MONTESSORI PARENTING

BY

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INTRODUCTION

- Montessori parenting requires a basic knowledge of the Montessori philosophy and method
- Knowing about the stages in child development

CHILD DEVELOPMENT IN THE TYPICAL CHILD *YEAR 1*

- Totally dependent
- Absorbs sensory information
- Early communication skills (crying, cooing)
- Begins to understand some words
- Babbling/ echoing sounds
- Says first word(s)
- Holds up head

CHILD DEVELOPMENT *YEAR 1* CONTINUED

- Rolls over
- Sits
- Crawls
- Walks
- Self-centered – at this age there is no inhibition control; the baby wants what he wants

CHILD DEVELOPMENT *YEAR 2*

- Some independence (can walk, talk)
- Still a sensory learner
- Understands and says more words
- Walking more steadily
- Places blocks
- Turns pages
- Scribbles
- Self-centered – inhibition control not yet developed

CHILD DEVELOPMENT *YEAR 3*

- More independent
- Sensory information now understood with words (big/little, hot/cold
- Runs
- Jumps
- Kicks/throws ball
- Fine motor skills improved
- More controlled drawing
- Parallel play with some interaction
- Beginning of consideration for others
- Inhibition control beginning

CHILD DEVELOPMENT *AGES 3-6*

- More independent each year
- Child now a conscious learner
- Greater mobility and coordination
- Improved fine motor skills
- Eye-hand / eye-foot coordination improves
- Ability to concentrate increases
- Vocabulary increases each year (2,500 – 5,000 words by age 5)
- Pre-writing / writing
- Cooperative play
- Able to learn manners
- Inhibition control increases each year

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MILESTONES OF DEVELOPMENT IN INFANCY AND TODDLERHOOD				
Age	Physical	Cognitive	Language	Emotional/Social
Birth – 6 months	Rapid height and weight gain. Reflexes decline. Sleep organized into a day/night schedule. Holds head up, rolls over, and reaches for objects. Can be classically and operantly conditioned. Habituates to unchanging stimuli. Hearing well developed. Depth and pattern perception emerge and improve.	Repeats chance behaviors leading to pleasurable and interesting results. Displays object permanence in habituation—dishabituation task. Recognition memory for people, places, and objects improves. Able to categorize simple stimuli.	Cooing and babbling emerge. Establishes joint attention with caregiver, who labels objects and events.	Expresses basic emotions (happiness, interest, surprise, fear, anger, sadness, disgust). Social smile and laughter emerge. Matches adults' emotional expressions. Displays unique temperamental traits.
7-12 months	Sits alone, crawls, and walks. Shows refined pincer grasp. Displays greater sensitivity to speech sounds of own language. Depth and pattern perception improve further.	Combines, sensorimotor schemes. Engages in intentional or goal-directed behavior. Finds object hidden in one place. Capable of deferred imitation. Recall memory for people, places, and objects improve. Groups stimuli into wider range of categories.	Babbling expands to include sounds of spoken languages. Uses preverbal gestures (showing, pointing) to communicate.	Anger and fear increase in frequency and intensity. Stranger anxiety and separation anxiety appear. Uses caregiver as a secure base for exploration. Engages in social referencing. "Clearcut" attachment to caregiver appears.
13-18 months	Height and weight gain rapid, but not as great as in first year. Walking better coordinated. Scribbles with pencil. Builds tower of 2-3 cubes.	Experiments with objects in a trial-and-error fashion. Finds object hidden in more than one place. Actively categorizes objects during play.	Actively joins in turn-taking games, such as pat-a-cake and peekaboo. Says first words. Makes errors of underextension and overextension.	Actively joins in play with siblings. Recognizes images of self in mirrors and on videotape. Shows signs of empathy. Capable of compliance.
19-24 months	Jumps, runs, and climbs. Manipulates objects with good coordination. Builds tower of 4-5 cubes.	Solves sensorimotor problems suddenly. Finds object moved while out of sight. Active categorization of objects during play improves.	Vocabulary increases to 200 words. Combines two words, consistent grammar not yet present.	Complex emotions (shame and embarrassment) emerge. Acquires a vocabulary of emotional terms. Starts to use language to assist with emotional self regulation. Begins to tolerate caregiver absences more easily. Self-recognition well-established. Uses own name or personal pronoun to label image of self. Categorizes the self and others on the basis of ages and sex. Shows sex-typed toy choices. Self-control appears.

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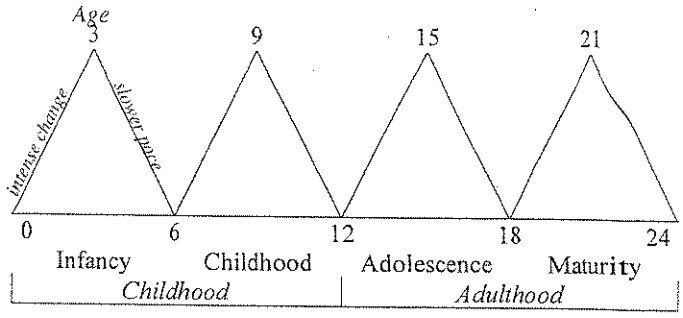
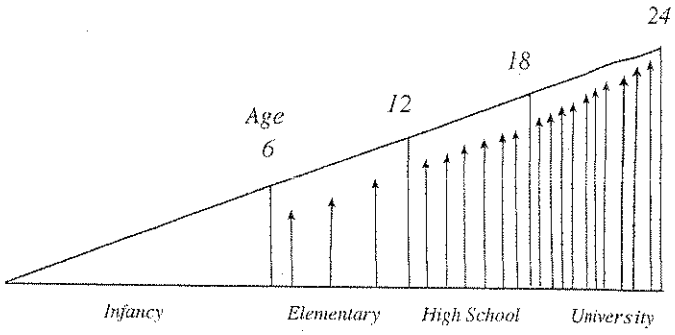
MILESTONES OF DEVELOPMENT IN MIDDLE CHILDHOOD				
Age	Physical	Cognitive	Language	Emotional/Social
6-8 years	Slow gains in height and weight continue until adolescent growth spurt. Gradual replacement of primary teeth by permanent teeth throughout middle childhood. Writing becomes smaller and more legible. Letter reversals decline. Organized games with rules and rough and tumble play become common.	Thought becomes more logical, as shown by the ability to pass Piagetian conservation, class inclusion, and seriation problems. Understanding of spatial concepts and ability to integrate distance, time, and speed improve. Attention becomes more focused, adaptable, and planful. Memory strategies of rehearsal and organization appear. Awareness of importance of memory strategies and psychological factors (attention, motivation) in task performance improves.	Vocabulary continues to increase rapidly throughout childhood. Word definitions are concrete, referring to functions and appearance. Language awareness improves over middle childhood.	Self-esteem differentiates become hierarchically organized, and declines to a more realistic level. Distinguishes ability, effort, and luck in attributions for success and failure. Understands that access to different information often causes people to have different perspectives. Becomes more responsible and independent. Distributive justice reasoning changes from equality to merit to benevolence. Pride and guilt are integrated with personal responsibility.
9-11 years	Adolescent growth spurt begins 2 years earlier for girls than boys. Gross motor skills of running, jumping, throwing, catching, kicking, batting, and dribbling are executed more quickly and with better coordination. Reaction time improves contributing to motor skill development. Depth cues appear in drawings.	Logical thought remains tied to concrete situations until end of middle childhood. Piagetian tasks continue to be mastered in a step-by-step fashion. Memory strategies of rehearsal and organization become more effective. Memory strategy of elaboration appears. Long-term knowledge base grows larger and becomes better organized. Self-regulation of cognitive performance improves.	Word definitions emphasize synonyms and categorical relations. Understanding of complex grammatical forms improves. Grasps double meanings of words, as reflected in comprehension of metaphors and humor. Adapts messages to the needs of listeners in complex communicative situations. Conversational strategies become more refined.	Self-concept includes personality traits and social comparisons. Self-esteem tends to rise. Recognizes that individuals can experience more than one emotion at a time. Emotional self-regulation includes cognitive strategies. Can "step in another's shoes" and view the self from that person's perspective. Later, can view the relationship between self and other from the perspective of a third, impartial party. Appreciates the linkage between moral rules and social conventions. Peer groups emerge. Friendships are defined by mutual trust. Academic subjects and personality traits become sex stereotyped, but children (especially girls) view the capacities of males and females more flexibly. Sibling rivalry tends to increase.

