<i>Part C Coordinator Meeting</i> , Topeka	Peggy Miksch, pmiksch@ku.edu or Robin Bayless, rbayless@ku.edu
11/12/10	<i>Assessing and Teaching Communication Skills to Children with ASD</i> , various locations	<a href="http://www.KansasASD.com">www.KansasASD.com</a>
1/24/11	<i>Part C Regional Meetings via ITV</i> , tba	Peggy Miksch, pmiksch@ku.edu
2/7-8, 5/10-11/11	<i>Evidence Based Practices in Early Intervention and the Primary Coaching Model</i> , 2/7 in Wichita, 5/10 in Topeka	Debbie Moody, dmoody@ku.edu, <a href="https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/5LLRTLX">https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/5LLRTLX</a>
2/10/11	<i>Early Intervention &amp; Autism: Evaluation &amp; Assessment</i> , Wichita	<a href="http://www.KansasASD.com">www.KansasASD.com</a>
2/11/11	<i>Social Skills Intervention &amp; Autism: Strategies &amp; Ideas for Real Life</i> , various locations	<a href="http://www.KansasASD.com">www.KansasASD.com</a>
2/24/11	<i>KDEC 2011: It's All About Relationships</i> , Wichita	<a href="http://www.kdec.org">www.kdec.org</a>
3/4, 4/1, 4/8/11	<i>Transition from Part C to Part B</i> , 3/4 in Salina, 4/1 in Olathe, 4/8 in Topeka, <a href="https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/T56RTHB">https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/T56RTHB</a>	Peggy Miksch, pmiksch@ku.edu or Robin Bayless, rbayless@ku.edu
4/8/11	<i>Supporting the Emerging Self Advocacy with Autism Spectrum and Related Conditions: Implementing the Integrated Self Advocacy (ISA®) Curriculum</i> , various locations	<a href="http://www.KansasASD.com">www.KansasASD.com</a>
4/17-19/11	<i>LENA Users Conference</i> , Denver, <a href="http://www.lenafoundation.org">www.lenafoundation.org</a>	LENA Foundation, 866-503-9918
5/3/11	<i>Family Service Coordination Training</i> , tba	Peggy Miksch, pmiksch@ku.edu
5/6/11	<i>Early Intervention &amp; Autism: Family Centered Intervention Strategies</i> , Wichita	<a href="http://www.KansasASD.com">www.KansasASD.com</a>
6/7-11/11	<i>KITS Summer Institute</i> , <a href="http://kskits.org/training/KITSSummerInst.shtml">http://kskits.org/training/KITSSummerInst.shtml</a>	Misty Goosen, mistyg@ku.edu or Robin Bayless, rbayless@ku.edu

## Transition From Part C to Part B Documents

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has distributed a document that addresses the State's responsibilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to ensure a smooth transition for children served in Part C and referred to Part B as these children approach their third birthday.

Documents are posted at the KSDE Website (<http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=2291>).

You may also click on "Special Education" on the left side, then "Integrated Accountability/State Performance Plan" on the right side, scroll half way down the page to "SPP Related Items" and click on "State Performance Plan Indicators and Related Documents". A little more than half way down the page are the sections for Indicator 11 and 12.

Here are direct links to some of the documents:

**OSEP FAQ (December 2009):** <http://www.ksde.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=aK8Jo7QKvEI%3d&tabid=2291&mid=8964>

**Kansas FAQ Document:** <http://www.ksde.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=9kbFznMIU6k%3d&tabid=2291&mid=8964>

**LEA Notification of Change in Requirements for Indicator 12**  
<http://www.ksde.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=oB5M4EDIKD8%3d&tabid=2291&mid=10333>

—submitted by Carol Ayres,  
KSDE Special Education Services

## Coordinator's Corner Foundations of Transition in Early Childhood

Today, most families of young children use and move between different types of early childhood services—like Early Intervention, Head Start, private child care, public preschool, or kindergarten. Moving between and among these various programs is referred to as "transition".

