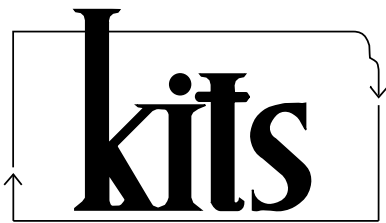


# KANSAS INSERVICE

# TRAINING SYSTEM NEWSLETTER



*Training for Early Childhood Professionals and Families*

Volume X, Issue 4

Fall 2001

## KITS Newsletter Available Electronically

Many of our KITS Newsletter readers have jumped on the electronic band wagon and have requested to receive copies of the newsletter via email, instead of the hard copy version through the regular mail. We're hoping that there are many more of our readers who would like to receive their newsletter via email. "Why would I want to do that?" you ask. You'll get your newsletter a week or two

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## Assistive Technology for Literacy

In many instances, it is not easy for a child with disabilities to learn to read and write. A child who has one, or maybe more than one disability, finds the world different from that of peers. Parents may be so overwhelmed with medical, therapeutic, and basic care needs that literacy for their child is a lesser priority (Light and Kelford Smith, 1993). Teachers may not be aware of emergent literacy research and may not include book reading, drawing and written language activities in the educational program of a child who has disabilities (Coleman, 1991). Some public school teachers may not view the child with disabilities as capable of learning to read and write and consequently provide little written language opportunities (Light and McNaughton, 1993).



Changes in understanding how one becomes literate, as well as advances in assistive technology development and use, are helping children with disabilities to become as literate as possible. Emergent literacy theory suggests that from birth, a child's ability to read develops along with listening, speaking and writing skills. Learning to read begins with the first exposure to books, and other print materials. This view of literacy differs significantly from traditional theories of reading instruction. Traditional theories suggest that children learn to

*Assistive Technology continued on page 4*

## School Readiness Strand at KDEC

“School Readiness” will be featured as a special strand at the 2002 Annual Conference of the Kansas Division for Early Childhood (KDEC) in Wichita. This special strand is possible through a grant from the National Association of State Boards of Education (only five awarded in the US) and the willingness of the KDEC Board to work collaboratively.

For additional information, contact KDEC Conference Chair Margy Hornback at ACCK, 620-241-5150 ext 116, or email [amargyh@acck.edu](mailto:amargyh@acck.edu) (see related article on page 6).

## Process Handbook Updates

The *Special Education Process Handbook* that was first published in 2000 by Student Support Services at the Kansas State Department of Education has been updated. The pages that have been changed may be downloaded from the Student Support Services web page at [www.kansped.org](http://www.kansped.org), under “Resources”.

—News from KSDE is submitted by Marnie Campbell, KSDE

## English as a Second Language Resources

The Kansas Department of Education has placed at William Allen White Library on the Emporia State University campus over 2500 items that are available to support the teaching of English as a second language. This collection was started to provide local school districts with access to materials for working with students who are not native speakers of English. The collection contains content-based texts, research-based materials, children’s fiction for the support of native-language literacy, and audio and videotapes in English and eighteen other languages.

This collection can be browsed and materials checked out at William Allen White Library or through interlibrary loan from your local public library or school library.

—submitted by Beth Hanschu, William Allen White Library, Emporia State University, [hanschub@emporia.edu](mailto:hanschub@emporia.edu)



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# The Collaborative Calendar of Events

For a more extensive calendar look at [www.kskits.org/ktc](http://www.kskits.org/ktc)

