



MO-AHEAD Newsletter

Missouri Association on Higher Education and Disability

July 2005

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Regional Conference Highlights

"Growing Together"

Great Plains Regional Conference - April 13 - 15, 2005

Game Night @ Tall



Oaks

Who you calling Chicken?



Conga Line!



If you couldn't attend the Great Plains Regional Conference in April or you couldn't make it to all the fantastic sessions and activities, KEEP ON READING! Several MO-AHEAD members summarized a few of the amazing resources found at the conference. KanAHEAD did a fine job in all of their creativity, planning, and implementation. THANKS to all those who made it a great time!

Reframing Disability & Redesigning Services Plenary Session

Dr. Sue Kroeger, Director of the Disability Resource Center at the University of Arizona, highlighted the broad diversity that is found in the DSS field. Most people who enter the DSS field have a general background regarding their understanding of life with a disability. Dr. Kroeger observed how most of our understanding of disability has come from our assumptions of the truth instead of actually searching for it; book-taught knowledge instead of first-hand experience. Dr. Kroeger challenged the audience to consider a sociopolitical perspective about disability rather than using a medical framework. In addition, she advocated for the Universal Design approach to replace the historical 'accommodation' approach in providing services.

Dr. Kroeger also presented on the increasing role of Disability Studies in society and the impacting results that come from these studies. Dr. Kroeger noted that Disability Studies challenges society's view toward the disabled and calls for a new imagery of disability. These findings also redefine the definition of normalcy and challenge the influence of the non-disabled.

On an ending note, Dr. Kroeger asked why Disability Studies should matter to us. Her answer—"You cannot understand my experience unless you look at it from my point of view." Dr. Kroeger concluded her presentation with a challenge:

1. To research disability studies and infuse them into our work
2. To challenge entrenched belief systems and attitudes
3. Revitalize our professions – without the field, we will never realize our potential revolutionary power
4. Internalize and practice the concept that people are not inherently disabled – It is society that disables them!
5. Explore different ways of thinking about the world in relation to the phenomenon of disability

Changes in IDEA (Special Education Law)

Session : Update on IDEA,2005, Andrea Blair, Kansas State University

Provisions of the reauthorized Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) take effect on July 5, 2005. Some changes made by the reauthorization that Ms. Blair presented were concerns regarding eligibility to receive services under the category of *specific learning disability* which include: the required transition goals moved

The NEW Reading Nook

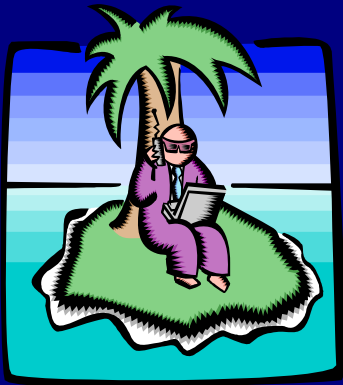
the curious incident of the dog in the night-time – Review by Janice Eudaley

Whatever we believe about ourselves and our ability comes true for us.

—Susan L. Taylor

No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main.

—John Donne



Book reviews are welcome and encouraged! Send to Tammy Pratt (tp Pratt@umr.edu)

What a great way to share with our fellow professionals!

One of the things I have observed after working in various areas of both the mental health and educational fields is that people “outside” the professions don’t really know what we do. They have ideas based on their own experiences or the vicarious ones provided by various media exposures. There have been many movies, books, and radio and TV talk shows that give the public the viewpoint of the particular person disseminating the information but for those “on the inside” these rarely match their life experiences. This is one reason why it is so exciting to come across a book that is dead on in its portrayal of a person with a mental health diagnosis and/or the people who provide treatment. the curious incident of the dog in the night-time is just such a book.

The main character is Christopher, a teen-age boy who lives in England and has Asperger’s Syndrome. The book opens with his discovering his neighbor’s dog pierced through with a garden fork. This is very disturbing to him because he likes dogs. “You always know what a dog is thinking. It has four moods. Happy, sad, cross and concentrating. Also, dogs are faithful and they do not tell lies because they cannot talk” (Haddon, 2003). This simplicity is in contrast to people who are mysterious and complicated to Christopher. He decides to sleuth out who killed the dog and write about his detective work because Siobhan, his teacher, suggested he write a book.



Haddon’s novel follows Christopher as he traverses his world of home, school, neighborhood, and finally the much broader environs of London. He has to do this within the parameters of his rules, i.e. the color order of the first cars he sees in the morning determine what kind of day he will have, and while navigating the foreign world of others’ body language, voice tones, and metaphorical phrases. All of these things, which most of us interpret “naturally”, require Christopher to break them down into manageable small facts that can be checked against his experiential memory and what trusted people in his life have taught him.

