

**Title of Session:** Special Education Forum - Autism

**Moderator:** Paul Bohac

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Room: Special Education Group

**MaryLF:** He never learned to read - just passed along. And he has no math concepts

**PaulDB:** Mary, how are you trying to teach him to read? Are you using a phonics approach or a whole language method?

**PaulDB:** We seem to be a few members short tonight BJB.

**PaulDB:** Any idea why?

**BJB** nods to Paul. Lot of grad classes starting up

**BJB:** and schools starting again

**PaulDB:** By the way, I am sorry I missed the Session during the festival.

**PaulDB:** How did it go?

**MaryLF:** We have been using sounds and syllables - multi sensory, sequenced therapeutic I:I approach

**BJB:** Festival was good. The transcripts are archived at [www.tappedin.org/transcripts](http://www.tappedin.org/transcripts)

**PaulDB:** Thanks, I would really like to read them.

**PaulDB:** What publisher produced the materials you are using Mary?

**MaryLF:** Sorry, don't know. I will look it up

**BJB:** Paul, can we side track a sec and do introductions?

**PaulDB:** I asked that because there are several sources of materials for autistic and dyslexic children available on the web.

**BJB:** do we have this info in the room, Paul?

**BJB** . o O ( know CEC has stuff for you, Mary )

**BJB:** Council for Exceptional Children

**PaulDB:** I am sorry BJ, Mary is retired and is helping her daughter and son-in-law home-school her 12 year old grandson who is autistic and dyslexic.

**BjB** nods. Thanks, Paul.

**MaryLF:** The publisher is S.I.S Pub Co, 6344 Buenos Aires, Albuquerque, NM 87120- the author is Sandra Dillon

**PaulDB:** Yes, CEC has materials and other information of an instructional nature can also be found at [www.soe.ku.edu/sped/](http://www.soe.ku.edu/sped/)

**BjB:** Mary, under Featured Items on the page that was above this chat window is a link to Teaching Art To Autistic Children

**BjB:** good resource for approaching literacy from visual input

**BjB:** [http://www.davisart.com/Portal/SchoolArts/articles/MIN\\_Autism506.pdf](http://www.davisart.com/Portal/SchoolArts/articles/MIN_Autism506.pdf)

**MaryLF:** I noted the Art resource. Thanks for other suggestions

**PaulDB:** I am not familiar with S.I.S. but I have heard of or read something about Sandra Dillon.

**PaulDB:** If I remember correctly, she has a background in reading Instruction and advanced degree in exceptional child education so I would think you have selected appropriate materials.

**PaulDB:** Are they the same materials used in the local school system or were they selected by the child's parents?

**BjB:** <http://www.ataccess.org/resources/atk12/bp/case1.html>

**BridgetM** joined the room.

**PaulDB:** Hello Bridget.

**BridgetM:** hi

**BjB** waves hi to Bridget

**BridgetM:** geez, I am so sorry to be late

**MaryleeO** joined the room.

**BjB:** We're discussing resources to help Mary with an autistic grandchild, Bridget

**PaulDB:** Please introduce yourself to the other members of this evening's group Bridget.

**BridgetM:** how old, Mary?

**BridgetM:** I'm a special ed teacher from NY, k-2

**PaulDB:** He is 12 and Mary is helping home school the young man.

**BridgetM:** ah

**PaulDB:** He cannot read and is having difficulty in math.

**BridgetM:** what are you interested in changing or developing?

**BridgetM:** communication?

**BridgetM:** Mary, I've worked with many students diagnosed with autism

**PaulDB:** Changing or developing? What an interesting way of phrasing the fundamental question!!

**MaryLF:** Jack is 12. The reading program was initiated by Miley Kane , his reading tutor. It must be given by a certified academic language specialist . My daughter is not certified but took much course work. We have hired Miley to do it now. His communication is good altho his grammar is strange and we don't work on that yet. He is a warm kid. He is a great actor and mime - can memorize whole plays. He currently has a lead part in community theater.