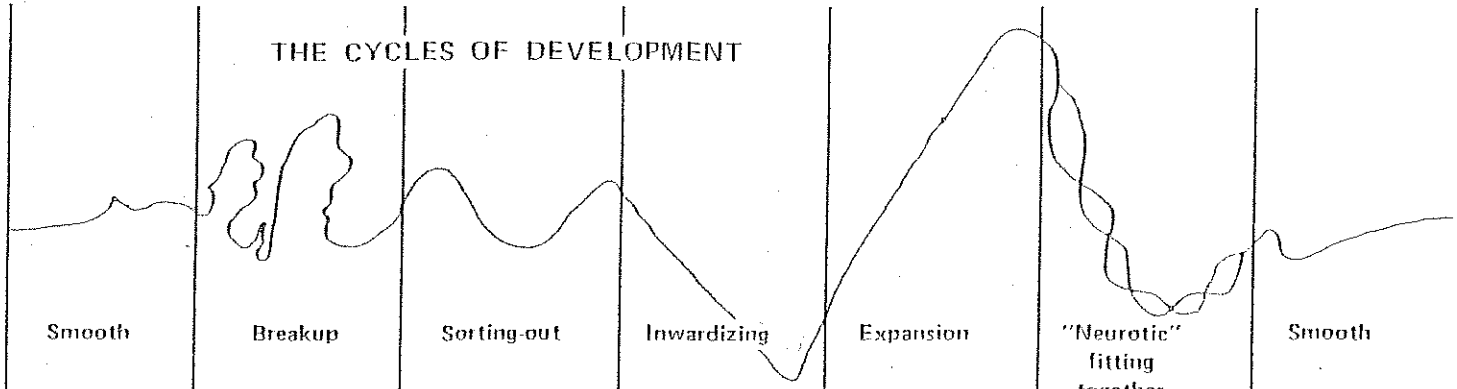


"Montessori education is geared to peaks and valleys of human formation." Dr. Montessori suggested we "divide education into planes and each of these should correspond to the phase the developing individual goes through." They are referred to as the "Four Planes of Development."



"Regular education is based on assumption of linear development (arrows represent increasing pressure). Traditional schools are divided into nursery, primary, secondary, and university. "It's underlying assumption is that intelligence inceases with age."

THE CYCLES OF DEVELOPMENT



CYCLE NO.	PHASE OF CYCLE	Smooth A	Breakup B	Sorting-out C	Inwardizing D	Expansion E	"Neurotic" fitting together F	Smooth A
I		4 weeks	8-12 weeks	16 weeks	20 weeks	Birth	1-2 weeks	4 weeks
II		40 weeks	44-48 weeks	52-56 weeks	15 months	24-28 weeks	32 weeks	40 weeks
III		2 years	2½ years	3 years	3½ years	18 months	21 months	2 years
IV		5 years	5½ years	6-6½ years	7 years	4 years	4½ years	5 years
V		10 years	11 years	12 years	13 years	8 years	9 years	10 years
VI		16 years				14 years	15 years	16 years
VII								
		• *relative calm* • *meet demands to satisfaction* • *consolidated* • *mesh with environment*	• *oppositional* • *at odds with selves & environment* • *boiling and bubbling* • *ritualistic*	• *temporary quieting* • *different tasks, places, & situations have different related behavior* • *associate result with a specific problem or task* • *in balance, establish relationships*	• *want stability, order & little change* • *fearful of the unexpected* • *depends on what child can control* • *fit world within selves*	• *constant motion and noise, vigorous* • *move with abandonment, so lost in filling newly discovered space children lose selves* • *movement & change key to direction*	• *intricate meshing of forces* • *separate fact from fantasy* • *"Bothered" age because children have a glimmer of what's possible but cannot always achieve.*	

TO CREATE A MONTESSORI HOME THE PARENTS SHOULD KNOW HOW TO:

- Give and receive **respect**
- **Observe** their child
- Set up a **prepared environment**
- **Listen** with complete focus on the child
- Build a reasonable **schedule** for the child
- Present the **family rules**
- Foster **independence**

RESPECT

- Cardinal principle of Montessori philosophy
- Model
- Teach
- Require respect for themselves
- Activities in the learning environment

RESPECT IN THE HOME

- Most important way to form positive relationships is by giving and receiving respect.
- How for an infant?
- Treat them with gentleness, kindness and patience
- Care for them
- Talk to them

RESPECT FOR TODDLERS

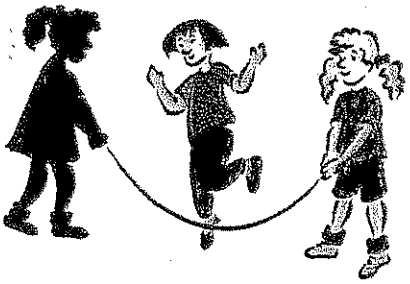
- Reveals more of their personalities
- 18 months to three years
- Sensitive period for learning language and order
- Need even more patience and gentleness during this period

THROUGHOUT THE CHILD'S LIFE

- Respect does not mean license to do whatever he/she wants.
- It means listening , caring and developing a spirit of cooperation between the parent and the child

OBSERVATION

- Montessori advises, "Follow the child"
- Observe the child to determine how to help the child in his/her development
- Needs routines and predictability
- Boundaries to keep them safe
- Child interested in process of learning, not the **result**



Observations

	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Low
Motor Skills				
Walking				
Judging Space				
Running				
Jumping				
Hopping				
Skipping				
Language				
Vocabulary				
Use of Sentences				
Conversation				
Describing an Event				
Speech				
Articulation				
Fluency				
Voice				
Attention				
To spoken information				
To games				
To books				
To TV				
Social Skills				
Cooperation with adults				
Cooperation with other children				
Consideration				
Kindness				
Service				

