

**In this issue:**

- *Informal Data Collection for Intervention: Supporting Young Children's Friendship Skills*
- *Collaborative Training Calendar*
- *Effective Read-Alouds*
- *Kansas Parent Information Resource Center (KPIRC)*
- *Part B Coordinator's Corner*
- *Vision Screening Technology*
- *Part C Coordinator's Corner*
- *Speaking to Children About Traumatic Events*
- *KITS Early Childhood Resource Center: Spotlight on Holdings in Spanish*
- *KITS 2013 Summer Institute*

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## Informal Data Collection for Intervention: Supporting Young Children's Friendship Skills

By 2012 KITS Summer Institute Presenters  
**Audra Classen, MS.E. & Gregory Cheatham, Ph.D.**

Introduction by Karen Lawson

**Introduction: Audra Classen, MS.E. and Gregory Cheatham, Ph.D.** were presenters during the KITS 2012 Summer Institute. Audra is a doctoral student at the University of Kansas. She has nine years experience teaching preschool through third grade, with the last four years in early childhood special education. Audra enjoys opportunities to plan and present staff development to para-professionals and others. Dr. Cheatham is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Special Education at the University of Kansas where he teaches in the early childhood/early childhood special education program. Greg's research and scholarship focuses on young children's social emotional competence, family-professional partnerships, and cultural/linguistic diversity within early childhood, early intervention, and early childhood special education contexts.

Many children in preschool settings experience difficulty with social skills and friendships. To successfully make friends and learn, many children can benefit from social emotional support. Young children's ability to regulate emotions, demonstrate appropriate social behaviors, and independently interact with peers (Denham, 2006; Webster-Stratton & Reid, 2004), has been positively linked to early learning outcomes (Denham & Brown, 2010). Specifically, children who easily make friends typically demonstrate specific friendship skills, such as sharing, taking turns, helping one another, giving compliments, organizing play, and understanding how and when to apologize (Strain & Joseph, 2006). In turn, young children with friendship skills are afforded more opportunities to interact with peers, thus developing and sustaining more friendships. Teaching children friendship skills can encourage appropriate engagement with peers and the ability to take greater advantage of learning activities.

Informal observation and data collection of young children's friendship skills can be directly linked to intervention and children's learning. Therefore, collecting observation data about children's skills in natural

## Informal Data Collection – continued

classroom routines is the first step towards providing intervention to meet children's needs. More specifically, informal assessment of children's friendship skills, followed by intervention, and then repeated observations, is an iterative process to support children's learning outcomes (McAfee & Leong, 2011).

In this article, we discuss ways in which early educators can effectively collect data regarding children's friendship skills. We present specific informal assessment approaches for measuring young children's friendship skills as a component of a responsive, iterative process, following a categorization system presented by McAfee and Leong (2011); specifically, we discuss informal data collection methods that describe, count, and rate young children's friendship skills.

### Describing Friendships Skills

Informal observation assessments can describe important aspects of children's behavior, possible environmental influences, and the behavior's function (Fox et al., 2003; Hunter & Hemmeter, 2009). Two approaches to informal description are anecdotal and running records (Grisham-Brown, & Pretti-Fontczak, 2011; McAfee & Leong, 2011). This article will focus on anecdotal records, that is, short event descriptions. Using factual details to describe what and how the child's behavior occurred when writing anecdotal records is best practice (Grisham-Brown, & Pretti-Fontczak, 2011; McAfee & Leong, 2011). For example, an anecdotal record focusing on friendship skills may look like this:

*Tyrone played with construction materials for 5 minutes, using blocks and vehicles. He made eye contact with peer. Tyrone said, "Give me that," and took his truck.*

Best use of anecdotal records results from teachers' inclusion of supporting details (e.g., "Molly fixed Jane's hair in the home center"), sequentially recording what is seen and heard including direct quotes of children's words (e.g., "Jane kissed the mirror and laughed. She replied, 'I petty, you tun.'") (McAfee & Leong, 2011).



In the example above, teachers can note Jane's turn taking skills and communication skills. By gathering multiple anecdotal records across multiple classroom routines (e.g., centers, snack, circle time) teachers can then look across the anecdotal records for patterns regarding the extent to which children interact with peers. A sample anecdotal record data sheet is presented in Box 1.