**MaryleeO:** I was in the room earlier and am just rejoining. I have limited experience with autism but have worked with dyslexic children. What is the name of his reading program? Can he name the letters and their sounds and how is his handwriting?

**PaulDB:** Does he "memorize" by listening to someone read his part to him?

**PaulDB:** Marylee, his reading program is by S.I.S Publishing Company and written by Sandra Dillon.

**MaryLF:** His handwriting is very good - script, not print for the "feel" of it. He can sound letters . Yes, he memorizes by listening to those helping him and picks it up further at rehearsals. Also his rhythm and voice are nice - he just finished doing a musical of Jungle Book where he played the monkey king - sang and danced

**BridgetM:** wow. interested and strength with script!

**PaulDB:** May I ask how the dual diagnosis was made (autism and dyslexia)?

**SusanR** joined the room.

**MaryleeO**: I'm not familiar with this program. That's great that script is mastered. Do you have any dyslexia questions? And, great question Paul about the diagnosis.

**PaulDB**: Hello Susan.

**BridgetM**: hi, Susan

**BjB**: welcome, Sue

**SusanR**: I will lurk and listen

**PaulDB**: I am having a hard time matching the description of the young man's behavior as an actor in community theatre with identification as "autistic".

**BridgetM**: Mary, I'm guessing reading comprehension is a problem. What about phonics?

**BridgetM**: ah, autism is a spectrum disorder - wide range of capabilities

**MaryLF**: He was diagnosed with autism at about 18 mos. with the usual walking on toes, perseverating, all developmental goals late, echolalia, etc. My daughter started attending Dr. Greenspan's trainings - the furthering of repetitive play by interruption and directing. They had O.T, speech, p.t. tutors and the family got involved in gym workout room especially for special needs kids. But then when entered school and could not learn to read or learn math concepts, the school could not meet his needs.

**PaulDB**: I know but...

**MaryLF**: As I understand dyslexia , it also is a range of reading, comprehension problems. Is that right?

**BridgetM**: <http://www.stanleygreenspan.com/>

**PaulDB**: Yes in terms of "processing" but does not preclude vision-related problems so that a determination of visually impaired is possible.

**MaryLF**: This reading program is phonics of a sort.....he writes in the air, he writes on a blackboard, he writes on a tablet, all the time saying the word or groups of words. Instructions have to be simplified and repeated. Hard to keep him focused.

**BridgetM**: have you tried any software?

**BridgetM:** last year my students (k-2), several w/ ASD diagnosis had success with headsprout, online reading program

**MaryLF:** A psychologist in Denver has come several times for his assessment and IEP's. She has recommended software. However, the school will not let him have it in the room . They also do not adapt instruction for him, the aides are never trained, etc etc (frustration)

**BridgetM:** might seem too immature for a 10 yr old

**BridgetM:** ah, geez, Mary

**BridgetM:** is it an inclusion setting at school? (again, sorry I was late)

**PaulDB:** Bridget, what is ASD diagnosis, it is an unknown acronym to me.

**BridgetM:** autism spectrum disorder

**MaryLF:** Yes, with most subjects - then the "resource room" for reading, math . The resource teacher had too many students. He just cannot learn in a group setting.

**MaryleeO:** I am familiar with air writing and the need for frequent repetition. If you haven't already, the International Dyslexia Association has a good website [www.interdys.org](http://www.interdys.org) that does a good job explaining dyslexia. Also, Lexia and Earobics are good computer programs.

**PaulDB:** Thank you.

**BridgetM:** sounds like family needs an advocate

**MaryLF:** Thanks for info. I will look into these resources.

**PaulDB:** We haven't discussed anything about his math work Mary.

**PaulDB:** Can you tell us what he is working on, or the materials he is using?

**MaryLF:** We know. A close friend with a similar kid just hired advocate and lawyer and school sys paid her \$35,000. However, my daughter has been through so much working within the system, she doesn't have energy to pursue any further.