One synonym for transition is change. Families (and individuals within families) react very differently to change. For some, changes are unsettling, disruptive, and even threatening. For others, changes are seen as growth-producing opportunities or as benchmarks for progress.

Good transitions are timely and well-planned processes that occur as a result of effective communication, collaboration and coordination of activities among both individuals and agencies. Such transitions allow both families and providers to "close" old relationships and prepare for new ones.

Transitions occur for families across their lifespan. A transition is defined as a change or movement from one place, plan, or interactional situation to another. Examples of transitions include, but are not limited to:

- a move from the hospital to home;
- a replacement of a service provider;
- the introduction of a new service;
- a move from individual to group service;
- a change from the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) to the Individualized Education Program (IEP);
- from home to a center-based program;
- from Part C to Part B systems;

- or any event that has a major impact on the child and family.

One major transition required within IDEA 2004 is when children transition out of Part C early intervention services into Part B preschool special education services. Families must be fully informed about the process and afforded their rights, responsibilities, and choices as they move their child from Part C infant-toddler services/tiny-k to Part B preschool special education services upon the child's third birthday.

The family service coordinator (FSC) serves as the facilitator in the planning and implementation of transitions for children and families in the infant-toddler services/tiny-k networks. Roles and responsibilities include negotiation of timelines, participants, and settings. The FSC ensures that the family is involved in planning transitions and provides assistance and attention to ensure that the transition is as smooth as possible. The IFSP team, facilitated by the FSC, is required to develop outcomes related to transition from the infant-toddler services/tiny-k network to the next service provider. The transition plan must be included as a part of the IFSP.

### Components of Quality Transitions

- The family is involved in all phases of the transition.
- There is an understanding that transition is a process, not an isolated event.
- Information is freely exchanged and shared with everyone involved and interagency cooperation ensures exchange of records (with parental consent).

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## Coordinator's Corner concludes

- There is sufficient preparatory time for the transition to be implemented smoothly. Transition processes and local community transition procedures need to build in appropriate agency response times to requests for services.
- There is recognition that families have the right and responsibility to make informed decisions about their choices and options. This may include having the opportunity to visit programs and agencies before decisions are made, having discussions with providers or with other families using given services, reviewing videotapes or written materials, and being fully informed about service delivery options, including inclusion of the child in a typical preschool program within the community.
- Communities must develop and design their own transition procedures based upon the needs of families in the community and local resources.
- Families must be prepared for possible differences in service models. Supporting families in becoming more informed about community transition options will strengthen their level of comfort with the change. Service providers must be careful to present facts only and not personal bias or prejudice.
- Practices are implemented that reduce or eliminate duplication in paper work and other services.



The Center to Mobilize Early Childhood Knowledge has released a video

entitled *Foundations of Transition for Young Children*, which focuses on what teachers and families need to know to help young children transition smoothly from one early childhood program or service to another, the legal requirements to support transition and the characteristics of effective transition practices. This eight-minute video is available at <http://community.fpg.unc.edu/connect-modules/resources/videos/foundations-of-transition?nectac=>

Transitions require interagency collaboration, cooperation and coordination, with family involvement throughout every phase. We want to encourage local communities and programs within those communities to plan together for successful transitions. As always, please feel free to share your thoughts, challenges and best practices with us. We realize that the work you do is paramount to the success of children and families and our education system in Kansas.

—submitted by Carol Ayres, Part B Section 619 Preschool Special Education & Tiffany Smith Part C Infant-Toddler Services/tiny-k



## NAEYC Radio Online

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) invites members and non-members alike to tune in to its monthly radio show called *Body, Mind and Child* at <http://www.naeyc.org/newsroom/NAEYCradio>.

Expert guests are interviewed on timely topics of interest to family members, caregivers, and teachers of infants and young children.

