

SUMMER 2006
Volume 2

Learning Disabilities Association of Tennessee

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Keep your child hot!**
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Calendar of Events



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Association of Tennessee**
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Summer's HERE

Summer vacation! Children and teachers look forward to this time as a chance to rest and recoup from the academic rigor of the school year. Later bedtimes and lazy days seem just the ticket as the days warm up and the swimming pool beckons. Teachers know however, that when students return to school in the fall it often takes as long as four to six weeks to regain the level of academic knowledge and skills acquired prior to summer break. Tilley, Cox, and Staybrook (1986) found that typically developing students regressed by about 4%. While students with mild disabilities showed approximately the same rate of regression over an extended break, students with moderate to severe disabilities regressed at a faster rate and had more difficulty regaining lost skills. Spelling and math skills seemed to suffer more than reading according to the research. To avoid a difficult reentry into the academic environment in the fall, students should continue to learn and grow during the summer months.

Many daily activities offer opportunities for maintaining academic skills as well as providing fun and relaxation. For example, a vegetable garden in the backyard or in containers on a balcony provides many opportunities for observation. Let your child take pictures of the plants and record in a journal the growth per week, watering schedule, and time from the first flower to harvest. Much of this information could be charted and comparisons made between different types of plants – vital math skills. Cooking is also a great educational experience. Children can find recipes in cook books and magazines, plan menus, and make lists of items needed from the grocery store. Working from a budget, children can plan and purchase needed items. With parental assistance most school age children can read simple recipes, measure ingredients, and complete simple cooking procedures. Cake mixes are a great place to start. The ingredients are shown as pictures as well as in a written format. The instructions are simple and easy to follow.

Trips to the library provide many activities to enhance learning. According to kidsource.com activities such as read alouds, storytelling, fingerplays, rhymes, and songs are often on the calendar as well as puppet shows, and arts and crafts

activities. Children should choose books in which they are interested. Many children with reading disabilities enjoy books on tape. Libraries often offer reading programs with incentives for children who read a certain number of books. To encourage this, parents may want to establish a drop everything and read (DEAR) time each day at home. As children see parents reading (newspapers, magazines, books, etc) they come to learn that reading is an important and valued activity. Take books and writing materials with you whenever you leave home. This gives your child fun activities to entertain and occupy him while traveling and going to the doctor's office and on other errands.

One parent suggests this activity for non-readers. Have the learner dictate a story, event, letter, poem, etc. The child may provide the illustrations for his/her book. Each day the reader reads the dictated writings back to you. Because the material is meaningful and relevant to the reader, valuable skills are gained. Since the reader comprehends the material, he/she can focus on the process of reading.

Some other activity ideas are:

1. Play dominoes – great family game for all ages that teaches counting and multiples of 5
2. Let children spend time sorting and counting the spare change that collects each day. If they want to spend some of the money, let them figure out how much will be left.
3. Play hopscotch.
4. Write letters to family members and friends.
5. When you travel throughout the community, point out business signs such as FED EX, Wal-Mart, or Burger King. Discuss the words and/or letters and sounds with your child.
6. Label items in your home using 3x5 cards. Have the child read them to you.
7. Take a walk around your neighborhood. Discuss how neighborhoods are like and how they are different.

8. If possible, go to museums. Children also enjoy collecting and categorizing items such as sea shells, rocks, leaves, etc. and creating their own displays.

9. Keep a thermometer outside and let the children take a reading everyday at the same time. Chart the daily temperature. Determine the average daily temperature each week and at the end of the month. Use a map and look up the temperature of cities around the world. Which ones are hotter? Where are they located?

10. When reading, discuss new words. Stop and ask about the pictures and about what is happening in the story. Read from a variety of books, including fairy tales, song books, poems, and informational books.

11. Buy inexpensive notebooks and let each child decorate the cover. Each day have them write down three things that happened or one thing that they enjoyed.

12. FamilyFun.com suggests finding ways to make hobbies educational. Children who enjoy sports could read about the sport, track the statistics of their favorite players, or write fan letters to them.

Whatever activities you choose have a safe and happy summer.

Colleges with Programs for Learning Disabled Students

Almost all colleges and universities provide some level of services and/or accommodations for learning disabled students, as mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The colleges and universities listed on the website <http://www.college-scholarships.com/contact.html> go a step further...they offer programs, some quite comprehensive, designed to support students with learning disabilities. By clicking on the names of the colleges and universities, you will be taken to the pages of their websites which detail their learning disabilities programs and, in most cases, list the names of and contact information for, staff able to answer your questions.