| DATE                 | EVENT  | CONTACT PERSON  |
|----------------------|--|---|
| Jan. 17, 2002        | <i>Infant Toddler Assessment and Intervention using the Infant Toddler Sensory Profile: Part 2, KC, Wichita, Topeka, Hays, Oakley, Garden City</i>                                 | Susan Krebs,<br>susan_krebs@yahoo.com   |
| *Jan. 23, 2002       | <i>Small Group Strategies for Reading Instruction, sites in Concordia, Independence, Manhattan, Salina, Hutchinson, Pittsburg, Beloit, Sublette, Kansas City, Parsons</i>          | Deb Burns, 785-291-3097<br>(Parsons contact is Robin Bayless, 620-421-6550 ext. 1618) |
| Feb. 19, 2002        | <i>Paying it Forward for Kansas Kids<br/>Kansas Children's Advocacy Day, Topeka</i>  | Jennifer@kac.org or<br>785-232-0550   |
| *Feb 27, 2002        | <i>Whole Class Strategies for Reading Instruction, downlink sites in Concordia, Independence, Manhattan, Salina, Hutchinson, Pittsburg, Beloit, Sublette, Kansas City, Parsons</i> | Deb Burns, 785-291-3097<br>(Parsons contact is Robin Bayless, 620-421-6550 ext. 1618) |
| Feb. 28-Mar. 2, 2002 | <i>Bridging to Belonging: Community Connections for Children and Families, Annual KDEC Conference, Wichita</i>   | Margy Hornback,<br>620-241-5150 ext. 116  |
| Apr. 1-3, 2002       | <i>Family Literacy Conference, Wichita</i>   | Carolyn Weinhold,<br>785-368-6354   |
| Apr. 3, 2002         | <i>Infant Toddler Assessment and Intervention using the Infant Toddler Sensory Profile: Part 3, KC, Topeka, Hays, Oakley</i>   | Susan Krebs,<br>susan_krebs@yahoo.com   |
| Apr. 18, 2002        | <i>Infant Toddler Spring Conference, Salina</i>  | Joe Porting, 785-296-8625   |
| *June 18-21, 2002    | <i>Supporting Children &amp; Families for School Readiness, 9th Annual KITS Summer Institute, Lawrence</i>   | Misty Goosen,<br>785-864-0725   |
| *Oct. 1, 2002        | <i>Annual Head Start &amp; Services for Children with Disabilities Meeting, location to be determined</i>  | Vera Stroup-Rentier,<br>620-421-6550 ext. 1768  |
| *Nov. 15, 2002       | <i>8th Annual Transitioning into Developmentally Appropriate Practices (TDAP) Conference, Wichita</i>  | Misty Goosen,<br>785-864-0725   |

\* KITS sponsored or co-sponsored events

- **KCCTO child care** or **CDA** advisor trainings: 785-532-7197 or 1-800-227-3578, web [www.kccto.org/index2.html](http://www.kccto.org/index2.html)
- **High/Scope** trainings: Judy Nelson, Rainbows United, Inc., 316-267-KIDS
- **Families Together Family Enrichment Weekends, Parent Networking Conferences** and **Families Together Mini-Conferences**: 1-800-264-6343 in Topeka; 1-888-815-6364 in Wichita; 1-888-820-6364 in Garden City; 913-962-9657 in Kansas City, web [www.familiestogetherinc.com](http://www.familiestogetherinc.com)
- **HeadsUp Network** distance training for the **Head Start** and **early childhood** community: 1-800-438-4888, web [www.heads-up.org](http://www.heads-up.org)
- **Children's Cabinet** meets the second Friday of the month in Topeka. Contact Doug Bowman, 785-296-1329, for room location information.
- **The Children's Alliance Training Team** trainings: Debra Childress, 785-235-5437, web [www.ink.org/public/childdally/trainingcalendar.htm](http://www.ink.org/public/childdally/trainingcalendar.htm)
- **KACCRRA** training: [www.kaccrra.org](http://www.kaccrra.org)

read when they are “ready.” The idea of “reading readiness has often been misapplied, especially for children with disabilities, who, because of their impairments, could not perform tasks required on readiness checklists and may not have competency in speaking (Coleman, 1991). Reading stories, writing, and drawing activities were often withheld from children with disabilities because they could not talk or hold writing tools and did not seem to understand connected language (Koppenhaver et al., 1991).

Brian Cutting (1989) identified several key factors in learning to read that are helpful in planning literacy instruction for children with disabilities: Expectations of Learning, Motivation, Opportunities for Practice, Real Life (Functional) Use of Literacy, and Models of Reading. Each factor is briefly discussed within, offering strategies and assistive technology solutions for teaching children with disabilities. Samples of the materials described in this article are included in the *Assistive Technology for Literacy Kit* available from your regional AT Access Site (1-800 KAN DO IT). You may choose to check out the *AT Literacy Kit* or move ahead and adapt your own materials after reading this article.

**Expectations of Learning:** Children with disabilities may not be viewed as potential readers or writers. Literacy

exposure and instruction may be rated as a low priority.

