



THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI
INSTITUTE FOR
DISABILITY STUDIES

Save these dates

Designing an Inclusive Program

Gulfport April 21 9 a.m. - Noon
Brandon April 28 9 a.m. - Noon

Literacy and Numeracy in Daily Routines

Meridian May 5 9 a.m. - Noon
Gulfport May 12 9 a.m. - Noon
Brandon May 19 9 a.m. - Noon

Interactive Reading: Engaging All Children

Meridian April 20 11 a.m. - Noon
Meridian April 20 12:30 - 1:30 p.m.

Musical Activities: A Foundation for Literacy

Meridian June 8 11 a.m. - Noon
Meridian June 8 12:30 - 1:30 p.m.

Register online at
www.usm.edu/ids/prepare



Project PREPARE is funded by the Mississippi Department of Human Services, Office for Children and Youth (GR# 525Q7472).

Possibilities

Early Childhood Inclusion

Institute for Disability Studies - Project Prepare
Mississippi's University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities
Issue No. 11 • Spring 2007

PREPARE Essentials

The Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS), Office for Children and Youth (OCY) has the great privilege of facilitating the development and implementation of the Mississippi Child Care Quality Step System (MCCQSS). The MCCQSS is a system to assess, improve and communicate the level of quality in licensed early child care and education settings. The MCCQSS essentially has five components that determine the overall quality of a program: Administrative Policy, Professional Development, Learning Environments, Parental Involvement, and Ongoing Evaluation. Specific outlined criteria for each of the five steps in the system reflect a progressively higher level of desired quality. In addition to receiving a certificate of award for a star rating achieved, programs that volunteer to participate in the system will receive a financial reward for successful efforts of improvements with an ongoing Quality Bonus for each child in their center participating in the Child Care and Development Fund Subsidy Program. The MCCQSS is currently in a pilot phase in the eastern part of the state. Contingent upon funding, it is anticipated that the MCCQSS will be implemented state-wide within five years.

We recognize that there is a need for increased quality early learning experiences long before children enter kindergarten. The goals embedded in the MCCQSS system support preparing all children with meaningful early learning experiences in high quality early childhood settings. As early childhood professionals, your commitment is critical to achieving a high star rating for early childhood education in our state. There are fourteen (14) states nationally that have implemented a quality rating system state-wide. Currently, Mississippi is in the pilot phase of implementation.

MDHS/OCY is committed to improving school readiness for all of Mississippi's children. The public awareness of the importance of school readiness through the MCCQSS will ensure positive school performance and lead to a brighter future for our state's children.

Julia Todd, Director, Office for Children and Youth, Mississippi Department of Human Services



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Web site:
Frank Porter Graham
Child Development Institute

A great resource for early childhood educators is the Web site for the Frank Porter Graham (FPG) Child Development Institute at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. FPG is a leading institute in the field of early childhood education with a strong focus on early intervention, early childhood special education, and inclusion. Not only does the Institute house a model inclusive childcare center, but their staff also conduct many research projects in the early childhood field. From the Web site you can access useful information about early childhood development, family involvement, early childhood policy, and more. You can also learn more about the many projects associated with the Institute such as the National Center for Early Development and Learning and the FPG Child Care Center by clicking on the titles on their Web site. One of the most useful links on the FPG Web site is the link to the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale. On a regular basis, FPG releases "Snapshots" which are short but resourceful articles relating to the latest research from the Institute and these are accessible from the Web site. There is even a place to sign up for "FPG e-News," a monthly listserv which provides information on the latest news in the early childhood field by visiting <http://www.fpg.unc.edu/news/enews.cfm>.

Speech-Language Spotlight: Addressing Stuttering...Now What Do We Do?

Stuttering is a very common occurrence in children between the ages of 2 and 6 years. Although it is very common, it is also very scary for the caregivers of those children who stutter. The good news is that stuttering will almost always disappear on its own unless there is a family history of stuttering. So... what can/should you do as the caregiver when talking and listening to a child that stutters?

1. Give the child plenty of time to talk without interruption and provide your full attention.
2. Slow your own rate of speech to provide a model of relaxed, unhurried speech.
3. Try to relieve all tension at home, daycare, and/or school.
4. Avoid telling a child to slow down, take it easy, or repeat without stuttering.
5. Avoid calling attention to a child's stuttering. Your words, facial expressions and actions can add stress to a child and make talking harder.
6. Avoid interrupting the child as he/she stutters.
7. Avoid finishing a child's words or sentences for him/her; don't interrupt.
8. Try not to be impatient or embarrassed by the child's speech.
9. Maintain eye contact with the child as he/she talks.
10. Try not to have the child "perform" for other people.
11. Get help from family members, childcare workers and teachers in approaching a child's stuttering in a healthy, supportive manner.



