

Title of Session: Special Education Forum

Moderator: BJ Berquist

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Room: Special Education Forum Group

BJB2: Hi, Holly and Lindsay

LindsayE: hello :)

BJB2: Here for the SPED discussion?

LindsayE: yes

HollyMC: Hello.

HollyMC: Yes

BJB2: great! Hopefully our discussion leader, Paul Bohac, will be here soon!

BJB2: while we wait for Paul

BJB2: . o O (and cross our collective fingers...)

HollyMC: haha!

BJB2: let's do some intros. Please tell me where you are located and what you teach...and have you been in any Tapped In discussions before?

BJB2: you've both joined the group so it looks like you're pretty experienced!

BJB2: oops...Lindsay has joined and so has Lisa who lost her connection

LindsayE: I live in Cleveland, I currently do parenting Ed & developmental assessments for children >3 for Help Me Grow, and I'm getting my EIS license. I have done Tapped In discussions before. :) how about you Holly?

HollyMC: I'm actually a first year teacher. I am teaching kindergarten at a Spanish Immersion school.

BJB2: I'm a retired teacher located in Pennsylvania. I taught for 24 years in a male juvenile correctional facility

LindsayE: I would love to do that, Bj

BJB2: and I assume you both have an interest in special ed?

LindsayE: yes

BJB2 . o O (retire or work with corrections, Lindsay? ;-)

LindsayE: both!

BJB2 chuckles

HollyMC: yes, I work in a gen ed classroom but because it is kindergarten, we usually detect things first so I like learning about it.

BJB2: excellent, Holly. That's the time to pick up on any learning difficulties!

BJB2: I know that ESL students are often targeted with being labeled...

HollyMC: I know. The difficulty is sometimes working with the parents if it is new.

BJB2: often incorrectly

BJB2: difficult working with parents because of the language barrier or another reason, Holly?

HollyMC: You mean that they are identified as special ed when it is just a language barrier?

BJB2: correct

HollyMC: I meant difficulty if it is brought to the parent's attention for the first time.

LindsayE: I often find parents to be all one way, or all the other. Some parents are willing to do or try anything, others are unsure of how a label will affect their child's educational experience, and are much more hesitant.

HollyMC: I agree.

BJB2 nods. And a lot of parents are in total denial

HollyMC: I think some are scared of the label and they don't really understand the process.

BJB2: let's see if this url still works: <http://www.greatschools.net/cgi-bin/showarticle/3677?cpn=20081210ld>

HollyMC: And I agree even more with that. They see just one child in one light whereas we can compare that one child to other children.

LindsayE: ooh yeah, sometimes when I find gross motor delays in children, it's the hardest for me to deal with if the parents don't believe it, because I wonder how do they not see it

BJB2: parents rarely want to believe there are any imperfections in their child.

HollyMC: I skimmed through it. It's interesting because at my school we teach in both English and Spanish and yet the Spanish speakers STILL struggle more than the non-Spanish speakers even though you would think it would be the opposite because the Spanish speakers come in with a disadvantage.

BJB2: That article was posted to the discussion board

LindsayE: I always recommend parents get their child's hearing tested again at age 3

BJB2: sometimes it's not the language barrier but perceived limitations...both from the child and the teacher

LisaS joined the room.

BJB2: do you have effective ways to assess the child?

BJB2: Hi, Lisa! Welcome back!

BJB2: Lisa, we're looking at <http://www.greatschools.net/cgi-bin/showarticle/3677?cpn=20081210ld>

LindsayE: for hearing, up to age three, it's the help me grow hearing questionnaire

LindsayE: we also have a vision and nutrition screen

BJB2: that sounds good, Lindsay

LindsayE: the most effective ways though, is to see a pediatrician

BJB2: and do you find that some children are just slower in developing their skills?

LindsayE: Holly, do you ever hear of Spanish speaking parents having trouble finding Spanish speaking doctors?

BJB2 . o O (my favorite book was always Leo the Late Bloomer)

BJB2: good question, Lindsay

LindsayE: there is a lee-way, of up to 7 months, 3 months prior to 4 months after

LisaS: sorry so late but I had a hard time getting into the room.

BJB2 nods to Lindsay

LindsayE: we monitor development every 2-6 months, depending on concerns and give parent tips

HollyMC: We have many resources in the community. I teach in Arlington, VA and we have a high population of people who speak Spanish so for the most part there are some resources out there.

BJB2: no problem, Lisa. Paul hasn't shown up so we're leading our own discussion ;-)

LindsayE: that's great! a good knowledge of community resources is a tool I wish all teachers would offer to parents

HollyMC: Sometimes they are more concerned with the going to the doctor in general though because of immigration issues.

