

NEWSLETTER

Featuring Teresa A. Cardon, Ph.D., CCC-SLP

Training Series Guest Speaker on February 11, 2011



Social Skills & Autism - Let's Get Real

With the prevalence of Autism on the rise, it is crucial that families and professionals understand one of the key aspects of this complex disorder - social deficits. It is important to not only be able to identify different aspects of social impairments but to understand how these pragmatic issues affect every aspect of an individual's life.

Gresham & Elliot describe social skills as "socially acceptable learned behaviors that enable a person to interact effectively with others and avoid socially unacceptable responses" (Gresham & Elliot, 1984). It is important to recognize that the word "learned" means that social skills can indeed be taught.

Unfortunately, formal diagnostic tools to identify social weaknesses are limited by the structured nature of the "test" environment. Formal testing, however, is an integral component if a child is to receive services.

The key to an effective social cognitive assessment, however, is found in its informal measures. One such informal tool is known as the "reverse interview" (M. Winner, 2002). When you "interview" a child and then ask them to "interview" you, you get a glimpse at how they interact with another person. Guided conversations, with preferred and non-preferred topics, are also helpful when identifying social limitations. Further, a discussion about emotions, facial expressions and discussing the "whys" behind an emotional picture are also very telling pieces of an informal diagnostic battery. And of course, parent input is highly valuable. Finally, a number of observations during different social settings are necessary to accurately

Calendar

Feb. 8, 2011

Webinar Series - Presenter - Katie Thomas - "Creating Social Stories in Powerpoint with Voice" - Online, across Kansas

Feb. 10, 2011

Part C - Presenter: Dr. Teresa Cardon - "Early Intervention & Autism: Family Centered Intervention Strategies" - Wichita, Kansas

Feb. 11, 2011

Training Series - Presenter: Dr. Teresa Cardon - "Social Skills Intervention & Autism - Strategies & Ideas for Real Life!" - ITV across Kansas

Feb 15-16, 2011

Region 7 T-TAP Training - Presenter: Mary Woodworth - Dodge City, Kansas

Feb. 22, 2011

Webinar Series - Presenter - Katie Thomas - "Introduction to Video Modeling" - Online, across Kansas

For more information and registration information on Trainings, please visit:

www.KansasASD.com

& check out the Training Calendar

**CARDON CONTINUED**

get a picture of the child's social interactions throughout the day.

Once a social cognitive impairment has been identified, a therapist needs to determine the best course of remediation. There are a number of social skills programs now available for purchase. In fact, it is the growing number of social skill programs that makes remediation somewhat confusing and disjointed. The strategies behind a comprehensive social skills program should include the following components:

- A structured and systematic "rule" system applied to abstract and unstructured social scenarios
- Personalized stories that address the individual deficits and needs of each child
- Motivating and fun activities that children can "buy" into

- Perspective taking activities
- Visual aids and transition supports
- A detailed look at emotions and empathy to help children interpret the confusion associated with non-verbal interactions
- Opportunities to practice learned skills
- Parent involvement to aid in generalization

The need for effective social skills training has increased as the prevalence in autism has increased. Professionals and families need to be aware of their role in providing social intervention and a comprehensive discussion and understanding of the available strategies is imperative. As interventionists we must ensure that each child has the social skills required to interact effectively with others in order to develop positive relationships throughout their lives.

REMINDER:

Summer Institute: An Introduction to Structured Teaching Training, June 13-17, 2011; Hutchinson KS - Please submit your applications before the Deadline!!

The Deadline for Applications is Feb. 11, 2011

See your SPED Director for applications.

If you have questions, please contact Jane Goetz, jgoetz2@kumc.edu

KISN Training Series:

If you have any ideas or suggestions for Speakers/Topics for next year's KISN Training Series, we'd LOVE to hear your ideas!!

Please submit your ideas to Jane Goetz:

jgoetz2@kumc.edu



Check out this article on using iPad/iPod for Communication with individuals with ASD:

<http://www.theautismnews.com/2011/01/19/mallick-the-autism-enigma---beauty-and-silence/>

Technology

Do you have a favorite iPad or iPod Touch APP that you are using educationally? Please share with us and we'll add it to our new link on our webpage!

Please submit your app to Katie Thomas, kthomas3@kumc.edu