### Counting Friendship Skills

Though anecdotal records have advantages, a more systematic approach to collecting data regarding young children's friendship skills typically is necessary. One option is counting specific types of discrete and continuous behaviors (e.g., responding verbally to peer, following directions, sharing, making eye contact, taking turns). With this data collection approach, the teacher observes and records the exact or estimated frequency or rate of specific friendship skills (Wolery, 2004). First, teachers identify target behaviors clearly defining what they want to observe by developing both examples and non-examples. This assessment stage of definition development is essential, because taking data on a well-defined child behavior provides for more reliable counting within and across data collection episodes. After precisely defining the child's friendship behavior, the teacher observes and counts the number of times the behavior occurs in a predetermined environment and time frame.

Teachers can select from several approaches to counting young children's friendship skills. Two approaches will be discussed in this article. First, event sampling (i.e., counting a focal behavior as it occurs, Wolery, 2004) is best suited for discrete child behaviors that have a short duration and occur with moderate frequency (Grisham-Brown & Pretti-Fontczak, 2011; McAfee & Leong, 2011). Countable discrete behaviors include: responding to a peer, sharing, and giving compliments. A teacher defines the behavior giving an example, "responds verbally or nonverbally to peer; speaks to peer with eye contact", while a non-example can be "turning and speaking to another peer". Next, the teacher tallies the occurrences of the behavior. The result can be a behavior frequency per observed minute. A sample data sheet for event frequency counting is provided in Box 1.

## Informal Data Collection – continued

A second data collection approach involving counting friendship behaviors is partial interval time sampling, which is most effective for counting discrete and continuous friendship behaviors that occur at a high frequency (Grisham-Brown & Pretti-Fontczak, 2011; McAfee & Leong, 2011). An example of child turn-taking behavior to count is “waiting and taking turn in the correct sequence during a board game” while a non-example can be “waiting then taking turn out of sequence before other child has a chance to move.”

After precisely defining the child behavior and observation venue, the number of equal-length time intervals is determined. With this approach a timer is necessary. The teacher observes throughout the entire interval and if the friendship behavior is observed at all (e.g., once, twice) during the interval, a single tally is recorded (Wolery, 2004). The result is an estimated frequency of specific friendship skills. When all time intervals have passed, the proportion of intervals in which the behavior occurred is calculated. For example, sharing can be defined as handing toys to peer during centers versus holding out toys to peers but not letting go. The five-minute observation divided into 30-second intervals, documented a child appropriately sharing during 4/10 intervals or 40% of the intervals.

Well-developed friendship behavior definitions result in more valid and reliable frequency counts and estimates. Therefore, meaningful data based decisions regarding friendship skills instruction are achieved by systematically counting behaviors (Grisham-Brown, J. & Pretti-Fontczak, K., 2011; McAfee & Leong, 2011). A sample interval time sampling data sheet is presented in Box 1.

### Rating Friendship Skills

Teachers can also use informal, teacher-constructed rating scales to assess children’s friendship skills. This type of data collection rates previously defined friendship behaviors of interest via a framework that makes children’s skill development obvious. Usually, rating scales rank a child’s skills along a development continuum (e.g., emerging skills, partially proficient, proficient, and advanced) from low to high (Grisham-Brown, J. & Pretti-Fontczak, K., 2011; McAfee & Leong, 2011).

Teachers can develop scales to rate children’s friendship skills, such as organizing play with peer, cooperative play, and expressing needs and wants.

A few sample rating scales are provided in Box 1. Rating scales can play an important role in recording young children’s friendships skills considered critical to peer relationships and learning. A sample rating scale data sheet is presented in Box 1.

### The Iterative Assessment-to-Intervention Process

The process of assessing children’s skills and providing intervention can occur throughout the program day (McAfee & Leong, 2011). For example, a child who consistently and independently plays beside rather than with classmates can be taught to engage with peers. Child skills to be considered include: noticing peer playing, asking about peers’ play, and taking turns. After taking informal baseline data on these skills through describing, counting or rating, the teacher could provide direct modeling of desired friendship skills to the child by prompting a peer to model appropriate child skills. After two weeks of intervention, if the need for more support continues to be evident within the informal data, the teacher uses puppet stories during circle time to increase engagement, building explicit connections between stories and the child’s experiences. The young child’s learned play skills or those requiring more instruction are noted during subsequent observations.