BJB2: do you do the screenings at school?

BJB2 . o O (could you?)

LindsayE: oooh yes, do free clinics check for an ID of sorts?

HollyMC: They go through an intake center before they come in.

HollyMC: Which is the same things Lindsay was talking about they get screened...hearing, vision...

LeoL joined the room.

BJB2 waves hi to Leo!

LeoL waves back, sneaks in quietly

LindsayE: heh

BJB2: Leo, we're discussing the problems that ESL students face in school...

BJB2: including labeling as special ed and how accurately that is done

LeoL: Ok, I'm out of my depth here, so I'll just hang out and try not to appear foolish :)

BJB2: here's a site that is relevant to our discussion: <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/11/081114080933.htm>

HollyMC: I know this is random but I just watched the autism special on Larry King with Jenny McCarthy. It was interesting

LeoL: thanks

BJB2: so much is being learned about autism...and its many flavors!

LisaS joined the room.

LindsayE: Holly, you might be interested in the book by Augusten Burroughs, titled Look Me In The Eye

BJB2 glues Lisa's shoes to the virtual floor!

LindsayE: it's an adults perspective of growing up with undiagnosed Asbergers

HollyMC: We have a program in VA called VPI (Virginia preschool initiative) specifically for at risk children, from low socio-economic backgrounds and it is very similar. It gets them kindergarten ready academically and socially.

BJB2: there are also several resources on Autism in this group room

HollyMC: And the children who attend it are more ready. A lot of them don't have scissors or even pencils at home so it is a great program.

LindsayE: I'll bet

HollyMC: Didn't he write Running with scissors?

LindsayE: you're right... It wasn't Augusten Burroughs, it was his brother

LindsayE: I thought it sounded funny when I typed it

BJB2 wonders if another brother wrote: you'll shoot your eye out!

LindsayE :tonguetied::

LisaS: I have seen the same and some of the stores around in the area I live in do drive for supplies.

BJB2: so basically, the goal of preschool is to assess the kids and get them socially ready for school...and assess basic health?

BJB2: Leo works with older kids...and I'm sure he can fill you in on their social maturity ;-)

BJB2: we talked a little about working with parents of kids with suspected learning problems, but what about just working with parents in general?

LisaS: What intervention would you use on a preschool that has tried a goal chart, lap blanket, and have parents who are in denial? Yes, preschool is mostly social learning along with the basics. I am a preschool teacher who has students that are already reading.

HollyMC: in VA? no it is to get them ready for kindergarten, teaching them letters/letter sounds, basic math concepts, working/playing with other children. They were finding that poorer children were struggling from kinder on and this program tries to get them to the same level as other children coming in.

HollyMC: Parents are my biggest challenge.

BJB2 nods to Holly

LindsayE: I work with parents in general, with community resources, and their children, it's amazing, some of the teen parents I work with are so very resilient

LindsayE: unfortunately, I work with some who are so concerned with themselves, their children come as an afterthought

LindsayE: all the families I work with are under 185% poverty level

HollyMC: I don't have teen parents but I do have young parents who are still children themselves. And sometimes treat their children like peers.

LisaS: Yes in Va. we do get them ready for kindergarten but most preschools curriculum is based on social play.

HollyMC: Teen parents must be a challenge. They already know everything!

BJB2 laughs....that's true of most teens!

LindsayE: ooh yes, especially the ones under 16

HollyMC: Wow.

LindsayE: I've resorted before to handing them sheets of paper with a baby to do list

LisaS: I am a preschool and first grade teacher in a private school and we do get them ready for kindergarten but other centers I have worked at think that play is more

important.

BJB2: are we still talking ESL children and parents?

HollyMC: I think play is very important, but structured play

BJB2: which do you think is more important, Lisa?

LisaS: I do feel play is important but academics does need to be fostered into the curriculum.

LeoL: we're talking preschool ESL?

BJB2: we started out doing that, Leo....but I'm not sure right now

LeoL: hehe

LisaS: The center that I used to work at we could not actually teach them their ABCs because that the curriculum did not allow it. I just could not do it so I went back teaching in a private school.

LeoL: can't we integrate play and ESL academics?

HollyMC: for ESL learners I think it is very important to integrate play.

LindsayE: ooh wow, I emphasize parents to begin the abc song at birth, that way the child has it memorized, then can associate the letters to the song as they grow

LeoL: how about a Twister board with letters instead of colors?