Topics of recently archived broadcasts include:

- Preschool Expulsions
- Playful Learning
- Importance of Infant Play
- Video games
- Communication Skills in Babies

—submitted by Phoebe Rinkel



## Links to Other Training Calendars

- KCCTO child care or CDA advisor trainings: [www.kccto.org](http://www.kccto.org)
- Families Together: [www.familiestogetherinc.org](http://www.familiestogetherinc.org)
- Children's Alliance Training Team: [www.childally.org/training/training.html](http://www.childally.org/training/training.html)
- KACCRRRA: [www.kaccrra.org](http://www.kaccrra.org)
- Capper Foundation: [capper.easterseals.com](http://capper.easterseals.com)
- Council for Exceptional Children: [www.cec.sped.org/pd](http://www.cec.sped.org/pd)
- KSDE: [conferences.ksde.org/](http://conferences.ksde.org/)
- Kansas Children's Service League: [www.elearningkcsll.org](http://www.elearningkcsll.org)
- Kansas Head Start Association: [www.ksheadstart.org/event](http://www.ksheadstart.org/event)

## New Kansas ECO Resources

Just in time for “new staff orientation”, Kansas Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) information and training resources have been updated to include guidance in the team ratings process disseminated through regional training events in the spring of 2010. All of the new materials can be downloaded from the newly reorganized KITS ECO web page <http://kskits.org/ta/ECOOutcomes/Index.shtml>

Designed to be more “user-friendly”, the updated web page is organized as follows:

- Introduction
- Hot Topics
- What an Administrator Needs to Know
- What a Data Entry Person Needs to Know
- What a Direct Service Provider Needs to Know
- What a Trainer Needs to Know
- Resources

New materials include step-by-step training for new staff, updated Process Quality Rating Forms for administrators, data entry personnel, and direct service staff, examples of completed Child Outcome Summary Forms (COSFs) for children at 15, 36, and 54 months, and suggestions for how to keep current with ECO information and resources.

—submitted by Phoebe Rinkel

## Margy Hornback Announces Retirement

The KITS Project hopes you will join us in wishing Margy Hornback a **HAPPY RETIREMENT!** KITS, and Kansas as a whole, will miss her vast contributions to the field of early childhood special education!

Margy has worked in a wide variety of roles throughout her career, including being a service provider, program administrator, teacher trainer/college professor, state agency early childhood

coordinator, and training and technical assistance provider. In each of these roles she has been a leader in our State and will be missed.

Her immediate plans include travel with her husband, Bob, and going to as many car races as they can. Hopefully, some time in the future we will be able to draw upon Margy’s knowledge and experience to continue to improve services for children and families.

## Get CONNECTed!

For everyone who has ever been frustrated in an attempt to navigate an online training module, or for those who find web-based professional development excruciatingly boring, the new CONNECT Modules might just change your mind: <http://community.fpg.unc.edu/connect-modules> In fact, the first CONNECT module on *Embedded Interventions* should probably become core training for any program that provides early intervention or early childhood special education services in natural or inclusive settings.

CONNECT modules are designed to improve our capacity to make evidence-based decisions in our practices. They apply a five-step problem-solving process to realistic situations faced by families and providers working together to support young children with special needs in inclusive settings. Virginia Buysse introduced this decision making process in her keynote session at the 2008 KDEC conference and it is described in the book she co-authored with Pat Wesley in 2006 called *Evidence Based Practice in the Early Childhood Field* (available from

Zero to Three Press or on loan from the KITS Early Childhood Resource Center at [kskits.org/ecrc](http://kskits.org/ecrc) or [resourcecenter@ku.edu](mailto:resourcecenter@ku.edu)).

Each of the CONNECT modules are organized in the same learning cycle:

Step 1: Identify a practice dilemma.

Step 2: Pose an answerable question about the dilemma.

Step 3: Gather best available evidence and other key sources of knowledge regarding the practice dilemma and interventions under consideration.

Step 4: Integrate findings from Step 3 with differences in perspective and context to reach an informed decision about intervention.

Step 5: Evaluate the outcomes of your decision.

