



scraps and materials for texture. When this is completed, the teacher should cut out two giant fish from the artwork. Tape them in the dramatic play area during your fish theme week.

**Modifications:** If you have a child with visual impairments in your classroom, you may need to modify the activity by providing hand-over-hand assistance with the gluing and painting process and attaching foam curlers on paintbrushes to help with grasping.

If you have a child with a social delay you may need to assist and model for the child how to start and maintain a communication cycle with his or her peers. In addition, limits may have to be set on sharing paint and additional art materials with his or her peers.

## Featured Activity

### Rainbow Fish Mural

**Materials:** Butcher paper, paint, paintbrushes, colored tissue paper, additional art materials, scissors, tape.

**Procedure:** Cover the art table with a piece of butcher paper. Allow the children to paint the paper using various colors. When the paper has dried, allow the children to glue on paper

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To subscribe or to submit materials (pictures, articles, etc.) for consideration, contact Shannon Haley-Mize at (601) 606-9227, 1-888-671-0051, or [shannon.haley@usm.edu](mailto:shannon.haley@usm.edu).

[www.usm.edu/ids/ProjectPrepare.htm](http://www.usm.edu/ids/ProjectPrepare.htm)



## Save these dates...

June 19 – 23, 2004

NAEYC Conference in Baltimore, Md. For more information, visit [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org).

July 16, 2004

Join Project PREPARE for Conversations about Infants and Toddlers with Special Needs. For more information, contact Susan Phillips at (601) 606-9226.

August 17, 2004

Annual Child Development Conference sponsored by Paving the Way Coahoma Community College. For more information, contact Stella Young at (662) 624-2211.

# POSSIBILITIES

## Early Childhood Inclusion

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Above: Participants at the Hattiesburg Inclusion Institute experience what it may be like to have a fine motor delay.

## PREPARE Essentials

Project PREPARE Inclusion Institutes for 2004 are underway. The PREPARE staff has traveled to Hattiesburg, Madison, and Grenada for the first part of the series to explore recommended practices, learn about inclusion, and gain knowledge of signs of developmental delays. Participants have stepped in the shoes of children with special needs by participating in activities that show what it might be like to have a vision, speech, gross motor, or fine motor impairment.

The PREPARE staff will be on the road again for our second series of Inclusion Institutes. Child care providers will hear suggestions for working with families from a parent of a child with special needs; learn how to adapt the classroom environment to better include children with special needs; and gain awareness of resources and services in Mississippi.

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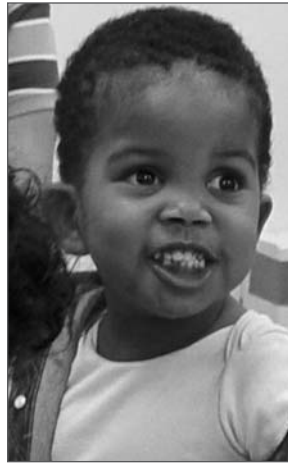
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## A Parent's Perspective: Cameron's Story

Cameron is two years old and attends the Families First Children's Center in Hattiesburg. He was diagnosed with double outlet right ventricle when he was four days old. He spent the first four months of his life at Children's Hospital in New Orleans. Once Cameron was able to come home, I had to carefully attend to him. In May 2002, he had another open-heart surgery. His lengthy hospitalizations have delayed many of Cameron's developmental domains.



to Cameron's special needs, many day cares did not want to be responsible for a child who had a tube in his stomach and required many daily medications. Cameron began attending Thames Elementary School on Tuesdays and Thursdays, where he received early intervention. We finally heard about an inclusive child care center, Families First Children Center.

Cameron is able to attend school with his same-age peers and receive physical and occupational therapy. Cameron is my bundle of joy. He loves to play with his friends and paint at Families First. But he

When I decided to look for a child care facility that could attend

especially loves to smile and blow kisses. (Submitted by Cameron's mom)

## Resource Room

The Toy Library and Technology Learning Center (TLC) located in Long Beach is a great resource to help programs include children with special needs. TLC is a non-profit, community based program located at The University of Southern Mississippi Gulf Coast campus. The center dedicates itself to enhancing education,

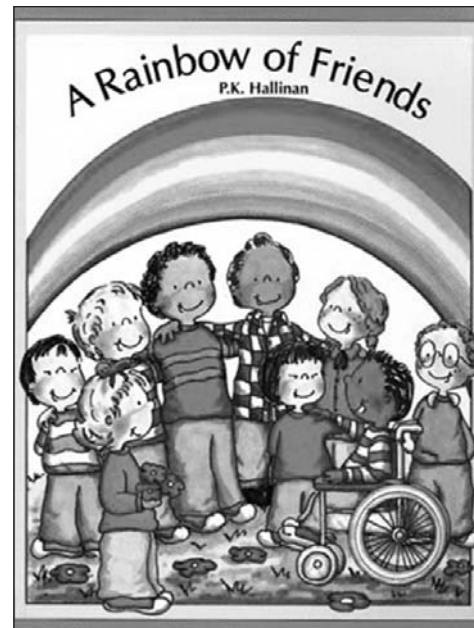
independence, and quality of life for persons with disabilities. Personnel provide specialized training and loan assistive technology and recreation equipment.