In conclusion, friendship skills are critical to young children’s relationships and learning. As such, teachers can take informal data to identify skills children need and the extent to which children effectively demonstrate them. Consistency and validity of data occurs when young children are observed in natural classroom routines and teachers understand how to match data collection methods to the defined behavior (Grisham-Brown, J. & Pretti-Fontczak, K., 2011; McAfee & Leong, 2011). Although descriptive data collection is useful, systematically counting and rating friendship skills promotes better-informed intervention decisions regarding supports for children.



Informal Data Collection – concludes on Page 4

## Informal Data Collection – conclusion

### Box 1

#### Resources to Support Informal Data Collection

Data Collection Method	Sample Data Collection Forms
Anecdotal Record	<a href="http://www.prekinders.com/pdf/AnecdotalRecords.pdf">http://www.prekinders.com/pdf/AnecdotalRecords.pdf</a>
Event Sampling	<a href="http://www.specialconnections.ku.edu/~speconn/page/assessment/ddm/pdf/event_recording_blankrevised.pdf">http://www.specialconnections.ku.edu/~speconn/page/assessment/ddm/pdf/event_recording_blankrevised.pdf</a>
Partial Interval Sampling	<a href="http://www.specialconnections.ku.edu/~speconn/page/assessment/ddm/pdf/Partial_Interval_blank.pdf">http://www.specialconnections.ku.edu/~speconn/page/assessment/ddm/pdf/Partial_Interval_blank.pdf</a>
Rating Scales	After opening URL link, scroll to page 5 (Friendship Rating Scale) <a href="http://www.getreadytoread.org/images/content/downloads/ELORS_forms/2606_teacher_childform2010.pdf">http://www.getreadytoread.org/images/content/downloads/ELORS_forms/2606_teacher_childform2010.pdf</a>

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- Wolery, M. (2004). Monitoring children's progress and intervention implementation. In M. McLean, M. Wolery, & D.B. Bailey (Eds.), *Assessing infants and preschoolers with special needs (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.)* (pp. 545-584). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.



## Collaborative Calendar of Events

Check for information on a variety of training events for Kansas early childhood professionals at [www.kskits.org/training](http://www.kskits.org/training)



DATE	EVENT / LOCATION	SPONSOR / CONTACT / REGISTRATION
1/15/13	<i>MTSS Leadership Essentials Workshop</i> – Ozawkie	Kansas MTSS - <a href="http://taese.net/ksdetasn.org/cms/index.php/calendar/event/1/MTSS-Leadership-Essentials-Workshop">http://taese.net/ksdetasn.org/cms/index.php/calendar/event/1/MTSS-Leadership-Essentials-Workshop</a>
1/26/13	<i>Families Together – Team Empowerment Conference</i> – Salina	Families Together, Inc. - (785) 233-4777, (800)-264-6343 or at <a href="http://www.familiestogetherinc.org">www.familiestogetherinc.org</a>
1/30/13	<i>Kansas Infant-Toddler/tiny-k Meeting</i> – Webinar	KDHE-ITS/KITS – <a href="http://www.kskits.org/training">http://www.kskits.org/training</a>
2/6/13	<i>Intentional Literacy: Targeting Oral Language Throughout the Preschool Day</i> – Webinar	TASN-KITS & KSDE-Kansas 4 Year Old At Risk and Kansas Preschool Pilot Programs - <a href="https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/B5HVMVX">https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/B5HVMVX</a>
2/7-8/13	<i>Patterns of Strengths and Weaknesses: Theory, Interpretation, Application, and Intervention</i> – Lenexa	TASN - <a href="http://www.cvent.com/d/9cq4l/1Q">http://www.cvent.com/d/9cq4l/1Q</a>
2/7/13	<i>Families Together – Team Empowerment Conference</i> – Lenexa	Families Together, Inc. - Kansas City Parent Center: (913) 287-1970 / <a href="mailto:kansascity@familiestogetherinc.org">kansascity@familiestogetherinc.org</a>
2/7/13	<i>MTSS System Check-In: After MTSS Structuring and Implementation</i> – Dodge City	Kansas MTSS - <a href="http://taese.net/ksdetasn.org/cms/index.php/calendar/event/4/MTSS-System-Check-In--After-MTSS-Structuring-&amp;-Implementation-/0">http://taese.net/ksdetasn.org/cms/index.php/calendar/event/4/MTSS-System-Check-In--After-MTSS-Structuring-&amp;-Implementation-/0</a>
2/12/13	<i>Understanding the Unique Needs of Students Who Are Deaf/Hard of Hearing</i> – Garden City	Kansas State School for the Deaf – Angie Walker, (913) 324-0600 or email: <a href="mailto:awalker@kssdb.org">awalker@kssdb.org</a>
2/13/13	<i>Understanding the Unique Needs of Students Who Are Deaf/Hard of Hearing</i> – Winfield	Kansas State School for the Deaf – Angie Walker, (913) 324-0600 or email: <a href="mailto:awalker@kssdb.org">awalker@kssdb.org</a>
2/20/13	<i>2013 KSDE TASN Winter Leadership Conference for Special Education Administrators</i> – Wichita	KSDE/TASN - <a href="http://www.cvent.com/events/2013-winter-ksde-leadership-conference-for-administrators/event-summary-bffde8f1f6854705b94eb74e68e3d63f.aspx">http://www.cvent.com/events/2013-winter-ksde-leadership-conference-for-administrators/event-summary-bffde8f1f6854705b94eb74e68e3d63f.aspx</a>
2/20/13	<i>Kansas Infant-Toddler/tiny-k Meeting</i> – Webinar	KDHE-ITS/KITS – <a href="http://www.kskits.org/training">http://www.kskits.org/training</a>
2/22/13	<i>Assessment and Interventions of Children for Visual Impairments in High Risk Populations</i> – TBD	Easter Seals Capper Foundation – Risa Flanders, (785) 272-4060, Ext. 7152 or email: <a href="mailto:rflanders@capper.easterseals.com">rflanders@capper.easterseals.com</a>
2/27/13	<i>IFSPlooz!</i> – Wichita	KDHE-ITS/KITS – <a href="http://www.kskits.org/training">http://www.kskits.org/training</a>
2/28/13	<i>KDEC 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference: Survive and Thrive in Uncertain Times</i> – Wichita	KDEC – <a href="http://www.cvent.com/events/2013-the-31st-annual-kansas-division-for-early-childhood-conference/event-summary-">http://www.cvent.com/events/2013-the-31st-annual-kansas-division-for-early-childhood-conference/event-summary-</a>