PREPARED ENVIRONMENT

- Organization is basic
- Teacher analyzes her classroom carefully to determine the most effective arrangement for the age of the children
- Parents need to give depth of thought to a prepared home environment which will work best for the child and the family

PREPARED ENVIRONMENT CONT'D

- Gives children the building blocks of organization
- Plan ahead
- Set priorities
- Following through is taught from a young age

Analysis of Home Space

Living Room

- chairs appropriate for child's size
- book holder with children's books

Family Room

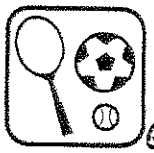
- comfortable furniture appropriate to family sizes
- games in cabinet
- toys in cabinet
- books in basket

Kitchen

- cabinet for child's toys
- table & chairs - child size
- glasses, dishes appropriate for size and age of child

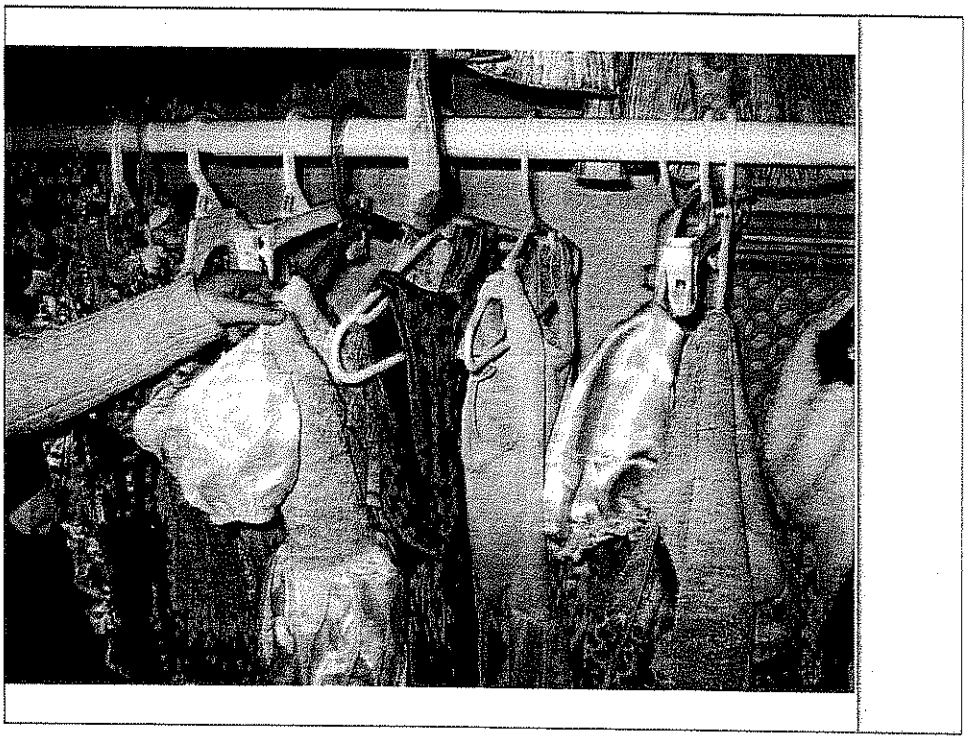
Bedroom

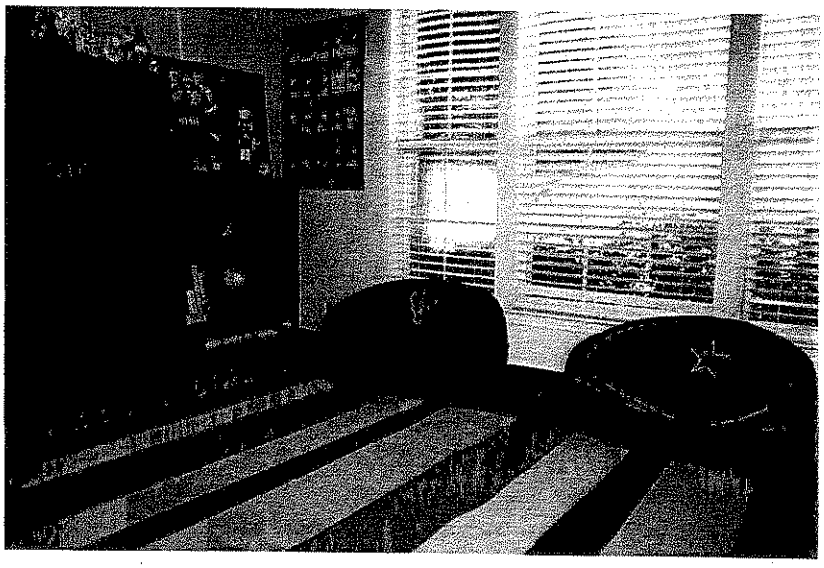
- low rack for hanging child size hangers
- holder for shoes
- limited number of toys on shelves
- book shelf
- music



Garage

- area for child's equipment labeled with name
- hooks, holders to organize equipment