Parents, teachers, and other care providers need to know that their attitudes and expectations can make an enormous difference in the literacy achievements of their children. Raise your expectations, provide opportunities for reading and writing and share the message with everyone who interacts with children with disabilities.

It is important that we be aware of the link between art and writing. During early writing, children incorporate pictures and use scribbling to tell about a story or event. As children watch people write and have more experience writing, they begin to put words and letters in their artwork. When we admire their works, we are reinforcing the idea that their marks have value and that they have something to tell others. Borrow the *Concepts About Print* test or the *Early Detection of Reading Difficulties* (Clay, 1985) for more information on the development of literacy skills among children.

**Motivation:** Parents, teachers, and other care providers must find ways to support each child’s motivation to become literate. One approach is to have fun while learning!

**Throw away your worksheets!** Worksheets are time consuming for children with disabilities and have been found to be unrelated to literacy achievement (Leinhardt, Zigmond, and Cooley, 1981). Use thematic units. Using several books about the same topic helps children build their vocabulary

and world knowledge across several books and activities. The *AT Literacy Kit* has sample adapted books on a cowboy theme. Some of the books have identified repeat lines relevant to the story: “Slim Jim Watkins was one tired cowboy!”, “Rise and shine!”, “snore”. As Slim loses his belongings children are able to collect symbols for each item in order to participate in the story.

**Opportunities for Practice:** Practice is one component of immersion, or surrounding children with print. Materials must be accessible!

Provide opportunities and accessible materials throughout the day. A variety of practices make books accessible to children with disabilities. Cut the pages from the book and laminate them so the pages are stiffer and water proof. “Puff” pages by gluing pieces of weather stripping in the corner so little fingers can turn the pages more easily. Add communication board layouts to the back so vocabulary and symbols are readily available.

Use commercially available products like “Magna Doodles” to provide a simple writing tablet. Magnets can be glued to larger wooden blocks so they are easier to grasp. The *AT Literacy Kit* includes a variety of “brand magnets” so children can design their own ranch brand. Crayons and markers can be grasped by adding foam pipe insulation, making PVC pipe holders, or using clothespins and wooden blocks.

**Real Life (Functional) use of Literacy:** Literacy instruction must go beyond survival words to include reading and writing as a part of daily routines. Literacy development is best fostered when reading and writing are used to accomplish a goal.

The *AT Literacy Kit* includes opportunities to prepare gourmet recipes such as “Beans ‘n Weenies” using adapted step-by-step instructions with pictures. Allow for participation during reading by pausing before a repeat line and letting the child read the line by touching the appropriate symbol on a communication device. Adapted writing activities could include making “Wanted” posters of different children and writing their cowboy nicknames or making new labels for a can of beans.

**Provide Models of Reading and Writing:** Seeing other people read and write is important for children with disabilities. A special concern is that children with severe physical disabilities may not be positioned to see everyday models of literacy. From a wheelchair it may be hard to see a sister looking up a number in the phone book or Dad writing a note to the daycare provider.

“Think out loud” when you are engaging in daily literacy events. Bring materials to the student’s eye level as you model literacy activities. Hold up the cake mix box and point to the instructions as you read each step. Point to pictures in the grocery ads and name the item as you write it on the list. Work closely with a physical therapist to determine the best position for reading and writing activities.

Remember that this is a critical time in a child’s life. Parents, teachers, and other care providers need to take advantage of naturally occurring opportunities in a child’s day to model literacy skills.

**References:**

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Light, J., & McNaughton, D. (1993). Literacy and augmentative and alternative communication: The expectations and priorities of parents and teachers. *Topics in Language Disorders*, 13(2), 33-46.

—submitted by Rhonda Etter, M.A., CCC/SLP, AT Specialist, Southeast Kansas AT Access Site and Sheila Simmons, M.A., CCC/SLP, Project Coordinator, Assistive Technology for Kansans



*KITS Newsletter continued from page 1*

earlier due to printing and mailing time, the graphics are in color instead of black and white, and the money KITS saves on printing and postage can be spent on providing more inservice training, technical assistance, and resources to early childhood professionals in Kansas! There’s no cost to you since Adobe Acrobat Reader is free and can be downloaded from the KITS web site with the click of a button!