### Other Websites That List Early Childhood Training in Kansas

The Capper Foundation  
 ChildCare Aware of Kansas  
 Families Together, Inc.  
 Kansas Children's Service League  
 Kansas Head Start Association  
 Kansas Assoc for the Education of Young Children (KAEYC)

Kansas Assoc for Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health (KAIMH)  
 Kansas Center for Autism Research and Training (KCART)  
 Kansas Child Care Training Opportunities (KCCTO)  
 Kansas Dept of Health & Environment (KDHE) - Infant-Toddler Services  
 Kansas Division for Early Childhood (KDEC)  
 Kansas State Dept of Education (KSDE) - Special Education Services  
 Kansas Technical Assistance System Network (TASN)  
 Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education (TAESE)

## You Should Know About...

### Effective Read-Alouds for Early Literacy: A Teacher's Guide for PreK-1

Reading aloud with young children is not only enjoyable, but it is a powerful way to build crucial literacy skills. Through effective read-alouds, teachers can target oral language, vocabulary, comprehension, print awareness, alphabet knowledge, and phonological awareness development. However to make the most of read-aloud experiences, teachers must be intentional in their strategies.

Those interested in developing their understanding of how to make the most of read-aloud experiences may find the Beauchat, Blamey and Philippakos new book, *Effective Read-Alouds for Early Literacy: A Teacher's Guide for PreK-1*, a useful tool. This book can be borrowed from the [KITS Early Childhood Resource Center \(ECRC\)](#) and provides strategies for selecting books and using read-alouds to develop children's early literacy skills, including examples from diverse classrooms.

Reference: Beauchat, K.A., Blamey, K.L., & Philippakos, Z.A. (2012). *Effective read-alouds for early literacy*. New York: Guilford Press.

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### Kansas Parent Information Resource Center (KPIRC)

The Kansas Parent Information Resource Center (KPIRC) is a state level technical assistance center for organizing school, family and community partnerships to support increased student achievement. KPIRC promotes meaningful family involvement at all levels of education and provides trainings and resources to help parents, educators and other organizations promote the educational success of every Kansas child.

#### KPIRC Educator Trainings:

- Provide information, resources and guidance to educators to build family-school-community partnerships;
- Refocus/enhance existing family involvement programs to support achievement;
- Provide a research-based partnership approach, new strategies and best practices; and
- Meet Title I requirements for districts and schools to provide parent involvement policies and school-parent compacts, plus much more.

