



REACH OUT

Research Exploring Alternatives for Children
Project REACH Newsletter for Families



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Inside this issue:

A Note from Drs. Lee Kern & Frank Gresham	1
Helpful Hints for Parents	2
Helpful Re- sources for Families	2
Hagar Visits Lehigh Univer- sity	3
Meet the Staff	3
Books for Kids and Teens	3
Bask to School Word Search	4

A Note from the Project Directors: Drs. Lee Kern and Frank Gresham

Dr. Lee Kern and Dr. Frank Gresham are the principal investigators of Project Reach. Dr. Kern is a Professor of Special Education at Lehigh University, and Dr. Gresham is a Professor of Psychology at Louisiana State University. Both have extensive experience working with students with emotional and behavioral disorders.

Welcome to our first edition of *REACH Out!* We started this newsletter in an attempt to keep families of students enrolled in Project REACH up-to-date on some of the exciting things going on with the project. Many of the ideas presented here come from the families and students participating in our research.

We will soon be completing the third year of our five year project aimed at studying effective interventions for students who have been identified as having the most intensive social, emotional and behavioral needs. There are 106 students and their families participating in the project from Pennsylvania and California. Students are enrolled in 15 different school districts and range in age from 5 to 16 years. So far, we have presented findings and information from the project at nearly 50 local, state, and national conferences and in national journals with many more presentations this year. Most recently, we presented information about critical classroom variables and student behavior and techniques for improving classrooms for students with emotional and behavioral disorders at the National Association of School Psychologists Annual Convention in Anaheim, California.

As you know, Project REACH is truly a one-of-a-kind project and we would not be so productive if it wasn't for the help of the students and their families who participate in the project. We have learned a great deal from the families who have already given up some of their valuable time and invited us into their homes and schools. We appreciate your commitment to the project and look forward to working with you for the rest of the project!

» » Thank You » »

Helpful Hints for Parents

POSITIVE STATEMENTS

Praising your child is an easy and natural way to interact positively with your child and help promote appropriate behavior. It is important to let children know when they are behaving the way that they should. Praise helps increase motivation and improves self-esteem and autonomy.

- Give praise for specific behaviors.
- Use clear and specific language.
- Be honest.
- Use praise often.

Examples:

“Thanks for doing the dishes.”

“I really like the way you hung up your coat and put your backpack away when you came home from school!”

“Good job helping your sister with her work.”

“Great job finishing your dinner!”



AVOIDING THE HOMEWORK BATTLE

Almost every parent has had to fight with his/her child to do homework at one point in time. Now that school has started up again, you are probably expecting the “homework battle.” Here are some tips to help you manage.

- Have a structured homework routine including:
 - a quiet, well lit work space that is free of distractions
 - a specific homework time.
- Communicate with the teacher in order to determine your child’s homework, expectations, and progress.
- Keep other activities off-limits.
- Establish rules and provide feedback.
- Provide lots of praise.
- Build in choices.
- Provide help in a caring and supportive way.
- Provide a short homework break.

Helpful Resources for Families

Parent Education Network

Phone: 1-800-522-5827 V/TTY

or 1-800-441-5028 (Spanish)

Website: <http://www.parentednet.org/>

PEN is Pennsylvania's statewide Parent Training and Information Center. It is a statewide alliance for parents of children with a range of disabilities. It provides knowledge and skills to parents through parent training projects that promote mutual respect between educators and parents. The website offers free publications and links to legal information.

California PARENT Center

Phone: 1-877-9PARENT

or 1-877--972-7368

Website: <http://parent.sdsu.edu>

The CA PARENT Center is a statewide Parental Information and Resource Center based in San Diego, CA. It is a project of the June Burnett Institute for Children Youth and Families, administered by San Diego State University Foundation. Sign up to receive a monthly newsletter with information regarding parent resources, parent conferences, and involvement in schools.

Assistant Secretary Hagar Visits Lehigh University

In July, John Hagar, assistant secretary of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, visited Project REACH and the College of Education at Lehigh University in order to learn about some of the cutting edge research the university conducts. Mr. Jim Button of the Office of Policy and Planning and Dr. Linda Rhen, the director of the Bureau of Special Education for the Pennsylvania Department of Education, joined Hagar on his visit.

Mr. Hagar's visit gave the Project REACH staff the opportunity to discuss some of the critical issues facing the schools and families involved in Project REACH. Hagar met with Dr. Lee Kern, co-principal investigator of the project, and other Lehigh University professors. Graduate students working for the project had the opportunity to meet with Mr. Hagar and discuss their research activities and its implications on public policy at the state and federal level.