Change is hard, but if you have access to email, give the electronic version of the newsletter a try. If it doesn’t work out, you can always change back to the hard copy version! You may email Robin Bayless at [rbayless@ku.edu](mailto:rbayless@ku.edu) to start receiving your newsletter electronically.



## KDEC 2002 Conference

Mark your calendar for the Kansas Division for Early Childhood (KDEC) Annual Conference, *Bridging to Belonging: Community Connections for Children and Families*. The conference dates are February 28 through March 2, 2002, at the Airport Hilton in Wichita. Highlights of the conference are keynote speakers on Thursday and Friday, an evening presentation on Thursday, and greater depth and breadth of presentations during break-out sessions on all three days. Nationally recognized speakers at the conference include Betty Rintoul, Norman Kunc, and David Koppenhaver.

Betty Rintoul is the keynote speaker and presents a break-out session on Thursday. Dr. Rintoul is a clinical psychologist who lives in Carrboro, North Carolina. In addition to her work with Research Triangle Institute, she maintains a private consulting practice in Chapel Hill, specializing in children birth to five. She has worked with children and families as a teacher, administrator, consultant, and therapist. Much of her work has involved culturally diverse clients and children at risk for developmental problems. Currently, Dr. Rintoul coordinates the intervention training for *Legacy for Children*<sup>™</sup>, a parenting research contract with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. She also provides training for the Early Childhood Resource Center, dedicated to

applying research to practice in programs for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and their families.

The title of her keynote address is *Circles of Development* where she will discuss the interactive importance of the individual child, the family, child-care, and the community as factors in the ultimate school success of children. Her break-out session is *Promoting Parent-Child Interaction* where she will explore techniques for observing and promoting positive parent-child interaction with children age birth to five.

Norman Kunc is a well known disability rights advocate and a modern day storyteller, continuing the long held tradition of using humor and narrative to initiate self-reflection and social change. Born with cerebral palsy, Norman's initial advocacy focused on the educational rights of students with disabilities. More recently he has directed his attention to how schools and communities can utilize the diversity of people to build a sense of belonging.

Norman will present *Inclusive Education: Rediscovering Our Right to Belong* on Thursday evening which is designed to appeal to professionals serving individuals with disabilities at all age levels, family members of individuals with disabilities, and individuals with disabilities. He will show how learning to value and work with a diversity of people is the first step in building a system which fosters a sense of belonging among students and staff.

The title of Norman's keynote presentation on Friday is

*The Right To Be Disabled*. Norman will discuss the importance of placing less emphasis on "fixing" children and the need to focus on their inherent assets and gifts while striving to find methods of welcoming all people into the community.

Norman's break-out session on Friday is *The Other Side Of Therapy* where he will present rationale for focusing on the child's well-being and the quality of life rather than attempting to eradicate the child's disability.

David Koppenhaver will present a 3/4 day session sponsored by KITS on Friday, *Helping Young Children with Disabilities Make Sense of Print*. Dr. Koppenhaver is the Pearson Distinguished Chair in Education at Gustavus Adolphus College where he teaches courses to elementary education majors in instructional technology, inclusive education, and reading methods. He received his Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1991, where he studied under David Yoder and James Cunningham. He now collaborates with those gentlemen, Karen Erickson, and others in a wide variety of research exploring literacy learning and instruction of children with developmental disabilities.

This year, the KDEC Conference break-out sessions are organized within topical strands. These strands are School Readiness (sponsored by the Kansas State Board and Department of Education), Assistive Technology, Severe

*KDEC 2002 continued on page 7*

Disabilities/Autism, Inclusion (Natural Environments/LRE), and Integrated Therapy. The term, topical strands, is used to indicate that each session across the three days of the conference includes at least one presentation on each of the indicated topics. In addition, there are other sessions that are more general in nature or designed for specific audiences such as Early Childhood Coordinators or related services staff.

KDEC has always collaborated with other agencies to keep the cost of attending the conference low and the quality of the presentations high. This year is no exception, and KDEC welcomes a new collaborative professional organization, KS TASH. Collaboration with a variety of agencies and organizations has resulted in break-out sessions ranging from *Dogs, Frogs, and Hedgehogs: A Thematic Approach to Developing and Enhancing Emerging Preschool Skills in Science, Math, and Literacy* to *How to Diagnose and Intervene With Young Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder*. Preconference brochures were mailed in November and early-bird rates will apply until January 11, 2002. Come join us in this valuable learning opportunity (see related article on page 2)!

