

Published by Cerebral Palsy of New Jersey

Educating for Success

Success Stories and Solutions for Educating Students with Disabilities.

Now in its 2nd Year!

Giving Students Choices

Last year Cerebral Palsy of New Jersey developed a new service to meet the needs of students who participate in Extended School Year programs.

The program, **Choices: A Creative Approach to Extended School Year Services**, takes extended school year programs out of the classroom and offers a new approach to continuous and fun learning for students ages 3 to 21. Students participating in **Choices** have the opportunity to experience the community around them and to use both their past and everyday learning experiences in real world settings.

Cerebral Palsy of New Jersey develops an individualized curriculum for each student and then provides the staff suitable to provide the support and implement the curriculum. The students who participated last year were involved in a variety of activities that included: attending summer camp, job sampling, learning and practicing independent living

SEE PAGE 4

How Thinking Ahead Can Make a Transition Easier

by Jeannette Van Houten

Natasha is about mid-way through her freshman year in high school and things are going well. It's no accident that she was able to transition smoothly from middle school. About a year ago, her child study team began putting a plan in place.

As an eighth grader, Natasha was using a talking word processor and word prediction software for written expression. She had been using the tools successfully for two years in the same classroom. Her aide was familiar with her word processor and with the program she used and could handle the little glitches that popped up from time to time.

In getting Natasha ready for high school, her Child Study Team (CST) wanted to be certain of three things. First, they wanted to be sure the tools that had become a staple in Natasha's learning process would be available and continue to be used and, second, that she would have supports in place in case she ran into problems using them. Finally, they wanted Natasha to be comfortable changing classes with the tools and getting them hooked up in each new location.

A training was scheduled for the middle of August for the staff who would be working with Natasha. During the full-day workshop, they received training on the software



Natasha used and had hands on practice using the word processor. During the workshop, Natasha's aide from middle school shared some of the difficulties they had run into and the solutions that had come up with. Natasha was invited to come to the training at the end of the day so she could meet her new staff and express some of her concerns about the upcoming school year.

The CST also thought it was important for Natasha to receive training prior to the start of school. Six hours of her Extended School Year program were set aside for three visits, two hours each, at the high school

SEE PAGE 4

Upcoming Workshops and Presentations

Members of Cerebral Palsy of New Jersey's Assistive Technology Services Department will be presenting on the following topics in the near future. For registration information about these workshops and conferences, contact information is listed.

AccessAbilities 2006

William Paterson University is hosting **AccessAbilities 2006**, a conference on Assistive Technology and Augmentative and Alternative Communication on March 16 and 17 at its campus in Wayne.

Presenter: Julie Burhart, MS, CCC-SLP, ATP

When: March 16, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

AAC and Recreation: Let's Play!

We all know that children learn through play and exploration. Many children who require AAC cannot interact with toys and games as their typically developing peers do. This workshop focuses on adapting toys and games for children with disabilities and how to promote AAC use within these activities. AAC systems range from No/Lo Tech to High Tech for children of all abilities.

Participants are able to experience a variety of AAC systems and learn how to adapt recreation activities. Participants leave the workshop with a list of vendors for AAC systems and games presented.

Presenter: Fred Tchang, ATP

When: March 16, 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Reading and Writing: Exploring Assessment Methods and Best Practices

How can you improve the assessment process? Learn from the experience of people and organizations from around the country who are grappling with the same difficulties choosing and using assistive technology for reading and writing. Tools to be discussed include SETT, WATI Assessment forms, and FEAT.

Presenter: Mike Marotta, ATP

When: March 17, 2 to 4 p.m.

Escaping the Mouse Trap: Sorting through Cursor Control Options (Hands-on)

For some individuals, the mouse creates a physical barrier to the computer they cannot overcome. This workshop focuses on the wide range of mouse alternatives available to enable access to computer functions. Discuss evaluation tools necessary to determine an appropriate match between user's needs and features of the various alternatives, and address the principles of proper positioning and ergonomics as they relate to workstation design and equipment placement.