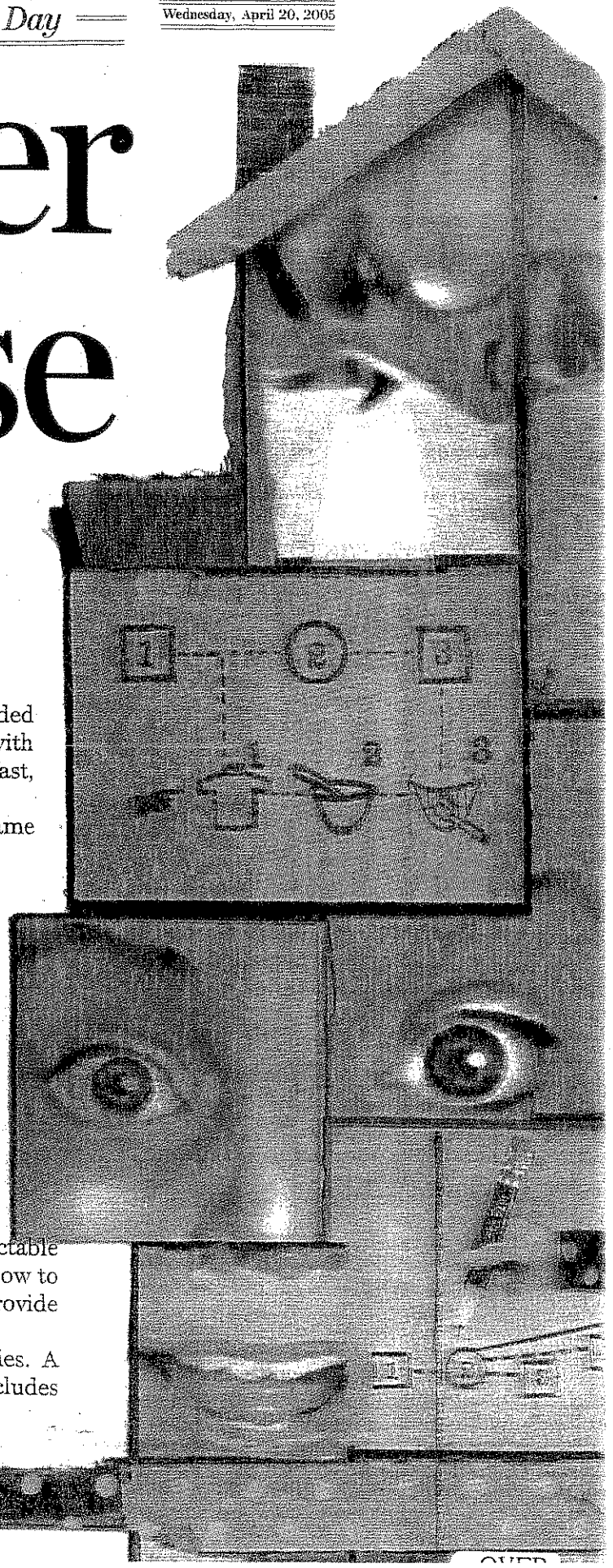


TEXAS LIVING
Family & Kids Day
DallasNews.com
Wednesday, April 20, 2005

Disorder in the House

Give kids tools early to instill an organized approach for life

By MARK MACESICH
Special Contributor



When Cindy Garrison's son was 4 and attended pre-kindergarten, he struggled each day with the basics — dressing, eating breakfast, brushing his teeth.

"I was reminding him about the same things every day until I finally asked him what I could do to help," she says.

"He said, 'Mom, draw me a picture.' So I drew him a picture of a shirt to remind him to get dressed, a bowl of cereal for breakfast and a toothbrush with toothpaste to remind him to brush his teeth." And just like that, he was on his way to being a more organized child. Ms. Garrison was on her way to being a not-so-harried mom.

"Kids are most comfortable when they have predictable patterns in their lives; they need to know what to expect," says Ms. Garrison, who develops programs to teach, advise and support parents on childhood development issues for Practical Parent Education, a Plano-based nonprofit.

"Children come out of the womb with the need for predictable patterns in their lives, but they don't come out knowing how to accomplish that," she says. "As parents, it's up to us to provide them [with the tools] they need."

As kids get older, the need for organization intensifies. A weekly calendar of the whole family's schedule, which includes practices, concerts, appointments, projects and activities, is essential, says Chris Bedenbaugh, who coordinates Southern Methodist University's Summer Academic Enhancement Workshops for school-age children.

OVER

ıdvice from the experts

atch them early: The younger ıds are when they learn the asics, the better. "Older children ill can learn new organizing ills," says Ms. Garrison, whose ıildren are now 8 and 11. But eaching later is harder. It'll take ınger, and it won't seem as atural."

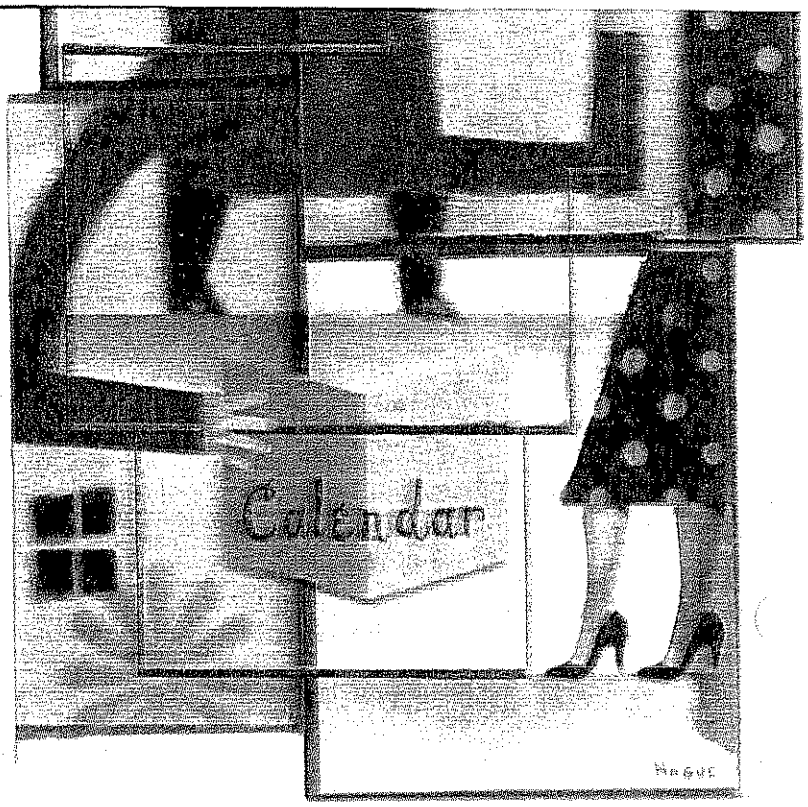
ıon't expect instant results: You have to repeat the behavior ı make it your own. It takes 25 ays to create a habit," says Ms. edenbaugh.

ıne size won't fit all: Children f different ages and stages of evelopment need different trategies. "Visuals can help get he message across to some kids, vho may think in pictures rather han words," says Ms. Bedenbaugh, who also teaches lyslexic children. Checklists, ılanners and calendars should ıelp with older kids.

Parents must hold kids accountable: Reward successes and, when necessary, withhold privileges for failure to meet reasonable expectations. "As your child begins to demonstrate behaviors that show pre-planning, consistency and responsibility, praise them," says Mary Sigmann, a professional organizer on the Web site Adoption.com.

Help them to help themselves: Experts say brainstorming possible solutions that allow kids as much control as possible is the best way to get and keep them on track.

Set the example: "If parents don't set an example," says Ms. Garrison, "they probably won't have organized kids."



MICHAEL HOGUE/Staff Illustration

Young children

Provide a simple plan: "Small children can become overwhelmed very easily," says Ms. Bedenbaugh, who, like other experts, recommends assigning specific tasks with precise, easy-to-follow instructions. Don't tell children to "clean their room," says Ms. Sigmann; instead, tell them exactly what to pick up and what to do with it.

Use visual reminders: If children can't read, draw separate pictures that represent the task broken down into steps. Laminate the paper so children can use a marker to cross off steps as they progress.

Downsize to the right size: "Inaccessibility is a primary reason things don't get put away," Ms. Sigmann says. "Lower closet rods and shelves so children can reach them. Hooks hung low are easier than hangers for bulky coats and jackets. Make sure furniture is the right height and size. Select a dresser low enough so the child can reach the top."

Catch the collecting bug: Scholastic.com recommends that you encourage your child to create a collection. "It can even be something free, such as rocks or canceled stamps, that he can sort, classify and arrange." This teaches organizing skills.

Tips for older kids and resources, 2E

Elementary age

Sorting things out: Tasks that involve planning, list-making and sorting or ordering reinforce organizing skills. Some of those include grocery shopping, putting away dishes, helping with laundry or rearranging a closet.