#### KPIRC Family Trainings:

- Provide families with practical information, resources and guidance on how to support their children's learning;
- Provide research-based approaches for families to support their children's learning;
- Inform families of opportunities to become involved in their children's educational settings; and
- Inform families of parent involvement requirements in districts and schools, plus much more.

KPIRC, along with other organizations, hosts a Parent Leadership Conference each fall. This free conference provides two days of interesting, fun keynote speakers and workshops to encourage and support parent leadership in the home, school and community. To learn more about the conference contact KPIRC.

To learn more about KPIRC and their resources, visit their website at [www.kpirc.org](http://www.kpirc.org) or call 1-866-711-6711.

Submitted by Jane Groff, Director  
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Request Assistance



If you would like help in learning to use effective read-aloud strategies or support for other issues, you can request KITS support through the [Kansas Technical Assistance System Network \(TASN\)](#) by clicking on the *Request Assistance* button and typing in your request.

## Part B ECSE Preschool Coordinator's Corner

### KDEC 31st Annual Conference: "Survive and Thrive In Uncertain Times"

February 28 - March 1, 2013  
DoubleTree Hotel at the Wichita Airport

Dr. Robin McWilliam, Janice Fialka and many outstanding presenters will provide applicable evidence-based practice information. You can access registration, fees/payment, hotel, agenda, keynote and other pertinent conference information at <http://www.cvent.com/d/6cqs34/1Q>

### Transition from Part C to Part B Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) Part B Indicator 12

We are so excited about the improvement the State has made for early childhood transition! Part C and Part B ECSE just completed the reports for our Annual Performance Report (APR) for the Office of Special Education. In Kansas, both C and B ECSE programs were able to successfully and timely transition 2,225 children and only two children did not meet the third birthday requirement. This is a great accomplishment for the local program staff who have been working so hard to ensure timely transitions for children.

For additional resources to assist with guidance and best practices go to this KITS web page.

[KITS Transition Resources](#)

On the **KITS Transition Resources** website you will find the State Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between KDHE and KSDE for children transitioning from Part C to Part B in Kansas, as well as a local example of a MOA, scenarios and a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document to address specific guidance areas for transition.

You can also find SPP/APR information on this KSDE Early Childhood Special Education web page:

<http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=4745>

KSDE and KDHE are seeking ways to improve the Outcomes Web System, and want to ensure that we gather information and input from those using the application. If you have suggestions or ideas on updates, please send an email to Tiffany Smith at [tsmith@ksde.org](mailto:tsmith@ksde.org).

### Early Childhood Outcomes Web System (OWS) Part B Indicator 7

KITS has posted the webinar, [Understanding and Using ECO Data for Program Improvement](#) to assist local programs with improving their outcome data. There is also a data drilldown guide to support programs with evaluating their early childhood outcome reporting process, and identifying patterns in the data that can lead to improved services to Kansas children and families. The KITS website, [Kansas Early Childhood Outcomes Information](#), has a section called **Understanding Your ECO Data** that includes the drill down guide and other helpful information and documents. Be sure to click on the **Recently Added Information** section for updates.

If you have new staff or need a review for the Child Outcome Rating, there is a presentation on the KITS website, [Completing the Early Childhood Outcomes Summary Rating](#), for entry into the Outcomes Web System (OWS) for Indicator 7 Early Childhood Outcomes.

### Early Childhood Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) Part B Indicator 6

A preschool child with a disability who is eligible to receive special education and related services is entitled to all the rights and protections guaranteed under Part B of the IDEA. One of these guaranteed rights is the right to be educated in the least restrictive environment in regular classrooms alongside their peers without disabilities. The child's placement must be based on the child's individualized education program (IEP). In addition, the IEP must include an explanation of the extent, if any, to which the child will NOT participate with nondisabled children in regular class.

**Part B ECSE – conclusion on Page 8**

## Part B ECSE – conclusion

This year, OSEP has required that States report Early Childhood LRE - Indicator 6 and that the FFY 2011 Indicator 6A percent and Indicator 6B percent for this year will be the baseline measurement. The baseline and target are reported in a State Performance Plan and Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) 2011 and is due to OSEP on Feb 1, 2013. The district percent on FFY 2011 Indicator 6A and 6B are reported in the FFY 2011 APR reports which are distributed in March 2013. The data for the FFY 2012 state and district Indicator 6A and 6B percent will come from the Dec 1, 2012 Education Environments which comprise Indicators 6A (TM & UM) and 6B (SP and SS.)