Remember, stuttering is a natural phase of a young child's development. Repetitions and short hesitations are perfectly normal in the early phases of speech and language development and may come and go for some time. Typically these phases will go away if ignored. However, a parent or caregiver may be concerned when there are physical characteristics that accompany the stuttering, such as facial expressions that convey extreme effort, considerable eye squinting or any other body movements that occur during the stuttering that makes the caregiver feel like the child is exerting significant effort. In this case, a referral for a speech/fluency evaluation would be appropriate.

Source: Speech and Language Handouts, 2nd edition # 10388. Mary Brooks and Deedra Hartung 1976, 2002. Pro-ed An International Publisher

Resource Room: Breaking Down the ECERS-R: Space and Furnishings

This edition of Possibilities features suggestions for improving the Space and Furnishings for children with special needs in your center. Some children with special needs require special equipment or modifications to fully participate with their peers. The information provided is based on the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, Revised Edition, by Thelma Harms, Richard M. Clifford, and Debby Cryer.

The first section of the ECERS-R, Space and Furnishings, is divided into several categories:

- indoor space
- furnishings for routine care, play, and learning
- furnishings for relaxation and comfort
- child-related display
- space for gross motor play
- gross motor equipment

One major consideration for making the space and furnishings in your center more conducive to inclusion of children with special needs is to make sure the space is accessible to all children and adults. Enough space should be provided in common walkways and traffic areas to allow adults and children to move freely. Rugs should be secured as to avoid tripping hazards. This also means that there should be wheelchair ramps, handrails, and enough space for wheelchairs and/or walkers as needed. Ensure your room is arranged so that there is enough space for children



with walkers or special equipment to easily move around and participate in different centers. Take a look around your room and see if you can make pathways wider, place educational materials on lower shelves, remove or secure rugs that could be a hazard to a child with a walker, etc. Additionally, ask yourself:

- Are the chairs and furniture the appropriate size for the children?
- Specifically, can each child sit with their feet touching the ground and elbows resting easily on the table?
- Can I visually supervise all of the areas of the room?

All children need a furnished area for relaxation and comfort. A cozy area in a room offers children a quiet secure place to unwind. For many children with special needs it can be a place that provides calming sensory experiences such as different textured pillows, a large bean bag, or a small tent to crawl in to escape a noisy room. Finally, children should have full access to gross motor areas such as the playground. Adapted playground equipment may need to be added or children may simply need adult assistance to ensure participating in activities that require climbing, sliding, swinging, or interactive games.

Many adaptations are easy to make, you just have to be aware of what changes need to be made. One of the goals of Project PREPARE is to raise the quality of services provided to all of Mississippi's children. If you have questions about the suggestions made above or would like more information on making adaptations and modifications for children with special needs, please contact Elizabeth Beavers at 601.266.5163 or Elizabeth.Beavers@usm.edu.

Getting Started: Making Daily Routines Meaningful and Interactive

Children increase their language and literacy experiences through...

Listening	Reading
Imitating	Rhyming
Talking	Writing
Singing	Playing

(From *The Creative Curriculum Approach*, 2004)

Examples are available at www.usm.edu/ids/prepare.

Early language and literacy experiences infused throughout children's daily routines provide repetitive opportunities for preschoolers to build and secure a foundation of pre-academic skills. Caregivers should seize opportunities throughout the day to enhance language and literacy. No preparation is needed, just imagination, creativity and knowledge of each child's abilities. Simply increasing the time that you talk and read to children will make a big difference in their development. Talking and reading should be interactive, fun and engaging. Caregivers should talk and read with children; extend story themes into their play; listen, respond, and expand on their language by adding more words (such as "oh, you want the big blue ball") or clarifying the meaning of words; and validate children's emotions.

It sounds simple and it truly is. But it requires knowledge and imagination. By understanding each child's developmental needs and embracing daily experiences, you are providing children with a foundation of meaningful early literacy experiences! Think about your daily routines and recognize all the wonderful possibilities for learning!

2007 Project PREPARE Workshops Registration Form

Name _____ Childcare Facility _____

Director's Name _____ Street/PO Box _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Please check which workshops you would like to attend.

Designing an Inclusive Program

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gulfport | Saturday, April 21 | 9 a.m. - Noon |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brandon | Saturday, April 28 | 9 a.m. - Noon |

Literacy and Numeracy in Daily Routines

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Interactive Reading: Engaging All Children

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Mail registration form to

The University of Southern Mississippi
 Institute for Disability Studies
 118 College Drive #5163
 Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001

Or fax to

601.266.5114
 Attn.: PREPARE

www.usm.edu/ids/prepare

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To subscribe or to submit materials (pictures, articles, etc.) for consideration, contact Susan Phillips at 601.266.5163, 1.888.671.0051 or Susan.Phillips@usm.edu.

Alternate formats available upon request.



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