Cooking up some order: Measuring, following directions, sorting ingredients and managing time are important elements of organization, according to Scholastic.com.

Predictable and flexible: When the kids get home from school, says Ms. Bedenbaugh, they should know where to put backpacks, that they need to change clothes, get a snack, do homework and complete chores before playing. Ms. Garrison agrees on the need for a routine but says parents can be flexible "for special situations." Altering the routine can confuse kids, so explain why you're deviating, she says.

Homework central: Set a specific time and place for homework, Ms. Bedenbaugh says. Use a "homework box" or a set of see-through drawers with all necessary supplies to save valuable time.

Avoid rush hour: Practical Parent's Ms. Garrison told of a single mom at her wits' end because of the mad dash to get out the door each morning with her children, ages 11 and 7. After she solicited ideas from her kids — the 11-year-old suggested they get things ready the night before — mornings were calmer.

Teach your kids how to be organized

Continued from Page 1E

Older kids

Contain yourself: "When my daughter reorganized her room, I gave her lots of baskets and suggested how to organize her stuff. She had another way, a different way, but it worked," says Ms. Garrison. "Sometimes kids just need to have some control over their lives."

It's in the bag: "My son has a bag for each sport in which he participates — football, baseball, basketball, wrestling, soccer and tae kwon do," says Ms. Bedenbaugh, explaining that they came up with a list to make sure he has everything he needs. Uniforms for each sport hang in his closet.

Fail safe: When traveling, the kids pick out, organize and pack their clothing, says Ms. Bedenbaugh, who then offers to go through a checklist. "My daughter, who is naturally organized, always takes advantage of the ck." But, on a recent trip to Florida, "my son knew that he had everything. Imagine his surprise when he was getting dressed but could not locate his shorts!" She says, "Sometimes, you have to let them fail so they learn it's important to check themselves."

Organized search: Describing her children's effort to find her a vehicle to purchase, Ms. Bedenbaugh says: "They searched the Internet, compared prices, looked in the newspaper, listened to radio ads and went on numerous test drives. They actually found a fabulous deal and then helped me negotiate the price." These skills — collecting, comparing, organizing and analyzing information — ultimately help foster organizing skills.

Helpful Web sites

Practical Parent Education: Piano-based nonprofit organization provides information to help families function more effectively. www.practicalparent.org/Piano.htm

SMU "Get Smart" program: Information on skills-enhancement programs aimed at helping kids cope with academics. www.smu.edu/continuing_education/youth/academicskills/index.asp

Organizer Mary Sigmann: "Getting Organized Is a Breeze" Web site offers detailed advice, other resources. www.organizer-coach.com

www.adoption.com: Parenting advice, activities, tools and resources, especially for adoptive families.

Scholastic media: Advice on organizational skills and other issues involving school and family. www.scholastic.com/schoolage/grade3/homework/qc_5ways organized.htm: Five ways to help your school-age child stay organized; www.scholastic.com/schoolage/middleschool/homework/ms_toolsorg.htm: Organization tools for middle-schoolers.

Family Matters: Advice on organizing and other family and school matters: www.parenting-child-development.com/organization-skills.html

Others: Web sites with articles and other resources focused on getting organized. www.organized-mom.com; www.organized-living.com/articles/index.html

LISTENING

- Stop what they are doing to really listen
- Part of consideration for others is teaching a child not to interrupt
- Children before age three are impulsive beings
- Challenge to teach them to wait
- Between two-and-a-half and three this skill should be a goal

SCHEDULES

- Not rigid but flexible
- Comfortable routine and predictability
- A sense of security
- Overbooking - results in frazzled parents and meltdowns for the child

Schedules

Serve Us

Morning	
	Rise & Shine
8:35 a.m.	School Bell Rings
Afternoon	
LS 3:10/ UE 3:35 p.m.	School Dismissal
Evening & Bedtime	
8:00 p.m.	Sweet Dreams

FAMILY RULES

- Successful parents provide love through giving praise and consistent discipline
- Rules of living together should be taught and demonstrated
- Talking with an inside softer voice, walking inside/running outside
- Consideration for others are a few of the guidelines every family need with young children

FOSTERING INDEPENDENCE

- Montessori said don't do anything for a child he/she can do for him/herself
- Self-concept was improved by each skill he learned
- A parent's job from the day a child is born is to help the child become an independent person

CONCLUSION

As the child passes through the preschool years and kindergarten, the foundation begun in the **most important first three years** can be enhanced. An attitude of respect, a home prepared for a family schedule that serves **all** is the basis for Montessori parenting.

MONTESSORI PARENTING

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THE SHELTON SCHOOL

The Horizon

A Newsletter for Alumni, Family and Friends of The Shelton School

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From the Director's Desk

Discipline—Developing Self-Control and Self-Discipline
Adapted from Summer 2003 publication, Montessori Life

Children are born with no control over their bodies or their behavior. They are helpless and need someone to nurture and protect them. As they develop they gain control of their bodies, lifting their heads, gaining strength in the trunk and then sitting, gaining control of the arms and legs, usually crawling, pulling up and then walking. In about one year they have gained control of their bodies, and language is developing. They can understand what is said to them, and they are beginning to use words. Now that they can control more of their world, it is not necessary to wait for someone to move them from one spot to another. They can even tell their caregiver what they want or need.

No one, however, expects a child of one year to control his behavior. The parent continues to see that the child has enough food and rest to feel content. Most babies respond to positive experiences with the growth of emotional well-being. When the child is hungry, tired, over-stimulated or frustrated, it is the caregiver who works out a solution.

Parents do not expect children at age one or two to always be calm and cooperative. They know that a child of this age can go on sensory overload and melt down.

Between two and three years of age there is a period in which the brain reorganizes itself. Until now it has had no inhibition control. If a young child wants something, he wants it now. He does not understand waiting. As the brain develops at this period, the ability to inhibit actions is growing. By age three, most children become increasingly cooperative. The maturing neurological system allows the child to control behavior.

Self-discipline is learned by most children through imitation of those around them and with gentle but firm boundaries provided by caregivers. If parents are consistent in their expectations and use rewards and removal of privileges, most children find the world reasonable. They cooperate with the caregiver.

Some children do not show this same easy development. They often have motor delays or disorders, speech and language delays or disorders, and behaviors that are not within normal limits for their age. These behaviors include attention issues, lack of inhibition control, continued temper fits, confrontational and oppositional behaviors, and/or obsessive and compulsive behaviors. The neurological functioning that allows the child to "put the stops on" is lacking. Since it has not developed normally, it must be taught if the child is to be successful in group situations. Discipline should always be done with love and support for the child. The same techniques for teaching self-control to any child apply also to the child with control issues, but they take longer and require more consistency.

Discipline should always be done with love and support for the child.

Continued on page 22

Joyce S. Pickering
Executive Director, Hum. D.

From the Director's Desk Continued

Continued from cover

SIX COMPONENTS TO TEACHING SELF-CONTROL:

I. Structure

There must be a structure appropriate to the age-level of the child or adolescent, with freedoms and limits clearly defined.