LisaS: Yes we can. I have taught Japanese students at the age of 3yrs English.

HollyMC: they learn how to communicate with other children (build vocab), how to role play and for some of them it is the only chance they get to play

LindsayE: there's a great program called phonics in motion which I've seen children, who speak all languages have fun with

HollyMC: what is it? music?

LindsayE: it's hand movements that go with phonetic sounds

LisaS: All the needed was the consistency of us the teachers and watching and hearing the students in the classroom. They also taught me some Japanese.

HollyMC: that's neat, especially for the hands on kids. or the wiggle worms.

LisaS: Also, if the chance I gave them one on one.

LindsayE: yeah, it really helped in spelling later on

LisaS: Teaching sign to students also helps.

LindsayE: definitely

BJB2: good idea, Lisa

LindsayE: when I was student teaching in kindergarten, we had a sign language center

LindsayE: the kids loved it

HollyMC: wow.

BJB2: a good resource for books and other ESL resources ...April is National Poetry Month is <http://www.colorincolorado.org/>

LisaS: The school I work at now we teach sign through music as well as letters, numbers, etc.

BJB2: poetry is like music...teaches rhythm, rhyme

LindsayE: and can be a great group activity, at all ages, each person writes a line...

BJB2: large muscle movement in dancing is also good for developmental skills

HollyMC: I'm teaching poetry next week. I want to pull this up.

LisaS: I love poetry. It is easy to teach poetry through music. Also, rewriting stories such as The Mitten or Stone Soup.

LindsayE: what a great idea, Lisa

HollyMC: I do too. And I'm always surprised at how creative they can be when asked to write their own poems.

LisaS: I meant teaching poetry through music.

BJB2 smiles...there's that "perceived" expectations thing...kids can be much more creative than the 'standards' allow

HollyMC: Oh sorry! But I agree with that too, I usually chart the songs so that they can really work with them.

LisaS: We are actually thinking about having the version of Stone Soup that our Ks and 1st graders wrote published.

HollyMC: for voice print match and sight words. I love it.

LindsayE: they would love that!

LeoL: did you do it as a poem? (is it a poem originally?)

BJB2: Lisa, have you looked at www.tikatok.com ?

LisaS: This is why word wall are the greatest.

BJB2 . o O (Jeff's favorite site of the month)

LindsayE: oftentimes, you can look up college national sororities or fraternities, and they will publish the books for part of their philanthropic duties

BJB2: tikatok allows you to publish your storiesonline for free, print version has a fee

HollyMC: We use Lucy Calkins, she is great and this is a lot like her. We have 'publishing parties' where the kids 'publish' their fav stories.

LindsayE: it's a great way to get something cool for your students free, and join with another organization, then, work on a class Thank You note, getting in some good manners lessons!

LisaS: I did not know that. I will definitely pass that on to my sorority sisters.

HollyMC: that would be awesome if we could take it one (real) step further

LisaS: I agree.

BJB2 cheers...collaboration!

LindsayE: Alpha Xi Delta is a sorority I know for sure does it, as well as the national education fraternities often are willing!

BJB2: we have five minutes left...not bad considering we have no 'official' discussion leader ;-)

LindsayE: they'll actually send the books to other schools as donations too!

HollyMC: but we got some good resources!

LindsayE: definitely, and some great ideas!

BJB2: how proud the kids would be to see their book in the school library

LisaS: I think that students would appreciate reading and writing more if they saw their own work in print.

BJB2: excellent discussion....I love it!

HollyMC: Oh absolutely. They LOVE when I type it up and give it to them.

HollyMC: and it makes it more real. Real authors do that.

LindsayE: ooh yes!

BJB2: I recommend that you participate in the K to 3 Resources discussion on Tuesday

HollyMC: what time is it at?

BJB2: click on the Tapped In tab at the top of your screen and then click on Calendar in the blue menu bar

BJB2 . o O (each person has their calendar set to their time zone)

LeoL: thanks for letting me sit in. and thanks for all the ideas

BJB2: it's 8pm EDT/5pm PDT

HollyMC: perfect, thank you.

BJB2 hugs Leo. Always nice to see you!

LeoL: thanks BJB! gotta go back to work ...

BJB2: thanks, Holly, Lindsay and Lisa, for this exciting discussion. Please join us again

LindsayE: thank you!!

BJB2 . o O (hopefully, Paul will be back on track)

LeoL: thanks Lindsay, Holly and Lisa

HollyMC: thank you!!

BJB2 waves goodnight.

LisaS: thank you. I have enjoyed it and will take all the advice and use it.

LisaS: goodnight