

Title of Session: Alt/Correctional Ed Forum - Vision and Reading

Moderator: BJ Berquist

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Room: Alt/Correctional Ed Group

BjB joined the room.

BjB: glad you reminded me, Daniel!

DanielO: I thought you were the name I saw!

MaureenKP joined the room.

BjB: good job, Maureen

MaureenKP: way cool

BjB . o O (a small but distinguished group)

BjB: welcome to tonight's Alt/Correctional Ed forum

DanielO: glad to be here

MaureenKP: same

BjB: before we start...go to the Actions menu in the top right of your screen and click on DETACH

BjB: that will make your chat window larger and easier to read

DanielO: very nice

MaureenKP: got it

BjB: we usually start all the discussions in Tapped In with introductions

BjB: please tell me where you are located and what brings you to the discussion

BjB . o O (Daniel has a gun to his head)

BjB . o O (metaphorically)

DanielO: I teach mathematics at Wilson HS in Hacienda Heights

DanielO: CA

BjB nods to Daniel. Thanks

DanielO: and yourself?

BjB: first tip of the evening...

BjB: click one time on BJB under the HERE tab to the left of the chat window

BjB: and then click on the green i at the bottom

BjB: my ID will open on the other part of the detached window

BjB . o O (overlap your screens)

DanielO: I knew that was out there! Thanks for the tip. In fact, I ran across your info when I was going through the archives earlier today.

BjB: I've been a member of Tapped In since 1998

BjB: Maureen, can you tell Daniel what brings you to Tapped In and where you are located?

SusanR joined the room.

BjB: Hi, Sue.

BjB: Sue, we're just doing introductions

MaureenKP: sorry--I got lost in BJ's info screen...

BjB: we'll have to give you a tour of the tapped In interface one of these days, Maureen!

SusanR: I am Sue Roseman from Ottawa Ontario

MaureenKP: OK-- here's a little info and I'll put up a screen later--I'm a neuroscientist, recently turned to the problem of how vision affects learning. Working in LA and Orange county facilities in Calif.

BjB: very cool, Maureen!

BjB: You are presenting at the CEA conference?

MaureenKP: yes, on Aug 1

BjB . o O (CEA = Correctional Education Association)

MaureenKP: talking about how many kids we find with visual skill problems--like tracking

BjB: Do you have any information you can share with us?

MaureenKP: sure, but I don't want to be too long-winded---

MaureenKP: my son tells me my IM messages are too long....

BjB smiles. Sons are like that

MaureenKP: Here goes anyway:

BjB: do you think this tracking effects math learning also?

BjB . o O (so Daniel can also benefit from this research)

SusanR listens

DanielO: thanks!

MaureenKP: Yes, I think so, because the more rapidly one can move the eyes (accurately) the more rapidly the info can enter the brain-- should work for math as well as words.

MaureenKP: but there is no data on tracking and math to my knowledge

DanielO: interesting

MaureenKP: what we do know is that a very large proportion of incarcerated and at-risk youth have "visual skill" problems-- like with binocular coordination and tracking

BjB nods. And I assume there is information or research to "educate" the tracking?

JeffC joined the room.

MaureenKP: If we find them, and essentially re-train their eyes to work more efficiently with their brains, then reading fluency improves

BjB: I saw something at one of the conferences I went to about brain research and video games?

MaureenKP: very interesting stuff

BjB agrees!

MaureenKP: some of them do help attention

BjB: Hi, Jeff. Welcome

MaureenKP: and some can help with vision

BjB: how else do you do this training?

SusanR: How are vision tracking problems identified in the school system?

MaureenKP: identification has been simplified with a validated NIH survey

MaureenKP: remediation is via an internet program where they wear cool red/blue 3D glasses

MaureenKP: they like it b/c there is no reading--just following patterns around the screen, like video games

BjB: to paraphrase for Jeff, Maureen is a neuroscientist doing research on how vision effects learning

JeffC: cool!

MaureenKP: Thanks-- I'll be showing results with long-term followup at CEA

SusanR: Fascinating

MaureenKP: Will you all be there?