II. Imitation

Parents must model the manners and behavior they want.

III. Direct Teaching

Show the child or adolescent how to do what you want. Demonstrate shaking hands when meeting someone, making room for someone to pass, asking someone's pardon. Teach the child how to treat a guest (what activities or food does the guest like). Role play how to handle a tough situation (how to say no to an R-rated movie, drinking, driving too fast).

IV. Work

Children should help with duties around the home and yard as soon as possible, even if the family has domestic help. Children gain a feeling of competence through work. A preschool child can help pack a lunch. A third-grader should be able to do this without help. A child or adolescent can keep his room straight. This teaches organization and time management. A child who learns to make a bed or use the washing machine gains confidence from these basic skills. There is a satisfaction at all ages from simple tasks done well.

V. Independence

The parent never does anything for a child that the child can do for himself. This fosters independence, which enhances a child's self-concept. Allow children to settle their own differences if they can, and help them if they need guidance.

VI. Correction Is Specific

If a child leaves his bicycle in the driveway, he loses the use of the bike for 24 hours. Then he can try again to remember he is responsible for his bike. If a teenager comes in after curfew, he loses the privilege of going to the next event. He has another chance to be responsible on the subsequent event.

TECHNIQUES OF DISCIPLINE:

Isolation

Isolation is particularly effective in curbing attention-getting behavior (tantrums, whining, yelling) or non-social behavior (fighting, hitting).

Steps to follow:

A. Tell the child what you are doing and why. "Johnny, do not hit others. Let's sit in this chair and get control." Use a specific quiet chair or quiet place.

B. Isolation should take place immediately following the misbehavior for a period of time sufficient to gain control. "Come rejoin us when you can talk without whining." If the child cannot gauge this or bounces out of his chair immediately, take him back to his chair and explain again that he must stay there until he is in control. Sit with the child until this point is reached. If a child remains in the chair longer than is necessary, go to him and ask "Are you ready to join us now?" Discuss the out-of-control behavior and role-play the desired behavior.

C. Never isolate a child in a dark or frightening place.

D. When you decide to isolate a child or adolescent, be consistent.

Repetitive Behavior

Certain behaviors can be corrected through repetition, e.g. hanging up one's coat rather than dropping it on the floor.

Steps to follow:

A. Show the child the correct behavior you expect.

B. Tell him why he will repeat the behavior (because proper behavior is necessary to the family's well-being and his behavior will not be accepted).

C. Tell him how long he must repeat the behavior. "Johnny, you will hang your coat up, drop it on the floor, and hang it up again for one minute. I will tell you when to stop. (Set a timer or check your watch as you sit with him.) Begin."

D. After one minute, ask him, "Johnny, why did I have you hang up your coat repeatedly? What should you do next time?"

E. Stay with him. He must go through the actions to *feel* the behavior you want. Be consistent and stick to the time limit.
F. Do not speak in an angry or emotional voice.
G. Thank the child for his cooperation.

Removal of Privileges
This is effective if the privilege removed is one meaningful to the child. If the child doesn't care whether he has a particular privilege, removal of the privilege will be ineffective. Find something he really cares about. Be realistic. Don't set time periods that are too long, and to which you will not adhere. Remove a privilege for a day—let the child try again tomorrow.

Behavior Modification
Certain behaviors, often annoying bad habits, can be corrected using a behavior modification chart. This chart requires the child to mark his paper each time the inappropriate behavior takes place.

Steps to follow:
A. Work on only one behavior at a time. Choose the most annoying of several.
B. Discuss the chart with your child. Write the behavior you want to change on the chart. Elicit his cooperation by working together to change the behavior.
C. Each time your child behaves improperly, such as interrupting you while you're talking to others, give him a signal that tells him he must mark his chart. You may see an initial increase in the undesired behavior. Be patient and be consistent with the chart for at least a two-week period. If behavior is still erratic, combine other techniques, such as repetitive behavior, along with the chart.

Reminders
A. After the disciplinary action has taken place, forget it and return to life as usual.
B. If the improper behavior appears again, repeat the correction for a longer period of time (two minutes instead of one) and follow the same steps. The correction does not need to be more severe, just consistent.
C. Carry through a disciplinary action in a calm manner. Act rationally. It's the behavior you dislike, not the child.
D. Make the correction fit the crime. If a child uses a tool improperly, he should lose the privilege of using it. Tantrums should be accompanied by isolation only for the duration of the tantrum. Staying in isolation for an hour for spilling a glass of milk is excessive.
E. Be consistent. Mean what you say. If you don't carry through with your initial demands, the steps taken will be ineffective.
F. Instead of saying, "No, don't touch," say, "This is mine. You may play with this, it is yours."
G. Honest direct communication between a parent and a child is vital. Ask the child why he is behaving in this manner. Listen carefully. It may not be a reasonable explanation to you, but it will show you the child's logic.

Let him tell you how he feels; tell him how you feel.

Sometimes our behavior is causing his breakdown. We may become aware of a behavior we need to shift.

In any home, a child with these challenges will take more of the parent's time. (For the average pre-school child, normalization is achieved in several weeks or months. For the child with behavior difficulties, the parents should expect that it will take directed effort over a longer period of time, perhaps all the years between ages three and six.) Even if a parent did not know how to direct teach in the preschool years, it is still possible to change behaviors in a child after age six, 10 or 12, or even in the high school years, but is much harder. If a parent accepts this fact, much of the frustration and impatience will fall away. Each child is different. The parent cannot just give up on the more difficult child. A parent's job is always to help the child attain self-control and self-discipline.

A Newsletter for Alumni, Families and Friends of Shelton School

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The Horizon

Volume 16, Number 2

Shelton School and Evaluation Center

From the Director's Desk

Joyce S. Pickering, Hum. D.

What Can Parents Do?

There is a story about a couple who planned a trip to Italy. They studied the geography, history, language and customs, and when completely prepared, they embarked on their trip. Somehow their travel agent confused their trip with that of another client and the couple landed in Holland. Needless to say, they were shocked and disappointed. They were counting on their treasured dream of Italy.

As they realized there was nothing they could do but adjust, they slowly began to love and appreciate many things about Holland: the beauty of the countryside, the lovely flowers and the friendly, practical people. Holland did not have the flamboyance of Italy and the couple grieved somewhat about the differences. The longer they stayed, the more they enjoyed their unique experience in this place called Holland.

This allegory exemplifies the feelings and experiences of many parents when they discover that their child has a learning difference due to Dyslexia or a related disorder. As parents absorb the diagnosis and try to project what that means for their child's education and future, they need the guidance of professionals in the field.

Having worked with students with language and learning disorders for over 40 years and having two children and grandchildren with learning differences (LD), I would offer the following guides.

Be Informed

Ignorance is not bliss. The more you know about learning differences and how they are remediated, the more you can help your child. Read, go to lectures and conferences to find out the accurate information about what treatments are research-based and what programs are questionable.