The TLC has adapted toys operated by switches to help children with special needs. In addition, TLC has augmentative communication devices that allow people who are unable to communicate to "speak" through voice output. For recreational fun, TLC loans beach wheelchairs, adapted tennis equipment, swimming aids, and much more. TLC uses tools of technology to take disability to ability!

For more information, contact TLC personnel at (228) 867-2636 or visit [www.usm.edu/tlc](http://www.usm.edu/tlc).



Above: Lots of bubbles are created by touching the switch



## Book Spotlight

*A Rainbow of Friends* by P.K. Hallinan is a colorful children's book celebrating diversity. The illustrations in the book are vibrant and rich. Children represented in the book are of diverse races and some have special needs. It is a great story of friendship and acceptance, told through an upbeat rhyme.

**"A rainbow of friends is a dream we can share, where everyone's treated with kindness and care."**

*A Rainbow of Friends* could be incorporated in your toddler and preschool classes. The book will remind the children in your class to celebrate their differences because that is what makes each of them special. This unique tale will be a great addition to your classroom literacy area.

## Getting Started: Curriculum Modification

All children have needs and all children are special. However, some children have special needs that are different than those of the typical child. If you have a child with special needs in your class, you may need to make curriculum modifications to your program. A curriculum modification is a change made in the present activity or materials to maximize the child's participation. When a child with special needs is able to participate in the classroom activities, play with toys, and interact with peers, he or she will have better opportunities to develop and learn. Curriculum modifications should be easy to implement for the child care provider and require little or no additional resources.

There are eight identified types of curriculum modifications. The first type is environmental support. Environmental support means altering the physical, social, and temporal environment to promote participation, engagement, and learning. The following are a few examples:

- n In the block center, if a child has trouble keeping the blocks in the designated area, establish boundaries to the block area with a rug or brightly colored tape.
- n In the dramatic play center, if a child becomes over stimulated and does not engage in play, limit the number of items in the dramatic play area.
- n On the sensory table, if a child loses interest or does not engage at the sensory table, hide small toys for the children to find.

n In the book corner, if a child is distracted, carefully reconsider the arrangement of the book area. It should be an area that is not traveled through and is near other quiet centers. The teacher can also bring in tape recorders and ear phones for featured book recordings.

n In the manipulative area, if a child has difficulty sharing materials or space, use trays or box-top lids as individual work spaces.

n During circle time, if a child has difficulty attending to stories, arrange children to be sure they can all see the storybook. Select short stories and then gradually increase the length. Add puppets or a felt board to the story time to increase interest.

n During transitions, if a child has difficulty with making transitions, just before the transition, provide the child with a picture or object representing the area or activity the child should go to next. The child can then take that picture to the next area with him or her.

n During clean-up time, if a child refuses to clean up, make clean-up tickets. Use pictures of areas in the classroom and allow the child to pick a ticket. The ticket he/she picks is where the child will clean up.

Adapted from *Building Blocks for Teaching Preschoolers with Special Needs*

The next issue will feature the second curriculum modification, materials adaptation. If you need assistance with modifying your curriculum for children with special needs, contact Susan Phillips with Project PREPARE at (601) 606-9226.

## Meet our New Project PREPARE Staff

Project PREPARE would like to welcome their newest staff members, Nicole Briceno and Shelley McArthur. Nicole and Shelley are both alumni of The University of Southern Mississippi, where they received bachelor's degrees in child life and master's degrees in early intervention. They have experience working with children in a variety of settings, including hospitals, child care settings, and a clinical environment.



Nicole Briceno, training specialist, is assisting with Inclusion Institutes, administers environmental

assessments and provides technical assistance in many child care centers across the state. Nicole can be reached at [nicole.briceno@usm.edu](mailto:nicole.briceno@usm.edu) or (601) 408-8919.



Shelley McArthur, training specialist, directs curriculum for the Families First

Children's Center, supervises graduate students' practicum, and assists in grant research for the Institute for Disability Studies. Shelley can be contacted at [shelley.mcarthur@usm.edu](mailto:shelley.mcarthur@usm.edu) or (601) 408-8920.