Each online module includes learner activities, audio clips of interviews, videos illustrating specific practices, self-assessment activities, resource handouts, and an instructor’s guide. Module 1 includes 21 short videos and 14 handouts that support 14 self-assessment activities. Supplemental materials relate target practices to Na-

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## Get CONNECTed concludes

tional Association for the Education of Young Children and Division for Early Childhood personnel standards, U.S. Department of Education/Office of Special Education Programs State Performance Plans and Annual Progress Report indicators. Although it is strongly recommended that trainers or faculty adhere to the CONNECT learning cycle, it is anticipated that modules will be used in a variety of ways to meet individual needs of learners in different settings. Higher education faculty and professional development trainers are the primary intended users of the modules, which are designed to be flexible enough to be infused into existing coursework, practica, or seminars, presented as workshops, used in consultation, coaching, or supervision, or by Communities of Practice (CoP).

It is also feasible that a motivated professional could complete the module independently. I completed the *Embedded Interventions* module on my own in a little over three hours, but then wanted to go back through and review the Resource Library, Instructor Community, and navigation videos (yes, it would have been better if I had watched these first, not last). I was excited to find that as a registered user/instructor, I could download all of the video clips to my computer, enabling me to project the videos on a large screen in a group training setting. All of the handouts and activities can be completed in an electronic format on the computer or copied and printed for a group-training format as an alternative to the online experience. Best of all, navigating this website and the first CONNECT learner module was simple and rewarding. This site even includes a link to “Tech Tips for Instructors” on using CONNECT

modules. Instructors and trainers can participate in discussion boards to share applications for the modules and to provide mutual support.

To become a CONNECT member, complete the short registration form on the home page and create a user name and password. Once you have logged on, you can sample the quality of the training materials by locating these three resources:

- *Foundations of Inclusion Birth to Five* (video). This video supports the work we all are doing to blend programs in order to provide services in natural and least restrictive environments. It would be an excellent tool to remind staff of our vision and mission as we start a new school year.
- *Handout 1.1 Examples of Environmental Modifications*. This is a 22-page handout of color photos illustrating examples of environmental modifications for natural routines and preschool activities.
- *Handout 1.3 Research Summary on Embedded Interventions*. This two-page summary of research on embedded interventions includes the effectiveness of the practices for the children studied.

CONNECT members also have the opportunity to sign up for the list serv to receive notices of new modules and resources. (Note: As I was writing this article, I received an email announcing the release of Module 2 on *Transition*, along with the Spanish Version of Module 1 on *Embedded Instruction*.)

Whether you complete the modules on your own, or decide to use them for professional development, we would love to hear how they worked for you and/or your audience, and what you like and don't like about online training modules.

—submitted by Phoebe Rinkel,  
prinkel@ku.edu



## 2010 DEC Conference to be Held in Kansas City!

For the first time, the 26th Annual International Conference on Young Children with Special Needs and Their Families is coming to Kansas City! The conference is sponsored by the Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children. It will be held October 14-17, 2010 at the Westin Crown Center in Kansas City, Missouri.

View more about this event at: <http://guest.cvent.com/d/tdqz33/1Q>

FEES (rates higher after 9/10/10)

- Full Conference Student/Family rate \$225; DEC member \$125
- One-Day Student/Family rate \$175; DEC member \$75
- Full Conference Professional rate \$345; DEC member \$245
- One-Day Professional rate \$245; DEC member \$145

### GREAT ADDITIONS

- Pre-Conference Workshop \$195
- Tour of Juniper Gardens Children's Project \$45
- Awards Luncheon \$15
- Post-Conference Workshop \$95
- Continuing Education Units \$40



## Family Stories concludes

dren. The establishment of authentic relationships, as well as the creation of a shared meaning about bilingual education, can fortify a community's response to education. Moreover, for educators, the gathering of family and community stories may be the only vehicle available to understand the world from a family's perspective, and give voice to the unheard stories of society's historically disenfranchised and voiceless communities.