—submitted by Margy Hornback, 2002 KDEC Conference Chair



## KITS Needs Assessment

We're having some technical difficulties in getting the KITS Needs Assessment online but you can still download a hard copy at [www.kskits.org](http://www.kskits.org) and mail or fax it in. You can also request a hard copy by contacting Robin Bayless at 620-421-6550 ext. 1618, email [rbayless@ku.edu](mailto:rbayless@ku.edu).

We've had several returns so far, but we need more! Feel free to make copies and have all your staff complete them if they haven't already done so! The KITS fax number is 620-421-6550 ext. 1702 or 620-421-3623 and the mailing address is 2601 Gabriel, Parsons, KS 67357. Keep those Needs Assessments rolling in!

## Become a KDEC Member!

The Kansas Division for Early Childhood (KDEC) is currently seeking individuals who are committed to early intervention services and who desire to have diverse professional opportunities as well as be advocates for children with disabilities and their families. As KDEC embarks on a new year we need energetic people to join our organization and volunteer to work on a committee to enhance their professional abilities. By becoming a member of KDEC you align yourself with dedicated persons, have the opportunity to participate in professional development activities, are informed regarding innovations in research, policy, best practices, and current issues, and collaborate and communicate with other organizations and practitioners. Your membership fee includes membership in Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and KDEC. To request more information and an application, please contact Marcia Friesen at [mfriesen@newton.k12.ks.us](mailto:mfriesen@newton.k12.ks.us) or 316-284-6510.

## What is VIISA Training?

VIISA, Vision Impaired In-Service in America, is a model in-service teacher-training program for early intervention/early childhood professionals serving infants and young children (birth-5 years) with blindness and visual impairment and their families. The program is divided into two courses, one focusing on infants and toddlers and the other on preschoolers, and is taught by certified VIISA trainers. The topics covered include child development, vision impairment and its impact on learning, vision assessment, orientation and mobility, cognition, learning for those students with additional disabilities, play, families, communication, and pre-Braille/early literacy skills. Each course consists of two, two-day sessions. Requirements of the course include readings, written assignments, observations and hands-on practicum experiences. All participants are expected to complete the assignments and activities required by the course.

*VIISA Training continued on page 9*

## Letter Learning

**L**earning the names of alphabet letters—like all early learning—is best done in the context of what is meaningful to young children.

Many children first learn the initial letter of their own name, which has a great deal of meaning and importance to them. For the child who loves jello, **J** may be an important letter, while the child who knows that Daddy works at the Texaco station may begin to notice the letter **T**.

Some children learn to read without knowing the names of letters or the sounds associated with them. But research shows that for most children, associating names and sounds with the

alphabet comes before conventional reading.

However, this finding does not mean that letter names should be drilled into young children. There are far more effective and enjoyable ways for children to learn about letters. For instance, children enjoy labeling items that they choose. Sound out the name of the object together to determine which initial letter to use, then cut out big letters from magazines or newspapers and invite the child to tape them on items that she wants labeled.

At home or out together, point out letters and words that are likely to be of special interest to

your child. Try simple activities such as reading logos of favorite foods and stores, identifying street signs, writing grocery lists together, and playing with magnetic letters on the refrigerator door while singing the alphabet song. Remember, children learn through play!

Diffily, D., & Morrison, K. (Eds.) (1996). *Family-friendly communication for early childhood programs*. (p. 61). Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

## Paying it Forward for Kansas Kids

Plans are quickly moving forward on Kansas Children's Advocacy Day 2002, being held in Topeka on Tuesday, February 19, 2002, at the Kansas Expocentre Complex. The theme for this year's conference, *Paying it Forward for Kansas Kids*, is based on a concept introduced in this year's movie hit, *Pay it Forward*. The idea of "pay it forward" is that one individual does something significant to change the lives of three people; those three people then work to significantly change the lives of three more people and, as the concept moves ahead, the cumulative effort has a marked positive change on society.

This theme speaks to the heart of Kansas Children's Advocacy Day. The motivation behind this

conference is that—armed with current information on the issues confronting Kansas' children and families, and with tools, opportunities and motivation to actively work on changing policies and communities on their behalf—we will build an environment that better ensures the health, well-being and success of all Kansas children.