Natalie Sokol, the Pennsylvania project coordinator of Project REACH, stated, "Mr. Hagar's visit was an excellent opportunity for us to inform influential people at the federal level about the new approaches we have learned from the students and their families and teachers involved in the project. Hopefully we can continue to have a large-scale impact on special education services for children with disabilities."

Meet Our Staff

We love to meet new families and wanted to take this opportunity to tell you a little about ourselves.

Co-Principal Investigators

-Dr. Lee Kern is Iacocca Professor of Special Education at Lehigh University. Her favorite book is The Poisonwood Bible by Barbara Kingsolver.

-Dr. Frank Gresham is a Professor in the Department of Psychology at Louisiana State University. His favorite book for kids is Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak.

Project Coordinators

-Ramón Barreras is Project Coordinator at the University of California – Riverside. He is currently completing his Ph.D. in Education with an emphasis in school psychology. His favorite books are Animal Farm by George Orwell and Oh, the Places You'll Go! by Dr. Seuss.

-Nathan Clemens is Project Coordinator at Lehigh University and a consultant. He is a doctoral student in the School Psychology program. His favorite books are The Russia House by John LeCarre and Frog and Toad are Friends by Arnold Lobel.

-Charlayne Hayling is the Data Coordinator of Project Reach. She is a doctoral student in the Counseling Psychology program at Lehigh University. Her favorite book is Tar Beach by Faith Ringgold.

-Natalie Sokol is the Project Coordinator at Lehigh University. She is a doctoral candidate in Special Education at Lehigh University. Her favorite books are The Hat by Jan Brett and Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen.

Consultants-Lehigh University:

-Jaime Benson is a doctoral student in the School Psychology program. Her favorite books are Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire by J.K. Rowling and Fortunate Son by Lewis B. Puller, Jr.

-Jodie Chertok-Ackerman is a student in the Counseling Psychology program. Her favorite books are The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein and Free to Be...You and Me by Marlo Thomas.

-Anuja Divatia is a doctoral student in the School Psychology program. Her favorite book is Life of Pi by Yann Martel.

-Talida State is a doctoral student in the Special Education program. Her favorite books are Harold and the Purple Crayon by Crockett Johnson and The Little Prince by Antoine de Saint Exupery.

-Lisa Winders is a doctoral student in the School Psychology program. Her favorite books are The Poisonwood Bible by Barbara Kingsolver and Never Change by Elizabeth Berg.

Consultants-University of California-Riverside:

-Clay Cook is a doctoral student in the School Psychology program. His favorite books are Al Capone Does My Shirts by Gennifer Choldenko and Where the Red Fern Grows by Wilson Rawls.

-Taryn Harp is a doctoral student in the School Psychology program. Her favorite children books are from the The Great Brain series by John Fitzgerald.

-Natasha Medley is a doctoral student in the School Psychology program. Her favorite books are Little Women by Lousia May Alcott, Invisible Man by Ralph Ellison, and Love You Forever by Robert N. Munsch and Sheila McGraw.

-Kristy Rutherford is a doctoral student in the School Psychology program. She likes the Chronicles of Narnia Series, specifically The Final Battle and The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe by C.S. Lewis.

-Sage Thornton is a doctoral student in the School Psychology program. His favorite book is The Rainbow Fish by Marcus Pfister.

Books for Kids and Teens

- Learning to Slow Down and Pay Attention: A Book for Kids About ADD - A guidebook for kids to learn to deal with some of the challenges of ADD at home, in school, and with friends.
- Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day - A children's book about when a day goes unexpectedly wrong.
- Proud of Our Feelings - A book for very young children that helps them identify and describe different emotions.





If you have items you would like to contribute to the next newsletter feel free to send them to Project REACH at:

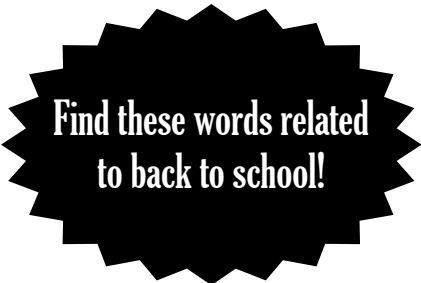
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Back to School Word Search

c e n e l t p r e y n e y s l c g h t i
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a r i c h n c w n c s e l m h e y f e u



FRIENDS	WRITING	PAINT
ART	LAUGHING	LUNCH
RECESS	MATH	PENCIL
SPELLING	READING	PAPER