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## Chelie Nelson Rejoins the KITS Project Team

The KITS Project is pleased to announce the addition of Dr. Chelie Nelson to our technical assistance staff. Chelie may be a familiar face to many of her colleagues across the state; she was a member of the KITS team from 2000 through 2005. Over her career, Chelie has worked in the field of early childhood as a school-based speech-language pathologist, an early childhood special education teacher, an early childhood technical assistance specialist, an assistant professor, and most recently as assistant director of special education for the Harvey County Special Education Cooperative. Chelie received her Bachelor and Master's degrees in Communicative Sciences and Disorders from Wichita State University. She was endorsed as an early childhood special education teacher



through Emporia State University and received her Ph.D. in Special Education and her administrative endorsement from the University of Kansas.

Chelie has an extensive background in childhood language and emergent literacy development. Her dissertation research focused on the

literacy experiences of young children with disabilities in preschool settings. Other areas of interests and expertise include collaborative early childhood programs, inclusive service delivery models, adapting early childhood curriculum, embedding intervention, and coaching/consultation.

As a technical assistance specialist, Chelie will be working with agencies and individuals serving preschool age children with disabilities and their families.

Chelie looks forward to her new role on the KITS team and the opportunity to again work with the early childhood programs and professionals in Kansas. Chelie will be based in Park City. We invite you to contact her at 316-440-6634 or email her at [chelie.nelson@ku.edu](mailto:chelie.nelson@ku.edu).

## Data Collection Revolution

### How LENA Pro Helped Me Streamline My Research Strategy for a Cochlear Implant Study

Great advancements in technology can transform the lives of young children. One such innovation is the cochlear implant. Over the past five years, it has become increasingly common for children who are not just deaf but deaf-blind to receive implants. For children with no or minimal auditory and visual perception, the implants have the potential to facilitate learning and increase independence.

In 2005 my colleagues at the Teaching Research Institute and University of Kansas and I received a grant to determine outcomes and predictive variables for these kids. To collect assessment data, we spent time in homes and schools where we observed many parents and teachers who did not seem to increase their amount of speech to the children with the new implants. It was common, for instance, to observe a parent or teacher feed a child but not say more than five words in the process.

We started wondering how the implant would benefit the child if the child heard very little speech. To find out, we wrote another grant to look at the quality and quantity of parent talk before and after cochlear implantation and to develop intervention strategies to help influence outcomes. Our plan was to videotape the children and their caregivers in their natural environments to determine the amount of parent talk.

Around the time the grant<sup>1</sup> was funded in 2008, I was invited to visit a LENA (Language ENvironment Analysis) Foundation exhibit at an

early childhood conference. On the morning of the conference, I decided to attend a poster session. As it turned out, the session featured Dr. Charles Greenwood, who displayed child outcome data he had obtained with the LENA System. I had a feeling that something in the universe was trying to tell me something.

After all, the logistics of our data collection plan presented some challenges. Once the children are eligible and approved for an implant, many are scheduled for the surgery to be performed very quickly; there is often a short turnaround time, sometimes within ten days. I realized that it was likely that there wouldn't be enough time to purchase a reasonably priced airline ticket and fly out to do the actual videotaping before each surgery.

That's when I had an epiphany. Instead of flying around the country videotaping children, we could simply send out LENA Clothing and the LENA Digital Language Processor (DLP) to the parents, collect data across a child's waking hours, and look at the child's audio environment and amount of speech directed to the child. I went from the presentation to the LENA booth and, after discussing the technology further with LENA representatives, ordered LENA Pro, a number of DLPs, and vests.

After a child is referred to our project, instead of hopping a flight we send the parents a brochure and "LENA letter" and then follow up with them over the phone. If they are interested in using LENA, we overnight them three DLPs and a

very cute LENA Clothing item that has a pocket specially designed to hold the DLP. The parents use the DLPs three times during the week, taking notes on their child's routines and activities on each recording day, and then send the materials back. We use LENA Pro to process the data; with the LENA data and the notes, we can see the number of adult words spoken during key periods, such as lunchtime, playtime, playtime with siblings, or car rides. In addition to adult words, we can observe the number of child vocalizations and adult-child conversational turns; we're also considering using the LENA Advanced Data Extractor (ADEX) tool to assess the quality of adult-child interactions.