Peter Yarrow of the legendary folk group, Peter, Paul and Mary, along with his daughter, Bethany, will present the keynote address, *Father to Daughter and Beyond: A Legacy of Commitment and Activism*. Peter and Bethany will provide a moving performance of songs and personal anecdotes, reflecting their shared commitment to promoting peace and justice for all. While bridging

their own generation gap, their positive message is designed to inspire both young and old to work together for meaningful change in their communities.

Because of the support of collaborating organizations, businesses and workshop presenters, the cost of the conference—including a pre-event evening reception and lunch—is just \$45. Those who have attended in previous years rate this as an excellent and unique conference opportunity.

If you did not attend last year's conference and would like to receive a conference brochure, please contact Jennifer@kac.org or Kansas Action for Children at 785-232-0550.



## Internet Addresses

Kansas Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (KACCRRRA) <[www.kaccrra.org](http://www.kaccrra.org)>

Who's Who in the Federal Government  
<[www.lib.memphis.edu/gpo/whos3.htm](http://www.lib.memphis.edu/gpo/whos3.htm)>

Connect for Kids: Guidance for Grown-Ups  
<[www.connectforkids.org](http://www.connectforkids.org)>

Oral Conditions in Children with Special Needs: A Guide to Health Care Providers  
<[www.nohic.nidcr.nih.gov/pubs/oral\\_conditions/index.htm](http://www.nohic.nidcr.nih.gov/pubs/oral_conditions/index.htm)>

National Oral Health Information Clearinghouse  
<[www.nohic.nidcr.nih.gov/publinks.html](http://www.nohic.nidcr.nih.gov/publinks.html)>

National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center <[www.mchoralhealth.org](http://www.mchoralhealth.org)>

Webmonkey for Kids [How to teach kids to build web pages] <[hotwired.lycos.com/webmonkey/kids/](http://hotwired.lycos.com/webmonkey/kids/)>

Sony Wonderland [fun activities]  
<[www.sonywonder.com/wonderland/pool/index.html](http://www.sonywonder.com/wonderland/pool/index.html)>

I Spy online <[www.geocities.com/~spanoudi/spy/](http://www.geocities.com/~spanoudi/spy/)>

Sears Portrait Studio [holiday story creations & activities] <[www.searsportrait.com](http://www.searsportrait.com)>



## Kansas Kids Ready For Learning!

[www.readyforlearning.net](http://www.readyforlearning.net)  
or  
[www.parsons.lsi.ukans.edu/ecl](http://www.parsons.lsi.ukans.edu/ecl)

Early and emergent literacy continues to be a hot topic across the nation as research validates the importance of quality early childhood experiences. Recognizing and responding to this important issue, the Kansas State Board of Education (KSBE), in collaboration with the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) and Kansas Inservice Training System (KITS), has developed a new web site.

Subtitled *Links to Early Literacy for Families and Providers*, this site "links" internet users with quality early literacy web sites and initiatives within the state and across the nation. Developed for use by parents and early childhood providers, this web site has been divided into "What We Know", "Activities" and "Special Needs" sections for ease of use.

Please help us spread the word about the Kansas Kids Ready for Learning web site!

—submitted by Tammie Benham, KITS/ECRC

*VIISA Training continued from page 7*

The upcoming VIISA course will focus on preschoolers and will be held on February 8-9 and April 12-13 of 2002 in Overland Park, Kansas. Three hours of graduate credit will be offered from the University of Kansas. To receive credit, a sign-up sheet will be available at the first session on February 8th. Those participants who participated in the infant/toddler course last year will be given first priority for attending the preschool course. The remainder of the applications will be date-stamped and first priority for attending the next course will be given to these applicants according to the order of when their application was received. Upon being selected, you will receive a packet that includes the contact information of your home study mentor, a

copy of the training manual and home study notebook, a set of handouts, a list of assignments (i.e., in class and out of class) and their due dates and the directions to the location of the training. In addition, you will receive a Learning-Style Inventory (LSI) form and a demographic survey to complete.