To understand learning differences, it is important to know that they are caused by difficulties in processing spoken and/or written communication. The brain is normal but different in its anatomy and functioning. The intellect is normal and, for some, above average or superior. Even though intelligent, the student is handicapped by the reduced speed and frequent errors that occur in processing visual and auditory information and integrating that information in the process of reading, writing, spelling, and, in some cases, math. Many of these learning differences are genetic and are seen in multiple family generations. Worrying about the exact cause is non-productive. The important thing is to learn what to do to help the child as early as possible and to minimize the difficulties through well-prescribed specific instruction.

For over 70 years specific instruction for dyslexic individuals has been developed and used to lessen their difficulties. These programs are called Multisensory Structured Language (MSL) approaches.

Joyce S. Pickering, Hum. D.

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There are a number of different approaches, but all have the same content and principles of instruction. For a list of these approaches, please contact my office. It must be clearly understood by the parent that these approaches are therapeutic; they do not cure the student, but help him to become functional in the academic areas of his processing difficulty.

For example, an unremediated individual with Dyslexia may have a second- or third-grade reading level in high school, while a remediated individual will be close to grade level performance, at grade level or, in some cases, above grade level. Most dyslexic individuals can attain grade level performance in reading with remediation, but most are low average in spelling throughout life. In today's world, this poses less of a challenge, in that technology has provided the computer and the software for spell check and grammar check.

In addition to the MSL approaches for language skills, there are specific instructional programs for math. Other areas in which LD students may need specific instruction are organization and study skills, social skills and motor skills.

In my experience, about 70% of the students with the specific learning difference Dyslexia, also have Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder. ADHD can be seen in three categories: Inattentive, Hyperactive, and Combined types. If a student cannot sustain his attention for a typical amount of time for his age, it of course affects learning. If the student is not focused as a lesson is presented, it is not stored in memory. It cannot be retrieved later to be used.

These programs designed for LD individuals caused by processing disorders do not cure, but do effectively improve academic skills.

If, as a parent, you become informed about the characteristics of learning differences, the challenges presented by these differences and the specific instructional approaches and strategies to improve a student's academic skills, you will find, I believe that you feel more confident in helping your child. Knowledge does set us free from our needless worries. A learning difference is a challenge, but it is not the worst problem in the world.

Be Realistic

Helping a student with a learning difference is not a fast process. It takes years of hard work on the part of the student and the teacher or therapist to attain average to above-average performance in academic subjects.

If a student is dyslexic his greatest challenges are reading, decoding (breaking words apart and blending sounds together), spelling and written expression (writing sentences, paragraphs, essays, reports).

When a student is instructed using an MSL approach, reading decoding usually improves first. As decoding becomes more automatic, most students show improved reading rate and read more smoothly. Spelling improves slowly and will always be a challenge. Written expression requires a combination of language skills. Levels of writing ability from sentences to compositions take several years to improve.

Help Your Child Develop Patience And Perseverance

During the process of remediation the parent can assist the most by helping the student learn to persevere and be patient with himself. The teacher or therapist will work on this also. It takes a lot of practice to read more accurately and rapidly. This is a difficult skill, which most take for granted, because most individuals can do it with relative ease. Not so for the individual with Dyslexia. It is a slow, laborious and unsatisfying task, and he would rather avoid it. To improve takes disciplined practice. The parent and teacher must keep the student encouraged. Praise for effort — *good try, good job, you are doing better, I'm here to help, we'll get there* are words they need to hear.

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If a student has a related disorder, you may see average or above-average reading decoding and speed, but difficulty in reading comprehension and math, some weaknesses in spelling and difficulty in organizing thoughts for a written assignment.

Seek Knowledgeable Professionals/ Be Aware of Quick Fixes

If it seems too good to be true, it probably is not true. Helping the LD student is not fast. There are a whole group of difficulties that must be addressed individually and assimilated in order for a student to have average or above language skills of reading, writing and spelling. Some programs work on just one aspect of the total profile of the learning difference. They may help partially, but they are not comprehensive therapeutic approaches. Research has not proven that visual or motor training result in improvement of the individual's reading, writing and spelling. Many LD students do have motor coordination deficits and motor programs are helpful to remediate these weaknesses. It is not clear that there is coordination deficits and motor programs are helpful to remediate these weaknesses. It is not clear that there is carry over from motor training to academic subjects. Remediation must be specific. If there is a motor problem, do motor training; if there is a written language problem, teach reading, writing and spelling with a program written specifically for written language disorders. The most accepted programs for written language disorders are the MSL approaches. If the student has a math disorder, the instruction should be multisensory and given by a person trained to teach LD students.

One of the best things a parent can do is to ask the remedial program directors for a list of other parents they can talk to about their child's experience and improvement. Also ask for any research or evidence that is available on the efficacy of the remediation.

Collaborate With the Student's School

Most schools will work with the parents. Some are difficult. If at all possible try to communicate calmly and rationally with the school in getting services for your child. If you are in a public or private school you will find different levels of knowledge from school to school. If you cannot get services because your child does not qualify, I advise not to waste your child's time while you try to improve that situation. Try to find services within your community that begin to help your child while you negotiate with the school.

If your child is in an LD school the communication needs to be completely open between you and the staff. Don't try to hide information or play games with the staff. They are knowledgeable and will figure out that they are not getting the full truth from a parent. You have to become a team for your child. Work with the professionals. They have seen many children with similar difficulties. They will do their best to help you and your child face and improve his challenges.

Empathize, Don't Sympathize

Tell your child you understand that some things are really difficult for him or her. Reassure him that you will find help for him and that you will support him. Understand his feelings of frustration and help him learn to deal with them. We all feel frustrated at times. We have to learn to control our feelings, calm ourselves, take a break and start over. An LD child will not succeed if he lets anger or anxiety get the best of him. Teachers and parents have to help with these skills. Never tell your child that he is unable to learn certain things and, therefore, you will not expect him to try. Don't tell his teachers not to expect too much either. Let an experienced professional guide you in what you can expect and what is realistic for the student to achieve. In short, understand how your child feels, but do not feel sorry for him and try to protect him from the world. The goal is to find help for your child and to help your child cope.

