

News and Notes From Teacher Brianne

One of the most basic needs and rights of children is the ability to communicate their needs, thoughts and desires with others. Children with communication differences such as non-speaking individuals should be allowed free access to *robust* alternative and augmentative communication systems (AAC) the same as speaking children have unrestricted access to their voice which cannot be externally controlled and is constantly modeled and stimulated. Considerations for alternatives should be given for all children who struggle with language and communication because although they may have emerging skills, it is important to remember that *under stress, we all regress* and those speaking skills may be limited in the moments they need them most.

Coming Up...

- **February 6:** Teacher work day, no school/sessions
- **February 17:** Progress Reports sent to parents
- **February 20–21:** Mid-winter break, no school or sessions
- **March 25:** Everett Sp. Ed. PTSA Run, Walk & Roll 5K [sign up here](#)
- **March 27–31:** Parent–Teacher Conferences—no school/sessions
- **April 3–7:** Spring Break, no school/sessions

Special Education

At the end of the Evaluation Results meeting an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) meeting, there is a section for all the participants to sign. The intent of this page is for documentation that the team members attended and participated in the meeting. It is not an endorsement of the information written in the document. If you do not agree with something that other team members have presented or proposed, you may ask for a statement to be written in the prior written notice to reflect your objections. Then you may request a follow-up meeting if things are not able to be resolved in that meeting. In addition, you have the right to invite others to participate in the meeting as well, such as a friend, family member or family advocate who help families navigate the special education process. Please inform the case manager before the meeting if you are inviting someone else.

Neurodiversity

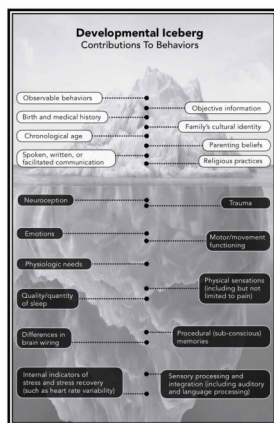
One of the pillars of the neurodiversity movement is the sentiment: **presume competence**. When you presume competence, you assume a child with a disability does and can understand when they are being spoken of and to. And if we do not presume competence and treat a person like they cannot learn or cannot understand and turn out to be wrong, our presumption would do them irreparable harm. Many individuals have written on their experiences of such harm before they were given access to assistive technology such as Ido Kedar, author of *Ido in Autismland*. He blogs his experiences at: <http://idoinautismland.com/>

In The Community - PAVE



This advocacy organization has several programs that serve families of and individuals with disabilities in many facets such as finding healthcare funding, respite care, parent support groups as well as advocates who know really well the laws governing special education and may support you in the process of evaluation and IEP meetings and much more.

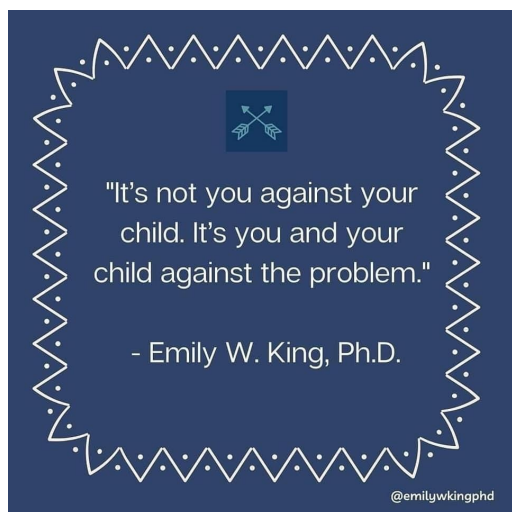
Social Emotional Learning: All Behavior is Communication



These two posters (left from Mona DelaHooke and right from Greg Santucci) remind us that there is so much more to consider about a behavior we observe a child having than what we typically attribute it to. We have to be detectives and dig deeper to truly understand what need the child is communicating through the behavior. Santucci's poster says, "The function of any behavior is much deeper than phrases like 'attention seeking'. This shallow analysis will lead to using rewards and punishments to get compliance. Want to improve behavior? Solve the problem! How do you solve the problem? Dig deeper! Click on each poster to go to the website and see a full size graphic.



What we worked on



Coaching Notes

Most of the time, children are not going to be able to tell you the reason why they have a certain behavior, it is necessary for us to do a lot of detective work for piece things together. However, we should always start by asking the child about the concerns. Dr. Ross Greene's line is: "I've noticed you are having difficulty with, _ (expectation)_ . What's up?" If they say they don't know, or fail to answer after a lot of think time, give them a hypothesis and ask them to give you a thumbs up, down or in the middle to indicate if you have ascertained their concern.

Teacher Brianne's Recommendations

Book

Ido in Autismland by Ido Kedar



Podcast or Blog

Two Sides of Spectrum



Social Media

Meaningful speech