The cost for each course is \$50.00 (\$100 total) and includes the home study manual, the VIISA training manual, resource materials and breakfast and lunch. Participants will be responsible for housing, mileage, and evening meals along with any other incidentals. For more information contact Karen Maddox at the Kansas State Department of Education, 120 SE 10th Avenue, Topeka, KS 66612, 785-296-4944, [kmaddox@ksde.org](mailto:kmaddox@ksde.org).



## Successful Scissoring



Have you ever wondered why young children have difficulty working with scissors? Managing scissors requires that a child combine fine motor skills—control and coordination of small muscles, especially hands, wrists, and eyes—with an intellectual task.

Closely related to motor development is physical growth and brain development. As the body grows physically and the brain develops, children are able to perform more intricate motor skills.

Most children are eager to cut with scissors. If a child is reluctant, it is probably because she is not ready.

A prerequisite to cutting with scissors is tearing, so we should

allow young children many opportunities to practice tearing paper and materials such as lettuce and clay prior to teaching them how to use scissors.

In introducing kids to scissors, we first discuss safety rules and provide each child with appropriately designed scissors (initially with rounded points). So that we at school and you at home can work together on this skill, here is our approach to showing children how to use scissors.

Show them how to hold the scissors. Have them practice opening and closing the scissors several times before they try to cut paper. Show children how to hold the paper in one hand and the scissors in the other, to open

the scissors and slip the paper between the blades, close the blades, then open them.

Let the children practice snipping small pieces of paper, old wrapping paper and greeting cards, and those catalogs and pieces of junk mail that you are recycling anyway. As the children develop proficiency, let them practice by cutting pictures from magazines, cutting along straight lines, and cutting along curved lines.

Diffily, D., & Morrison, K. (Eds.) (1996). *Family-friendly communication for early childhood programs*. (p. 41). Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.



## To Button, Zip, and Tie



Getting dressed on time in the morning can be a real challenge for many of us, but it is particularly difficult for young children who have to contend with buttons, zippers, and shoelaces when their fine motor skills are still developing.

When families are trying to get ready to leave the house at a certain time, parents will probably need to help young children with the dressing process. Preschool children want to be independent but get easily frustrated when the buttons won't do what they want them to do or the zipper will not cooperate.

Helping kids learn to contend with the logistics of buttoning

buttons, zipping zippers, and tying shoelaces is best done during less stressful times. Concentrate on one skill at a time. Work together and assure children that they will be able to do this with practice. Parents, might want to consider shoes with Velcro fasteners, as well as other clothing items that young children can manage more easily as these skills are developing.

Learning to control hands and fingers according to information received from sight is a coordination skill that will aid children in early attempts of reading and writing.

We adults can provide many different opportunities for children to develop these skills.

Dressing and undressing dolls and dramatic play with clothes that have buttons and zippers are good for practice. Activities such as shaping playdough, stringing beads, and placing pegs into pegboards also enhance the fine motor skills needed for dressing.

With appropriate experiences, children will gradually master all the intricacies of getting dressed and undressed.

Diffily, D., & Morrison, K. (Eds.) (1996). *Family-friendly communication for early childhood programs*. (p. 43). Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.



## New Materials Available for Check-out

Early Childhood Resource Center, 620-421-6550 ext. 1651 or 1-800-362-0390 ext. 1651,  
resourcecenter@ku.edu, web: www.kskits.org/ecselib