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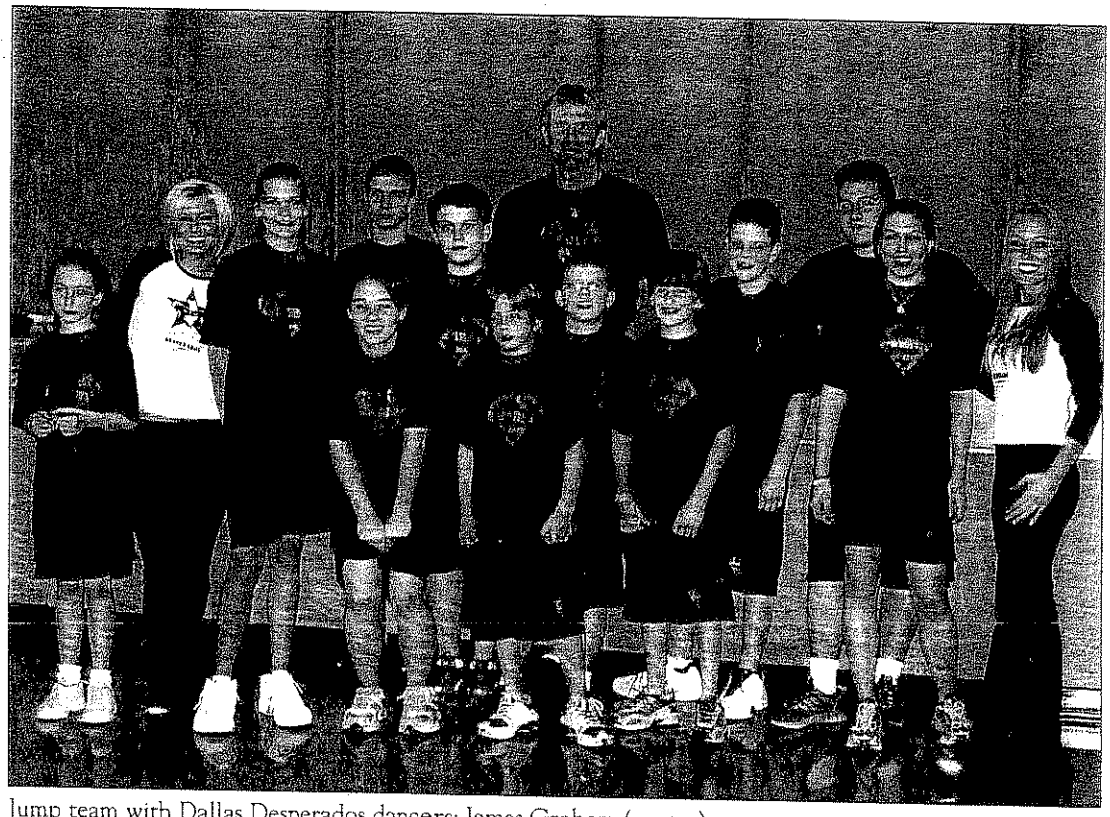
Spotlight on P.E. / Motor Skills

James Graham, Director of P.E. / Motor Skills

Sixth Annual Brian Price Jump-a-thon Scores Big

Shelton sponsored the Sixth Annual Brian Price Jump-a-thon February 14. Students in grades Early Childhood through twelve jumped rope all day to benefit the Sudden Arrhythmia Death Syndrome (SADS) Foundation.

Impressed with Shelton's previous fundraising efforts, national SADS representative Katherine Timothy of Utah was on hand to cheer students. Top jumper for the day was fifth-grader Nikki Rees, with 10,500 jumps. Fifth-grader Jake Greenberg was the leader in a subsequent jump-off. Proceeds, which are still coming in, are expected to exceed last year's net of $18,000.



Jump team with Dallas Desperados dancers; James Graham (center)

From the Director's Desk Continued

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Help Your Child to Become Independent and His Own Advocate

It is easy to fall into the trap of taking care of everything for your child when he has learning difficulties. Don't let it happen to you or your child. If you make him dependent on you to function, you rob him of the chance to be independent. Make it a rule: Don't do anything for him he can do for himself. Giving him duties and tasks he can do for himself helps him to feel more competent. Competence enhances self-concept. If you do everything for the child he feels incompetent. He may grow to like the helpless role.

Listen to your child, help him with the best plan to handle a situation, even role-play it with him. Then send him, backed with your confidence, to handle the situation for himself the best that he can. With practice, he will feel empowered, instead of like a victim.

From the day of our child's birth, our role as a parent is to help him become a functioning independent adult. To the extent that we are able to help our children become self-sufficient we can achieve a greater success as a parent.

Signs a Child May be Dyslexic

Pre-School:

May talk later than most children
May have difficulty with rhyming
May have difficulty pronouncing words
May have poor auditory memory for nursery rhymes and chants
May be slow to add new vocabulary words
May be unable to recall the right word
May have trouble learning numbers, days of the week, colors, shapes, and how to spell and write his or her name

Kindergarten through third grade:

Fails to understand that words come apart; for example that snowman can be pulled apart into 'snow' and man'
Has difficulty learning the letter names and their corresponding sounds
Has difficulty reading single words in isolation
Has difficulty spelling phonetically
Reads choppily and with difficulty
Relies on context to recognize a word

Fourth grade through high school:

Has a history of reading and spelling difficulities
Avoids reading aloud
Reads most materials slowly; oral reading is labored, not fluent
Avoids reading for pleasure
May have an inadequate vocabulary

-Information from International Dyslexia Association

JOYCE S. PICKERING, SLP/CCC, CALT/QI, HUM. D.
RESUME

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

B.S.	Speech Pathology, Louisiana State University, 1959
M.A.	Curriculum and Instruction, Virginia Polytechnical Institute, 1978
Hum.D.	Honorary Doctorate of Humanities, Dallas Baptist University, 2002
Post Masters	Montessori Preschool Training, Meca-Seton and George Williams College, Chicago, Illinois 1979
	Graduate Courses Early Childhood Education, Learning Disabilities, Experimental Psychology

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2010 to Present	Executive Director Emeritus, Shelton School & Evaluation Center
1990 to 2010	Executive Director, Shelton School & Evaluation Center 15720 Hillcrest Road, Dallas, TX 75248 972/774-1772; fax: 972/991-3977; email: jpickering@shelton.org
2010	Governor's Interim Committee on Dyslexia & Related Disorders
2007 to Present	Clinical Assistant Professor, University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center
2005 to Present	Steering Committee member - Center for Advanced ADHD Research, Treatment & Education, a collaborative research study between Shelton School, University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center and the University of Texas at Dallas Brain Health Center.
2000 to Present	Adjunct Instructor, Dallas Baptist University, Dallas, Texas
1989-1990	Director of Affiliated Programs, The dePaul Schools, Louisville, KT
1986-1989	Language, Speech and Hearing Consulting Clinician, Sarasota School System, Sarasota, FL
1984-1985	Director - Curriculum and Instruction K-12, American School of Mexico City, Mexico City, Mexico
1975-1984	Dean Early Childhood Education & Primary School, American Elementary and Secondary School, Sao Paulo, Brazil
1971-1975	Director - Reading Study Foundation
1970-1971	Director - Early Childhood Center
1967-1970	Director - Perceptual Development Center
1964-1967	Teacher - Deaf and Aphasic Children
1960-1964	Speech Pathologist

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Academic Language Therapy Association (ALTA) / *Certified Academic Language Therapist/Qualified Instructor* (Board of Directors 2007 – present)
- American Montessori Society, (Board of Directors, 2010
- American Speech-Language Hearing Association
- Council of Exceptional Children
- International Dyslexia Association (Board of Directors 1996 – 2006)
- International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council (IMSLEC) (President 1997 – 2005; Board of Directors 1996 – present)
- The Alliance for Accreditation & Certification of Structured Language, Inc. (Board of Directors 2003 – 2008; Board President 2006 - 2007)
- 32° Masonic Learning Centers for Children, Professional Advisory Committee