**KITS has created a NEW web page:**  
[Preschool Least Restrictive Environment \(LRE\) & Inclusion Resources](#)

KSDE has **SPP/APR LRE resources** at:  
<http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=4745>

### ECSE Indicator Technical Assistance

There are many resources available regarding Early Childhood Transition (Indicator 12), Early Childhood Outcomes (Indicator 7) and Least Restrictive Environment (Indicator 6) for Early Childhood, as well as the other Part B Indicators.

Please go to the [TASN website](#) to request Individualized Technical Assistance or to access information regarding the Kansas SPP Indicator Improvement Resources, SEA Public Reports and other useful links.

### KSDE Early Childhood Website

The [KSDE Early Childhood website](#) provides information, reports and documents about Early Childhood programs, including Parents as Teachers, ECSE Part B, Kansas Pre-K, 4 Year Old at Risk and our Birth to Five State Early Childhood Documents from our regional summits. Our website also has contact information for both [Part B ECSE](#) and the [KDHE Part C programs](#). If you would like to add or update Part B ECSE contact information, please contact [Beccy Strohm](#).

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## Automated Vision Screening Technology

Anne Nielsen, Ph.D., the Outreach Coordinator for the **Kansas State School for the Blind**, submitted an article for our [Fall 2012 KITS Newsletter](#) regarding the KanLovKids Program. Anne wanted to follow-up to that article with an announcement by the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Ophthalmology, American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus, and the American Association of Certified Orthoptists. A joint policy statement has been released which describes the use of automated vision screening technology as beneficial for children younger than four years and/or children who are preverbal, preliterate, or developmentally delayed. It can be accessed online at:

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2012/10/24/peds.2012-2548.full.pdf+html?sid=9f00b91e-6a81-411b-8760-5643b95764a2>

Our KITS ECRC has copies of the [SureSight Vision Screener training video](#) and quick reference guide available.

*Love is in the air...*



*... So have a happy Valentines Day!*







## Part C Coordinator's Corner

### Family Assessment

“Family is not an important thing, it's everything.”  
— Michael J. Fox

I recently had the opportunity to participate in a research study being conducted by a University of North Dakota doctoral student entitled: *Understanding the Family Assessment Process in Early Intervention*. The purpose of the study was to gain understanding of statewide policies and procedures used in the family assessment process within early intervention services. I was one of many state Part C coordinators who participated. As I was talking and reflecting on the policies and practices in Kansas, it became very clear to me that the Kansas Infant Toddler Services system, through our local tiny-k programs, really does try to incorporate family into all that we do. We certainly are striving for that through our policies and procedures that we are setting at the State level. The new IFSP reflects the philosophy that family assessment is not a discrete, one time activity.

I pulled some information from the NECTAC website about the Family Assessment process. This introduction gets at the heart of what we are trying to do in Kansas.

“The Family Assessment process is built into the IFSP and in no way does it imply that early intervention personnel should “assess” or evaluate the family in any respect. Rather, family members are invited to share information, on a voluntary basis, to help service providers understand their concerns, priorities and resources related to supporting their child's development and learning and any other issues the family may want help to address. Identifying the family concerns and priorities helps the IFSP team develop functional outcomes and identify the services, supports and strategies to accomplish those outcomes. The identification of family resources helps the team know what family supports and strengths are already in place to address the identified outcomes.

Because children learn best in the context of everyday activities, families are asked to describe their daily routines and activities, in terms of what interests and engages their child, what's going well and what challenges they face. Sharing this information helps to identify

difficulties that providers may problem-solve with families. Moreover, providers and parents can determine the routines in which to embed interventions and learning opportunities. For example, if a child loves her bath time, it may be a natural opportunity to encourage the learning and use of more words, improving balance, reaching for and grasping toys, etc. Learning about a child's interests, favorite people and preferred toys and activities can help providers and families personalize learning opportunities that will be highly motivating and engaging, and build on the child's strengths.

Often families would like to participate in new activities or use community resources but need help to include their child with special needs. Accompanying the family on an outing, problem-solving with families, preparing and supporting community providers are examples of the ways providers can help families engage in new activities that will have natural learning opportunities for their child.

Information is usually gathered through conversations with the family. Check lists and interviews can also assist the provider to get useful information. Parents need to know the purpose of this information, how it will be used and where it will be kept. The most important factor in gathering family information is the relationship that develops over time with the provider and family members. Therefore various conversation methods and relationship building techniques yield the most valuable information.”