- CM-2131 Developing Language For Literacy
- CM-2156 Children Achieving, Best Practices in Early Literacy
- CM-2157 Emerging Literacy: Young Children Learn to Read and Write
- CM-2159 Sound Learning, Songs for Teacher and Parents
- CM-2160 Investigating Science Series for Grades 1-3
- CM-3024 The Explosive Child, 2nd Ed
- CM-3025 Designing Music Environments for Early Childhood
- CM-3026 When "NO" Gets You Nowhere, Teaching Your Toddler and Child Self-Control
- CM-3027 ADHD in the Young Child, Driven to Redirection, A Guide for Parents and Teachers of Young Children with ADHD
- CM-3028 Power Parenting for Children with ADD/ADHD
- CM-3032 Common Sense Parenting of Toddlers and Preschoolers
- CM-3033 Meeting the Challenge, Effective Strategies for Challenging Behaviours in Early Childhood Environments
- CM-4044.2 Ladders to Literacy, A Preschool Activity Book
- CM-4049 Literacy Through Play
- CM-4050 Creative Curriculum for Early Childhood 3rd Ed
- CM-4052 Connecting Content, Teaching, and Learning, A Supplement to The Creative Curriculum for Early Childhood, 3rd Ed
- CM-4053 Young Children and Picture Books, Literature From Infancy to Six
- CM-4055 Oppenheim Toy Portfolio, Baby & Toddler Play Book, 2nd Ed
- CM-5507 Otitis Media in Young Children
- CM-5509 When Your Child Has a Disability, Rev. Ed.
- CM-5510 Otto Learns About His Medicine, A Story about Medication for Children with ADHD, Rev. Ed.
- CM-6554 The Gingerbread Man In Signed English
- CM-7065 Everybody's Different; Understanding and Changing Our Reactions to Disabilities
- CM-7066 Embracing Identities in Early Childhood Education, Diversity and Possibilities
- CM-7068 Sometimes I Drive My Mom Crazy, But I Know She's Crazy About Me, A Self-Esteem Book for ADHD Children
- CM-7072 I'm Deaf and It's Okay
- CM-7075 Our Teacher's in a Wheelchair
- CM-7077 I Can Hear the Sun
- CM-8011 Language Exercises for Auditory Processing-Preschool Edition, (LEAP-P)
- CM-8012 What the Kids Said Today, Using Classroom Conversations to Become a Better Teacher
- CM-8013 Rhymes & Reasons, Literature and Language Play for Phonological Awareness
- CM-8014 Linking Language, Simple Language and Literacy Activities Throughout the Curriculum
- CMV-2020 Reading Is Not A Natural Skill: Teaching Children the Code to Unlock Language LD-LA Tape 3
- CMV-2045 Teaching Reading: Strategies from Successful Classrooms, A Six-Part National Teacher Training Video Series (Manuals to Accompany Tapes)
- CMV-2046 Teaching Peace
- CMV-2047 Fiesta Musical, A Musical Adventure through Latin America for Children, In English and Spanish
- CMV-2048 Joining Hands With Other Lands, Multicultural Songs & Games
- CMV-2049 Children of the World, Multicultural Rhythmic Activities
- CMV-2050 World Playground, A Musical Adventure for Kids
- CMV-2161 Reading Rockets Teleconference, Individual Strategies for Reading Instruction
- CMV-3005.2 More!-2-3 Magic, Encouraging Good Behavior, Independence and Self-Esteem
- CMV-3021 Classroom Interventions for ADHD
- CMV-5020 Cat in the Hat
- CMV-5021 Kid Pix
- CMV-8010 Families with Hard of Hearing Children, What If Your Child Has A Hearing Loss?
- CMV-8011 Families with Deaf Children, Discovering Your Needs & Exploring Your Choices
- PM-2.807 Just Being Kids, Supports and Services for Infants and Toddlers and Their Families in Everyday Routines, Activities, and Places
- PM-2.849 Collective Wisdom, An Anthology of Stories and Best Practices for Educating Students with Severe Disabilities and Deaf-Blindness
- PM-2.851 Picture This: Digital and Instant Photography Activities for Early Childhood Learning
- PM-2.852 Early Childhood Workshops that Work! The Essential Guide to Successful Training and Workshops
- PM-2.855 Resources for Developmentally Appropriate Practice, Recommendations from the Profession
- PM-2.856 Infants and Toddlers in Out-of-Home Care
- PM-2.857 Better IEPs, How to Develop Legally Correct and Educationally Useful Programs, 3rd Ed
- PM-120 The Art of Awareness, How Observation Can Transform Your Teaching
- PM-121 Developmental Screening in Early Childhood, A Guide
- PM-427 Inclusive Preschool Environments, Strategies for Planning
- PM-689 Individual Education Plans: Involved Effective Parents
- PM-690 The Misunderstood Child, Understanding and Coping with Your Child's Learning Disabilities, 3rd Ed
- PMV-2.805 The Classroom Teacher's Guide for Working with ParaEducators (series of video tapes)
- PMV-2.806 Milk Cartons: The Way Back Home; How To Talk With Children About Interpersonal Safety: A Guide for Educators and Parents
- PMV-2.808 Valuing Parents in the IEP Process, Making Decision About What and Where Students Learn
- PMV-218 Asperger Syndrome, Living Outside the Bell Curve

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