BjB: probably none of us will be there

MaureenKP: sad...

MaureenKP: Maybe I can post my power point somewhere?

BjB: Jeff is in Oregon and Sue is in Canada and I'm in Pennsylvania

BjB: yes, you can post the powerpoint to the library, Maureen!

BjB: click on the Tapped In tab

MaureenKP: ok--will do-- as soon as I get back (around Aug 4)

BjB: and then the subtab LIBRARY

BjB: then we can all see the slides.

BjB . o O (btw, Jeff, I posted the Elluminate ppt to the library)

JeffC: cool bj... thanks

JeffC: I'm going afk in a minute (swimming lessons for the kids), but will lurk.

BjB: can you please tell us more about the Gemstone Foundation, Maureen?

MaureenKP: OK--thanks! Then whoever wants more info can contact me

MaureenKP: Sure

BjB: Daniel, do you work with special ed kids?

MaureenKP: It's a Calif non-profit with a scientific and professional Board of directors

JeffC: I did want to alert Maureen about a new Open Tap (this interface) that is research oriented in SPED.

DanielO: No, I do not.

JeffC: <http://24.9.203.121:8080/tappedin/>

JeffC: Nathan Lowell (NathanL here) runs it.

BjB: thanks, Jeff. We should invite Nate to the next Alt/Correctional Ed discussion to tell us about it

MaureenKP: Thanks to Jeff-- I'll have a look. Gem Fdn is dedicated to understanding the ways in which sensory processing interfaces with learning

JeffC . o O (good idea)

MaureenKP: and to provide services too.

BjB loves sensory processing.

SusanR: How are spec ed teachers dealing with vision tracking problems

BjB: and how would we access the online program?

MaureenKP: I think they mostly do IEP's, which generally call in doctors for evaluation. The online program helps get around the high cost of vision therapy

MaureenKP: I can set up a demo site for anyone who requests one--

DanielO: I take it glasses will not fix the problem?

MaureenKP: you can log in and see what it's like.

BjB: that would be very cool, Maureen!

MaureenKP: no, Daniel--you got it. Glasses won't fix this problem

MaureenKP: In fact, many kids with 20/20 vision have problems with binocular coordination or tracking

BjB: I can understand ADD/ADHD with this problem...

SusanR: I read something about a Visagraph device and special glasses are being used to improve tracking and increasing reading scores

MaureenKP: I have your email address, BJ-- I'll get you set up. Anyone else just let me know.

BjB: but how does it relate to other LD?

MaureenKP: the visagraph is nice-- we have used it too

BjB . o O (or behavioral disabilities)

MaureenKP: it's expensive, and you can do a lot of the same things (and more) with the online system

MaureenKP: you just can't measure the exact eye movements like the visagraph does

MaureenKP: it relates to all LD, in my opinion, not through cognitive factors

MaureenKP: it relates because if a child is, say, dyslexic, then if they also have this problem the dyslexia will be harder to deal with

BjB nods. and dyslexia is a separate issue from tracking?

MaureenKP: In fact the symptoms of ADHD and dyslexia are somewhat similar, so it's good to check for the specific vision problem first c=since it's relatively easy to fix

MaureenKP: dyslexia is neurologically distinct from tracking.

DanielO: I have students with special needs, but I have not come across tracking

MaureenKP: handled by different regions of the brain.

DanielO: This is very enlightening

MaureenKP: There's a neat test, called the Developmental Eye Movement test, in the literature--easy to give. I can send you info Daniel

DanielO: Thank you.

MaureenKP: Can I put things like reference in the library too, BJ?

BjB: how early can this tracking be diagnosed? Yes, certainly, Maureen

MaureenKP: The test that has been developed goes as young as 1st grade. It's validated up to 8th grade but works beyond I find

BjB: I work with kids 11-18 in a juvenile correctional facility

MaureenKP: perfect age

MaureenKP: we find this problem really starts to interfere with learning in middle school

BjB: I think a lot of factors interfere with learning in middle school!