Evidence of these practices is apparent in what families are telling us. After completing an IFSP, a family service coordinator emailed me and was very excited to tell me how it went and what the family had to say about the process. Here is an excerpt from that email.

*I used a Mom of a soon-to-be-three child today as a “mock run” of the full IFSP. I still found myself taking notes on a separate piece of paper, but using the IFSP and the SAFER, we navigated very easily through the important stuff. Here's the feedback: “Oh my goodness, I see my child on paper, not what he can or can't do.*

## Part C Coordinator – conclusion

For more information about Family Assessment you can go to:

<http://www.nectac.org/topics/families/famasses.asp>

### ITS Database Reminders:

Over the past few years, KDHE-ITS has discussed the need to shift from the use of the desktop version of the ITS database to the web-based version. Support of the desktop version has become increasingly difficult as the variety, and the vintage, of operating systems used at the local level has expanded. Because of the volume of changes to data collection mandated by the new federal regulations, this difficulty has been magnified.

A manual for use of the web-based system is available on the database under the reports option. The manual is being updated as changes occur.

KDHE-ITS will reschedule the database training originally planned for May 2012 once the needed regulatory changes, the IFSP programming, and the report conversion are closer to completion.

Please send any questions regarding the ITS database to [Marcia Boswell-Carney](mailto:Marcia.Boswell-Carney).

All local tiny-k programs are required to use the Statewide IFSP form and supporting documents starting January 1, 2013.

The forms are found at <http://www.ksits.org/forms.htm>

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## Items of Interest for Your Calendar



### January

- National Braille Literacy Month
- 18 – Winnie the Pooh Day
- 28 – Ernie's Birthday (Sesame Street™)

### February

- National Children's Dental Health Month
- Low Vision Awareness Month
- 3 – Elmo's Birthday (Sesame Street™)
- 28 – National Tooth Fairy Day

### March

- Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month
- Music in Our Schools Month
- Brain Injury Awareness Month
- 11-17 – Brain Awareness Week
- 2 – Dr. Seuss' Birthday
- 2 – Read Across America Day
- 9 – Barbie's Birthday (Barbie Doll™)
- 15 – Incredible Kid Day
- 20 – Big Bird's Birthday (Sesame Street™)
- 21 – World Down Syndrome Day

### April

- Autism Awareness Month
- 2 – World Autism Awareness Day
- *More in our Spring issue*

### May

- National Mental Health Month
- 9 – Children's Mental Health Awareness Day
- *More in our Spring issue*

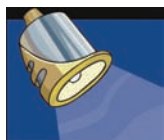
## Speaking to Children About Traumatic Events

In light of recent national events, children in your lives may have questions regarding violence or traumatic events occurring in our nation. While these conversations are difficult to have, national mental health partners provide online resources that give adults tips and tools for speaking to young people about trauma. The resources below provide guidance for parents and caregivers as they continue to help their children cope.

- [SAMHSA's Tips for Talking to Children and Youth After Traumatic Events: A Guide for Parents and Educators](#)
- [Coping with Crisis Helping Children With Special Needs](#)

Adapted from the Kansas Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (KECCS) Plan Newsletter, December 2012.

## Early Childhood Resource Center



### Spotlight on the ECRC Holdings in Spanish

The KITS Early Childhood Resource Center (ECRC) has continuously worked to improve and enlarge our collection of holdings designed for Spanish speakers. Whether you work with children or families, the ECRC has resources to assist you. The collection includes assessments, first aid training, parenting skills and much more.

So remember, if you need to examine a resource designed for the Spanish speaker, contact [Kim Page](#).



### Contact the KITS Early Childhood Resource Center (ECRC)

620-421-6550 ext. 1651

Toll free in Kansas:

800-362-0390 ext. 1651

Email: [resourcecenter@ku.edu](mailto:resourcecenter@ku.edu).

Our entire catalog is searchable online at  
[www.kskits.org/ECRC](http://www.kskits.org/ECRC)

### What is Our Purpose?

The ECRC is designed to provide access to a continuously updated collection of materials on topics related to children birth to eight who are identified with special needs. The holdings of the ECRC include:

- Resources for implementation of developmentally and individually appropriate practices in natural and inclusive environments;
- Appropriate and diverse evaluation and assessment instruments;
- Evidence based curricular materials for preview;
- Professional materials and staff training materials; and
- Research summaries.