For more information or to register for **AccessAbilities 2006**, contact conference chair Christine Besko, at 973-720-3345 or via email at beskoc@wpunj.edu.

Differentiated Instruction and Technology

The New Jersey Educational Computing Cooperative is co-sponsoring the **Differentiated Instruction and Technology** with Montclair State University on March 14, 2006. Additional workshops will be held on March 15 and 16.

Presenter: Mike Marotta, ATP

When: March 14

Engineering the Classroom

Through Universal Design This workshop focuses on ways to adapt the learning environment to meet the needs of all students. Through the principles of Universal Design, we will discuss the different learning styles and strategies to ensure that all students are engaged throughout the classroom.

Attendees will participate in activities to determine their personal learning style and will leave the workshop

with a variety of tools to help them better meet the needs of each student. We will also highlight some creative uses of the tools that may already be in the learning environment.

For more information or to register, contact www.njecc.org.

Upper Saddle River Educational Support Group

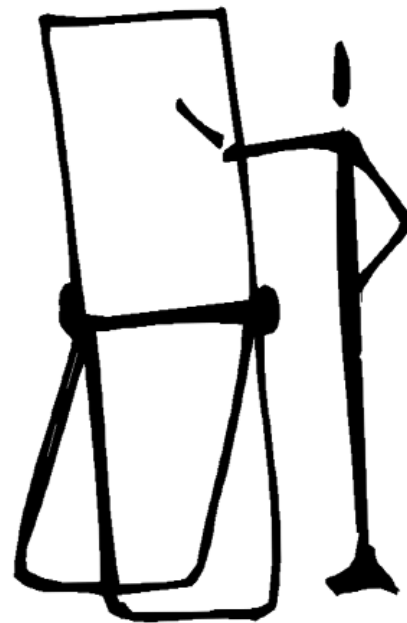
The **Educational Support Group** of Upper Saddle River will host this presentation at the Upper Saddle River Library, 245 Lake Street, Upper Saddle River. For information contact Ann Marie Kennedy, 201-236-4891 or via email at am_kennedy@verizon.net.

Presenter: Jeannette VanHouten,

When: March 14, 7 to 9 p.m.

Learn how your child can benefit from Assistive Technology Do your children have difficulty with reading or writing? We will be

SEE PAGE 4



Cerebral Palsy of New Jersey has been recognized by the New Jersey Department of Education as a "Registered New Jersey Professional Development Provider."

Speech-Language Pathologist Serving Northern Region

Cerebral Palsy of New Jersey welcomes Julie Burhart, MS, CCC-SLP, who is an ASHA-certified Speech-Language Pathologist licensed to practice in both New Jersey and New York.

Additionally, Julie holds her ATP certification from RESNA. She received her master's degree from Ithaca College. While working in Upstate New York she provided Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) services to individuals of all ages and abilities.

Julie also served on Cerebral Palsy of New York State's Assistive Technology Committee and assisted with developing its AAC Principles of Best Practice. Julie recently provided services at the New Lisbon Developmental Center.

Julie will be providing AAC services for Northern New Jersey. These services include assessments for chil-

dren and adults within the community, technical assistance, training on incorporating, using and caring for AAC systems, and in-servicing professionals on augmentative communication devices and systems.

For more information about scheduling an AAC assessment, training or technical assistance, contact Fred Tchang at 888-322-1918 ext. 588 or via email at ftchang@cpofnj.org.



Case Study:

Elementary Applications for Getting Organized

by **Jeannette Van Houten**

In the last issue of *Educating for Success*, we looked at ways to help older students get organized. But there's no reason why organizational skills shouldn't be addressed much earlier. Here are a few elementary applications:

Johanna, a second grader, was recently diagnosed with a learning disability that affects her writing and reading. In addition, Johanna's desk at school was typically covered with worksheets and papers and the floor around her was littered with crayons and pencils and miscellaneous items. Her lack of order concerned her educational staff and parents - this was more than simply a sloppy student.