MaureenKP: I definitely agree

MaureenKP: but it's in middle school that we find the proportion of poor readers with visual skills problems tends to increase

SusanR . o O (catch the problem early ...for long term gains)

MaureenKP: yes, indeed

MaureenKP: but school screenings don't test for it...

DanielO: Is this fairly new then?

MaureenKP: well, it has been around for a while, but the testing has been cumbersome

MaureenKP: not as easy as the eye chart

MaureenKP: and the solution has been expensive (vision therapy)

DanielO: Sounds it, by your description. And expensive?

MaureenKP: but now, the combo of a survey instrument and the internet makes it more reasonable in terms of both time and cost

MaureenKP: of course, some kids will still need full-blown vision therapy if they have difficult problems

MaureenKP: but for those whose problems are not so severe, the computer workouts seem to work

BjB: is this screening something that would be feasible in a school setting?

BjB . o O (not counting the training of screeners!)

MaureenKP: yes. we typically train the staff to give the survey, or else we do the measurements with our staff. Whatever the school wants.

BjB: your foundation is national or just in California?

MaureenKP: We're a California corporation, but (because we're internet) we have programs around the country and other places (Japan, Israel)

BjB: cool

SusanR: Canada?

MaureenKP: Yes, through a doctor's office reading clinic in Toronto

BjB: is there some observable behavior that can be used to detect suspected problems with tracking?

MaureenKP: yes. The test I mentioned to Daniel is the best--takes a couple of minutes to do. Also, people with tracking problems tend to use their fingers, lose their place, and (this one is good) see the words wiggle, jump or float on the page. Also they may twist their heads around while reading.

SusanR: frequent miscuing and back tracking when a child reads would that be indicative

MaureenKP: yes, I think so

SusanR . o O (I taught grade 1 and 2 for most of my career)

BjB: I'll have to share your information with teachers at our school.

MaureenKP: Then you have seen this problem, I'm sure!

SusanR nods

MaureenKP: (that last was for Susan)

DanielO: How would it affect, say, looking at shapes and figures? I teach geometry and I know many students without disabilities struggle with 3-dimensional shapes.

MaureenKP: Very interesting, Daniel. I suspect that the appreciation of 3 dimensions is somewhere beyond the basic input stages that I'm dealing with-- so it would be more of a cognitive issue with those kids

BjB: do you present at other conferences, Maureen? I can suggest you as a guest speaker or presenter at the Pennsylvania CEA conference.

BjB . o O (spatial awareness is also developmental, I think.)

MaureenKP: Yes, I do-- I'd be happy to speak elsewhere, but maybe you should hear me first!!

BjB laughs. I'm impressed so far

BjB: Daniel, you're the closest...

BjB: we'll designate you our representative to go hear Maureen

DanielO: Yes. Where is the conference located?

MaureenKP: in Anaheim California, at the Marriott

DanielO: Near Disneyland.

MaureenKP: yep

BjB: we've hit the jackpot with you joining us today, Maureen!

MaureenKP: Thanks! I feel like I hogged the proceedings--I hope it was useful to you all.

DanielO: Yes it was. Thank you.

BjB: please feel free to put in a plug for Tapped InI will never figure out why correctional educators are so intimidated by technology.

MaureenKP: I certainly will. This is really really cool.

SusanR: Thank you, Maureen. This was fascinating.

BjB: as an art teacher/communications teacher I see a LOT of visual perception problems

MaureenKP: I'll bet you do, BJ-- Sorry, but I gotta go to another meeting. Many thanks to you all-- see you later, and I promise to post the presentation and the reference for the tracking test.

MaureenKP: bye!

BjB: this group will meet again on the third Thursday of August.

SusanR: Thanks again for sharing

BjB: thanks, Maureen! I'll look forward to hearing from you

BjB: good luck at the conference

BjB: thanks for joining us, Daniel

MaureenKP: K-- I'll be back in August. thanks to all

DanielO: Thanks for letting me listen in!

BjB waves goodnight

DanielO: Good night all and take care.