**MaryLF:** Math-U-See is the math program

**PaulDB:** How is he progressing in his math work?

**MaryLF:** Slowly.

**BridgetM:** I just found a video set for staff training.  
<http://www.usevisualstrategies.com/products.html> Linda Hodgdon

**BridgetM:** I'm ordering for a library

**BjB:** sounds like he needs music to help him learn.

**BridgetM:** good idea, BJ

**MaryLF:** That's a good idea.

**PaulDB:** Yes it is.

**BjB** blushes. Thanks

**MaryleeO:** What do you recommend?

**BjB:** songs, maybe a musical instrument of some kind

**BjB** . o O ( percussion? )

**SusanR:** try playing classical music in the background

**BridgetM:** there are music sets to learn math facts

**BjB** nods to Bridget

**PaulDB:** Percussion and a metronome would help with a steady rhythmic beat.

**BridgetM:** that's a good idea also, Susan

**BjB:** we also have a new Music across the curriculum discussion here once a month

**MaryLF:** He might really respond well to that

**BjB:** next one is music and social studies

**PaulDB:** What about manipulatives when teaching math?

**MaryLF:** That also might help

**PaulDB:** Because of its concrete nature, math skills must be taught in sequence.

**BridgetM:** <http://www.lessonplanspage.com/MathMusicMultiplicationFacts24.htm> and  
<http://www.songsforteaching.com/mathsongs.htm>

**PaulDB:** Does he know how to perform the basic arithmetic functions?

**MaryLF:** Only the simplest and not well - uses fingers

**PaulDB:** Try a calculator with him.

**BridgetM:** I'd guess w/ the strength with script he does not exhibit tactile defensiveness so manipulatives would be a great idea

**BjB:** I hate to break the momentum of the discussion, but our time is about up. Paul, do you want to continue this topic in September?

**PaulDB:** Yes, I think it would be beneficial.

**BjB:** . o O ( Mary, we'll have this kid in college before you know it! )

**BridgetM** smiles

**PaulDB:** Home schooling offers some options not available in a traditional classroom setting.

**MaryLF:** Sounds good to me. I appreciate so much the help from everyone. And is there some way I could print this out, Bj?

**BjB:** Mary, when you log out the transcript will be automatically emailed to you

**MaryLF:** Wow, thanks

**SusanR:** I recommend Math Games and Literacy Games using cards, dice, special multi-sided dice and other manipulatives

**SusanR:** there is a special program called Box Cars and One-Eyed Jacks

**MaryLF:** Got lots of help

**BjB:** thanks, Paul and everyone for your great input!

**SusanR:** <http://www.planet.eon.net/~boxcars/home.htm>

**BjB:** next SPED is September 18

**BridgetM:** Mary, before you go. Home schooled students should still be eligible for therapies provided by public school

**PaulDB:** By the way, last month we talked a little about "inclusion" and I wanted to mention that in addition to IDEA, we also needed to remember that kids eligible for 504

accommodations were likely to be in a regular classroom as well and thus would be "included".

**MaryLF:** Good to know.

**BridgetM:** you may have to bring him to school for sessions

**BridgetM:** you may have to fight for that but ...

**PaulDB:** Yes, if such services are a part of his IEP, then the school system is responsible for providing such services at no cost to you.

**BridgetM:** it's worth it - if the therapists have been doing a good job

**PaulDB:** The scheduling of the services may be a problem but that is something that can be worked out.

**PaulDB:** Along those lines, materials being used by the school system should also be available to you as well.

**BridgetM:** in NY parents have to write a very detailed home school plan to submit to local school district

**PaulDB:** I hope this has given you something to work with Mary. It has been a good session on a topic we have not previously discussed.

**BjB** heads for bed. Thanks again, everyone. Mary, we'll look forward to more questions from you in September!

**MaryLF:** Thanks again. I got a great many ideas which I will pursue.