Even though we haven't met them face to face, most of the parents are thrilled with the idea of using LENA; they love outfitting their kids in the cute LENA rompers and overalls and, ultimately, receiving the colored graphs depicting their child's language and audio environment. Other parents have shown interest in using LENA to help make an informed decision on whether or not to have their child undergo cochlear implant surgery. Some families have even used LENA data to advocate for an FM system in their child's preschool environment.

Currently, 13 families are involved in our research at different phases. We have just sent out post-implant DLPs to three families. Since we are in the early phase of our research, we do not have results

*Data Collection Revolution concludes on page 10*

## Data Collection Revolution concludes

at this time. Ultimately, we will use LENA to look at generalization across the entire day.

As pediatric cochlear implantation has improved progress for many children who are deaf-blind, LENA has the potential to improve the lives of young children. Not only can the technology assist in measuring cochlear implantation outcomes, it also has the potential to be used to influence outcomes for many families and their children. As a result, LENA has been a perfect fit for our research and outcome objectives.

<sup>1</sup> The research discussed in this article is funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education - Technology and Media Services for Individuals with Disabilities (CFDA 84.327A). Grant H327A080045; Opinions expressed within are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the position of the U.S. Department of Education.

Stremel-Thomas, K. (2010, June). *Data collection revolution*. In LENA (Language ENvironment Analysis) Foundation eNewsletter. Retrieved August 24, 2010, from <http://www.lenafoundation.org/Resources/Newsletter.aspx> Reprinted with permission.

—submitted by Kathleen “Kat” Stremel-Thomas, Project director of *Influencing Outcomes for Children Who Are Deaf-Blind with Cochlear Implants project with Western Oregon University*.

## Autism Internet Modules

The Autism Internet Modules (AIM) were developed to make comprehensive, up-to-date, and usable information on autism accessible and applicable to educators, other professionals, and families who support individuals with autism spectrum disorders (ASD). All online modules are free and are designed to promote understanding of, respect for, and equality of persons with ASD. New modules include:

- Antecedent-Based Interventions
- Computer Aided Instruction
- Functional Communication Training
- Naturalistic Interventions
- Parent Implemented Interventions
- Prompting, Reinforcement
- Response Interruption/Redirection
- Self-Management
- Task Analysis
- Time Delay

Content for these modules was developed by the National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders ([\[fpg.unc.edu/\]\(http://fpg.unc.edu/\)\) who are partners on this project.](http://autismpdc.</a></p>
</div>
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The CEC Professional Standards are available on the AIM website. They are also addressed in the Module Menu for the following modules (with all modules having the CEC Standards information by August 30, 2010).

- Self-Management
- Structured Teaching
- Supporting Successful Completion of Homework
- Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)
- Pivotal Response Training (PRT)
- Assessment for Identification
- Structured Work Systems

AIM is now on Facebook!! Announcements are posted for new modules there as well. There is a link on the AIM site that will take you there ([www.autisminternetmodules.org](http://www.autisminternetmodules.org))

Please visit the Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence (OCALI) website for other resources on ASD and low incidence disabilities:

<http://www.ocali.org>

—submitted by Sheila Smith, OCALI

## Snapshot on Early Language Literacy for Children with Down Syndrome

Investigators at the FPG Child Development Institute recently published a new Snapshot summarizing the findings of a literature review on factors that may influence language development of individuals with Down syndrome. Based on this review, recommendations are provided that emphasize the

importance of early and continued language and literacy interventions. To learn more, see *Promoting Language and Literacy Skills in Children with Down Syndrome*, FPG Snapshot no. 60 (June 2010) at [http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~snapshots/Snap60\\_Final.pdf](http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~snapshots/Snap60_Final.pdf)

## Providing Educational Opportunities for All Children Through School and Community Collaboration

Editor's note: See past winners of the Application of Best Practice in Early Childhood Award at <http://kskits.org/resources/#Application> (2009-10 at [http://kskits.org/~kskits/resources/2009\\_2010winners.shtml](http://kskits.org/~kskits/resources/2009_2010winners.shtml))

The Early Childhood Special Education Program at Southeast Kansas (SEK) Interlocal USD 637, USD 246, SEK-CAP Head Start, SEK Education Service Center, The Family Resource Center, the Mental Health Center of Crawford County and the Expanded Foods and Nutrition Extension Program were identified as applying "Best Practice" in recognition for their efforts in providing educational opportunities for all pre-kindergarten children in USD 246 through innovative school and community collaboration.