Christopher tells us of his days as he experiences them. The reader has the feeling of walking around inside Christopher’s head and sitting right behind his eyes. When Christopher tells of his fear that someone is going to touch him or needing to spend the day in the corner of his schoolroom because he’s just so overwhelmed by the world and its confusion the reader doesn’t feel like an observer but rather is in the corner too. Christopher tells his story in short one to three page chapters that are numbered with prime numbers. His observations reveal his high intelligence in all things mathematical and scientific and his curiosity with humans. His writing is straightforward and clinical just as is Christopher’s approach to life.

Reading this book is not reading about Aspergers but rather briefly coming close to experiencing it. Haddon spent some time working with autistic children when he was younger and this comes through clearly in this novel. It is highly entertaining as just a good read and very helpful for professionals to get some insight into what life is like for these folks.



No time to lose!
Get Registered!

August 2 - 6, 2005

28th Annual AHEAD
Conference and Exhibit Hall
Milwaukee, WI

The conference will cover three professional areas of interest:

- **Education (professional training)** – fundamental information that you need to know that prepares and re-energizes you to do your job,
- **Service (delivery)** – current, emerging and cutting-edge practices that improve access for students, and
- **Research** – current inquiry that brings together critical information about methods, practices and profession

Visit www.ahead.org for more information.



Don't forget MO-AHEAD
Transition Guidebook is On-line!

<http://www.stlcc.cc.mo.us/fv/MO-AHEAD/index.html>

TRANSITION TRAINING UPDATES!

Parent Training Debut!

A *Transition to College* parent training session was held on April 19, 2005. This session was very well received with approximately 20 people in attendance and several parents left the meeting with many words of thanks and praise. A big highlight of the event was the request of a secondary administrator from Fort Zumwalt to have the training session conducted in her area.



This was the first training session that was organized

with the intent of being reproduced throughout the state. A training packet will be available to MO-AHEAD members after the training committee conducts more training and has gathered participant feedback.

Reaching to SEMO

A goal was set by the MO-AHEAD Executive Board to broaden the areas in Missouri participating in transition training workshops. In April, the first workshop for the southeastern portion of the state was held at *Southeast Missouri State University*.

High school administrators, counselors, and teachers from the area were invited. Candi Feller and Maureen Ottenlips were the co-presenters. Twenty-five individuals from the southeast Missouri area attended. Feedback from the attendees indicated there was a



I had the good fortune to attend an AHEAD parent presentation last evening at Special School District in St. Louis County. Suelaine Matthews and Maureen Ottenlips did a wonderful job! The information was very helpful to the parents attending. It was obvious that AHEAD has worked hard to highlight important points of differences between high school and college, and the shift of responsibility from others to the student. Thank you all for your hard work in developing the presentation, and to Suelaine and Maureen for your time! I hope AHEAD will be able to offer the workshop to others.

Karen Blessman

Website Resources

Federal Government

<http://www.disabilityinfo.gov>

The Disability Right's Commission

<http://www.drc-gb.org/>

Social Security:

<http://www.ssa.gov/disability/>

Disability Resources Monthly Online

<http://www.disabilityresources.org/>

National Organization on Disability

<http://www.nod.org/>

National Council on Disability

<http://www.ncd.gov/>

Great Plains ADA/IT Center

<http://www.adaproject.org/>

Disability Access
Information and Support (DAIS)

<http://www.janejarrow.com/>

National Center on Accessibility

<http://www.ncaonline.org/>



Back Row: Sue Matthews, Candi Feller, Tammy Pratt. Mid Row: Kim Fernandes, Jan Eudaley, Julie Edwards. Front Row: Lindy Mullins, Lisa Leftridge, Maureen Ottenlips, Mary Rutherford (Ellen Smithers not pictured)

Board Members

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MO-AHEAD = YOU

Do you have a website you use or consider a 'must have' resource? Share it with others in the profession by sending the link to Tammy Pratt (tpratt@umr.edu). Websites will be listed in future newsletters.

Do you know about upcoming conferences in the Midwest area that support DSS professional development? Please send them to be published as additional resources to MO-AHEAD members.

Many MO-AHEAD members have published articles, presentations or research. As a resource to our members, we are asking for contributions to be submitted to the MO-AHEAD Newsletter to be recognized and made available to other professionals in the field.

Thank you to all who contributed to the MO-AHEAD Newsletter. Synergy equals more than the total put into the effort! I hope you enjoy this issue.

**Surround yourself
with only
people who
are going to lift
you higher.
-Oprah Winfrey**