Resources for Parents

Schwab Learning is dedicated to helping kids with learning difficulties be successful in school and life. They develop and deliver resources that provide parents of kids with learning difficulties, and kids themselves, practical information, emotional support, and trustworthy guidance.

www.Schwablearning.org is the parent's guide to helping kids with learning disabilities. It can help you identify the problem, suggest effective parenting strategies, connect with other parents, and locate resources. Currently a booklet entitled *25 Fun Ways to Encourage Reading* is available to download. It has lots of exciting and education games and activities that will increase reading skills and comprehension for children in grades KK-5. The companion website www.SparkTop.org is a created for kids ages 8-12 with learning difficulties including learning disabilities (LD) and Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Highlights from the 2006 LDA Conference in Jacksonville, FL

At the 2006 LDA Conference in Jacksonville, one of the knowledgeable presenters was Dr. Maryanne Wolf from the Center for Reading and Language Research at Tufts University in Massachusetts. She discussed reading in a scientific perspective in "A New View of the Brain: Evaluation, Development, and Dyslexia."

She stated that there is no reading center in the brain, but it is a network of connected circuits. Sometimes a failure or delay in the developmental systems, or connectedness, or the ability to reach automatic rates of processing cause reading problems. Failure to learn to read is failure in the existing brain circuits. Dr. Wolf called this, "Processes that didn't Bolt!"

Several assessments were mentioned to evaluate reading that are now normed tests. The

RAN Test - Rapid Automized naming Test - is a good predictor of reading success. The RAS Test - Rapid alternating Stimulus Test is used to evaluate children's attention and executive processing, and is predictive of reading fluency.

Several processes need to be stressed to improve reading fluency: Phonological, morphology, orthographics, visual, semantics, and syntax. Dr. Wolf discussed a computer program from Tufts called "Speed Wizard Game" that is used daily to improve word recognition. More information can be obtained about Dr. Wolf's research at her web site at <http://www.asc.tufts.edu/crlr>.



Want to Join LDA of America

The **Learning Disabilities Association of America** believes that every person with learning disabilities can succeed in school, at work, in relationships, and within the community — when provided the right opportunities.

At the national, state and local levels, LDA provides cutting edge information on learning disabilities, practical solutions, and a comprehensive network of resources.

LDA provides support to people with learning disabilities, their families, teachers and other professionals.

Benefits of Membership:

Support through local groups and workshops
Affiliation with one of LDA's local affiliates (over 200 in 43 states)

Advocacy through assistance, training and information

Information via a toll-free call-in line

Resources through a national LD Resource Library/Bookstore

Research Updates covering the latest research in the field and much more. To join, contact the LDA office local affiliate or visit the website at www.ldanatl.org.

The "FIRM"

Family Informational Resource Meetings

Please join us for our first meeting:

July 27th, 2006

6:30-8:30 p.m.

North Rash Hall

Christ United Methodist Church

4488 Poplar Avenue, Memphis

Our focus at this meeting will be **Community Resources:** agencies and programs beneficial for families living with the issues of disabilities.

Sometimes, we just need a little help!

Please come and join as we share with each other!

Speakers will discuss programs and topics, including:

Mid South Arc's Disability Awareness Kit, UCP's various programs, Special Mom's, Ryan's Hope, HOPEbuilders, the Art House programs, Sibshops and Respite Care

The STEP program will make an announcement about their upcoming September conference.

Child care will **not** be provided at these meetings. Please be sure to sign-in, so you will be kept informed of our upcoming meetings, scheduled for

October 26th, 2006;

January 25th and April 26th, 2007.

Sponsors for the FIRM are

The Harwood Center, UT Boling Center for Developmental Disabilities, the Down Syndrome Association of the Mid South, Special Mom's, Memphis Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Support Network, Baptist Pediatric Rehab, Someone to Lean On Support Group, (TIPS) Tennessee Infant Parent Services, the Memphis Respite Voucher Program, Mid South ARC, Special Kids and Families, Inc., United Cerebral Palsy of the Mid South and (STEP) Support and Training for Exceptional Parents

Upcoming Events

Lighting the Way Nursing Conference, August 24th, Holiday Inn University of Memphis. For registration information contact R. Roberts at 901-448-3127. Continuing Education Credits for Nurses and CaseManagers is pending.

Support and Training for Exceptional Parents Conference September 23rd, 2006, Wyndam Garden Hotel, downtown Memphis. Contact STEP at 1-800-280-STEP

Beyond Access Inclusion Conference 2006 November 15, 2006, Cook Convention Center, downtown Memphis. For more information contact the RISE office at 901-678-4932.

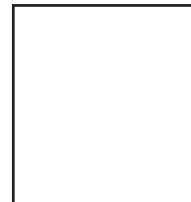
For more trainings in your area log on to the TN Disability Training Network Calendar at <http://kc.vanderbilt.edu/tnpathfinder/calendar/>

You can also search online for services and professionals at these websites.

Tennessee Disability Pathfinder – www.familypathfinder.org
West Tennessee Community Services Network www.wtcsn.org
Memphis Shelby County LINC services 901-415-2700.



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The Learning Disabilities Association of Tennessee has a mission to provide information concerning awareness, advocacy, parent information, and community education to maximize the quality of life for individuals and families affected by Learning Disabilities and related disorders in Memphis, Shelby County, and West Tennessee.