The USD 246 administration and board of education felt that developmentally appropriate preschool experiences would increase school readiness in all community children. The desire to enhance services to all children was the catalyst for the board to include preschool classroom space in a local bond issue. After the bond issue was approved by the patrons, the local district, SEK Interlocal 637, SEK Education Service Center and SEK-CAP Head Start began programmatic planning discussions. The framework for the interagency project was developed by the planning team and received formal approval by the USD 246 Board of Education. The project was then submitted and approved by the remaining agency boards. The agency representatives developed a formal agreement memorandum that delineated funding respon-



sibilities and the first professional staff member was selected through a joint interview process. Formal job descriptions were jointly written and approved by the partner agencies. Renovation of the room designated for preschool was completed in the summer of 2003 and an age-appropriate playground was developed at the site. The project began full operation at the beginning of the 2003 and was expanded in 2007 with The Family Resource Center, the Mental Health Center of Crawford County and the Expanded Foods and Nutrition Extension Program as additional partners. The program location was expanded to a large modular with two connecting classrooms, a shared playground, and joint participation in field trips. As a result, pre-kindergarten and special needs preschool children in the Arma district now have access to quality educational programs in their home district.

Funding for the project is provided through a strategic combination of federal, state and local resources. The project meets all federal, state and local practices for standards.

Progress reports are aligned with the Kansas Early Learning Standards.

The partner agency representatives developed an evaluation schedule to periodically review the project to determine needs and successes. At the end of each year a written survey is conducted with all of the participating families to determine family satisfaction and suggestions for program improvement.

ment.

The partners in this project came together with a mission to develop a quality, integrated preschool service in a developmentally appropriate environment. The collaborating agencies overcame the barriers of multi-agency requirements and established a unique program that interfaced staff allocations, materials and resources to develop a seamless program that would meet the needs of all preschool age children. The partners maintained and utilized the unique strengths of each respective program and thus provided resources to children and their families that would not have been possible if the preschool service had been provided by any single agency. This collaboration project is a model for all small communities with limited resources to overcome financial and programmatic barriers to serve children with the highest quality educational opportunities.

—submitted by *Debbie Potter*,  
ECSE School Psychologist/  
Coordinator

## New Items at the Early Childhood Resource Center

- Nemeth, K. (2009). *Many Languages, One Classroom: Teaching Dual and English Language Learners*.
- Beauchat, K., Blamey, K., & Walpole, S. (2010). *The Building Blocks of Preschool*.
- Irwin, S. (2009). *SpeciaLink Early Childhood: Inclusion Quality Scale*.
- SpeciaLink. (2010). *How to Measure Inclusion Quality in Child Care*.
- Kisor, D. (2006). *Songs of Resilience*.
- Kisor, D. (2007). *Songs of Resilience, Music Videos*.
- Kisor, D. (2010). *Songs of Resilience, Volume II*.
- Kisor, D. (2010). *Un Mundo, One World*.
- Linder, T. (2010). *Observing Kassandra: A Transdisciplinary Play-Based Assessment of a Child with Severe Disabilities*.