### New to the ECRC for Winter 2013

- Barton, E.E., & Harn, B. (2012). *Educating young children with autism spectrum disorders*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Committee For Children. (2011). *Second step: A violence prevention curriculum pre-k*. Seattle, WA: Author.
- Elliott, S. (2007). *Social skills improvement system (SSIS) – Preschool paper*. Minneapolis, MN: Pearson.
- Jensen, S. (2012). *Early functional communication profile*. East Moline, IL: LinguiSystems.
- Korsten, J.E., Foss, T.V., & Berry, L. (2007). *Every move counts clicks and chats: Sensory-based approach: Communication and assistive technology*. Lee's Summit, MO: EMC Communications.
- Merrell, K.W., Whitcomb, S.A., & Parisi, D.M. (2009). *Strong start pre-K: A social & emotional learning curriculum*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes.
- Merrell, K.W., Whitcomb, S.A., & Parisi, D.M. (2007). *Strong start K-2: A social & emotional learning curriculum*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes.
- Shure, M. (2001). *I can problem solve (ICPS): An interpersonal cognitive problem-solving program (kindergarten & primary grades)*. Champaign, IL: Research Press.
- Sparling, J., & Lewis, I. (2008). *Creative curriculum learning games set*. Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies.
- Steed, E.A., Pomerleau, T.M., & Horner, R. (2012). *Preschool wide evaluation tool: PRESET – An assessment of universal program-wide positive behavior support in early childhood*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes. (Forms and Scoring Guide)
- Villa, R., Thousand, J., & Nevin, A. (2008). *A guide to co-teaching*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Walker, B., & Cheney, D. (2012). *The SAPR-PBIS manual: A team-based approach to implementing effective schoolwide positive behavior interventions and supports*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes.
- Wittmer, D.S., Petersen, S.H., & Puckett, M.B. (2013). *The young child: Development from prebirth through age eight*. Boston, MA: Pearson.



## 20<sup>th</sup> Annual KITS Summer Institute

### *Teaching Young Children Through Intentionally Designed and Balanced Learning Experiences*

June 4, 5, 6, 7, 2013

Adams Alumni Center, University of Kansas, Lawrence

It is hard to believe, but this summer marks number twenty for the annual KITS Summer Institute! Come join us as we celebrate this milestone and learn from national experts on issues important to early childhood professionals. This year the focus of our Summer Institute is to understand current information regarding child development and developmentally appropriate practice as a context for providing intentional instruction and learning opportunities in early childhood settings.

The week will be devoted to specific teaching strategies and methods that can be used to create a balance between activities that are explicitly led by adults in large and small groups, and those that are intentionally designed, but carried out in an embedded manner within centers and daily routines. Participants will learn techniques increasing child language production and understanding as well as specific strategies for encouraging and reinforcing listening skills. The following is a tentative schedule for the week:

#### Tuesday, June 4:

*Understanding How Young Children Learn: Implications for Teaching Practices in the Early Years*  
- Bronwyn S. Fees, Ph.D., Kansas State University

#### Wednesday, June 5:

*Making Every Minute Count: Using DEC's Recommended Practices to Embed Learning Goals in Routines*  
- Sarah A. Mulligan, M.Ed., CAE, Missoula, Montana

#### Wednesday, June 6:

*Narrative Intervention through Storytelling*  
- Trina D. Spencer, Ph.D., BCBA, Northern Arizona University

#### Friday, June 7:

*The Talking Classroom: Intentionally Designing Talking and Listening Activities to Promote Oral Language Skills in Young Children*  
- Judith Dodson, M.A., LETRS, Evergreen, Colorado

To attend the Summer Institute, participants must submit an online registration and enroll for college credit with one of the partnering universities. For registration and enrollment contact information please visit our website:

<http://www.kskits.org/training/KITSSummerInst.shtml>

If you have questions please contact Karen Lawson at 620-421-6550 Ext. 1618 or email her at [klawson@ku.edu](mailto:klawson@ku.edu)

## Kansas Inservice Training System

**Training for Early Childhood Professionals and Families**

**2601 Gabriel, Parsons, KS 67357**

**Phone: 620-421-6550 ext. 1618**

**Toll free in Kansas at 800-362-0390 ext. 1618**

**Fax: 620-421-0671**

**E-Mail: [kskits@ku.edu](mailto:kskits@ku.edu)**

**Website: <http://kskits.org/>**



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**Search for us as**  
**Kansas Inservice Training System.**

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