### Contact ECRC:

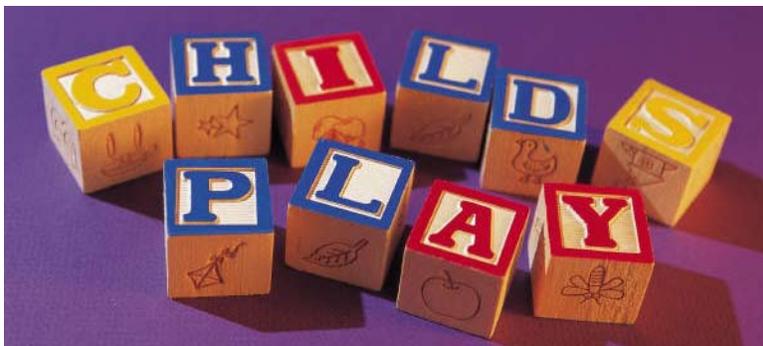
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## Spotlight on Teaching Strategies

*Teaching Strategies GOLD* is a brand-new, ongoing observational assessment tool—based upon years of feedback from thousands of educators and important new research about how children develop and learn.

Designed for all children birth to age five, CreativeCurriculum.net is used in all types of early childhood settings, including inclusive and early intervention programs that are based in homes, centers, and schools.

Since its initial launch in 2001, the core system has evolved to include hundreds of robust tools and reporting

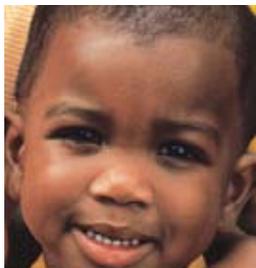
capabilities for teachers, parents and administrators.

As quoted in the Teaching Strategies press release, “This is one of the most important products that Teaching Strategies has ever developed,” said Diane Trister Dodge, founder and President of Teaching Strategies, Inc. “Assessment information is essential for individualizing instruction for young children. This new system will support teachers and promote appropriate teaching practices that help all children be more prepared for school.”

*Teaching Strategies GOLD* is available in English and Spanish.

If you would like to see *Teaching Strategies GOLD* or use it as part of your professional development, call Kim in the KITS ECRC at 620-421-6550, ext. 1638 or email [kpage@ku.edu](mailto:kpage@ku.edu)

—submitted by Kim Page,  
ECRC Coordinator



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## Transition from Part C to Part B Training

March 4, 2011, Salina

April 1, 2011, Olathe

April 8, 2011, Topeka

No charge! Lunch provided!

Registration is now open at

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/T56RTHB>

TRANSITION Guidance from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) released this year has provided an opportunity for Part C and Part B administrators and providers to engage in new conversations about transition. This day will allow attendees to be given opportunities to discuss and engage in planning to promote the implementation of evidence based practices in transition that reflect the new guidance. A variety of state partners will be available to support the planning process.

## Phoebe Rinkel Receives KDEC "Award of Excellence"

Phoebe Rinkel, Technical Assistance Coordinator for KITS, is the 2010 recipient of the Kansas Division for Early Childhood (KDEC) "Award of Excellence." This award honors an individual who has made significant contributions to the field of early childhood special education in Kansas. KDEC is the state subdivision of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC), an international professional organization designed for professionals and families associated with infants and young children with special needs. An early childhood special educator with 30 years experience, Phoebe works with infants and preschoolers with disabilities and their families in community not-for-profit programs, public schools, and university research projects. As the KITS Technical Assistance Coordinator, she provides consultation as well as intensive technical assistance and training to school districts and special education cooperatives building their capacity to provide effective services to preschoolers with disabilities and their families. She also serves on many state and national committees and is a frequent presenter at professional conferences.

Phoebe holds a M.S. Degree in Family and Child Development from Kansas State University with licensure in Early Childhood Disabilities and as Supervisor-Coordinator in Special Education in the State of Kansas. Phoebe and her husband Steve live in Shawnee, and are the proud parents of a son, Max, who graduated from the University of Kansas in December.

In her acceptance letter to the KDEC Board, Phoebe wrote: "I have always been proud to belong to DEC and KDEC, and I am humbled by this recognition from my esteemed colleagues. I wish I could share this honor with the extraordinary mentors, team members, children and families with whom I have had the pleasure of working for the past 30 years. I am grateful to every one of them, and to you, my colleagues and friends."

—Adapted with permission from *The Insider*, (2010, March). Life Span Institute at Parsons. Retrieved August 24, 2010, from <http://parsons.lsi.ku.edu/~parsons/html/Newsletters/March2010Opt.pdf>