Her educational team and parents decided to use designer scotch tape (ivy leaves) to create a border around her desk. This gave her a visual reference of where her desk ended. To help with papers, two color-coded pocket folders were given to Johanna.

A red folder was used to hold papers that were done. A green folder was used to hold activities and papers that needed to be completed. The folders were attached to the side of the desk with magnetic tape, this allowed for easy placement and removal.

To help with utensils (pens, markers and crayons), small pencil bags with magnetic strips were added to the side of the desk. Getting her materials in order helped Johanna feel more in control of her learning. It was the first step in tackling her learning disability.

For students with learning disabilities, organizational skills need to be addressed at a very young age. Just like students need to practice their letters and numbers, students need to practice creating structure in their lives.

For more information about helping students get organized, contact Fred Tchang at 888-322-1918 ext. 588 or via email at ftchang@cpofnj.org.

Upcoming Workshops and Presentations

FROM PAGE 2

demonstrating different ways that children with learning disabilities can use assistive technology, both high tech and low tech, to reach their educational goals. We will demonstrate some of the assistive technology available and discuss how we can provide support to help your students reach their goals.

Abilities Expo 2006

The **Abilities Expo**, a showcase for the latest products and services for people with disabilities will be held April 21 through April 23 at the New Jersey Convention and Expo Center in Edison.

Presenters: Julie Burhart, MS, CCC-SLP, ATP and Emily Hurley, MS, CCC-SLP, ATP

When: April 22, 1 to 2 p.m.

From Low to High Tech: Communication

Solutions that Work at Home and at School This presentation will introduce parents and professionals to a number of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) strategies and solutions meant to be useful and accessible in both the school and home environments. Strategies will include low-cost, low-tech options and describe ways of creating a learning environment rich in communication opportunities and language-learning.

Presenter: Mike Marotta, ATP

When: April 21, 4 to 5 p.m.

Technology in the Workplace Are you supporting people who are struggling to meet their vocational goals? Join us for this fast paced session exploring the world of assistive technology solutions in the workplace. We highlight low to high tech solutions and there will be hands-on opportunities.

Presenter: Mike Marotta, ATP

When: April 22, 4 to 5 p.m.

The Mouse Hunt: Exploring Mouse Alternatives This session will focus on the variety of mouse alternatives available to replace the standard mouse. Participants will experience devices that provide mouse access from a variety of methods (head control, hand, foot, etc.) We will also discuss mouse adjustments that can be made right in Windows XP to increase functionality. Resources will be

provided for participants to obtain additional information.

We've included a flyer in this mailing that contains a **free pass** to the Abilities Expo. Feel free to photocopy it and bring a friend.

For more information on the Abilities Expo, visit www.abilitiesexpo.com.

Thinking Ahead

FROM PAGE 1

the week before classes started. Natasha became familiar with her new surroundings and was able to practice using her tools in the natural environment.

A one-day workshop for her teachers and aides and six hours of "practice time" made a huge difference for Natasha last September. She started high school feeling confident and comfortable. She was able to jump right into classwork with her peers because her tools were with her and ready to go.

For more information on creating a seamless transition plan for students moving to a different classroom or school, contact Associate Executive Director Jackie Edwards at 888-322-1918 ext. 526 or via email at jedwards@cpofnj.org

Giving Students Choices

FROM PAGE 1

skills, attending theater workshops, and going grocery shopping. In addition, students were able to develop and/or increase social skills since they were able to participate in many of these activities with their siblings and friends. Conducting the program in community settings offers students the opportunity to participate in society while working on academic and vocational goals.

For more information on the **Choices** program for students ages 3 through 13, contact Angela Baldwin at 856-310-0214 ext. 32 or abaldwin@cpofnj.org and for information on programs for students who are 14 through 21, contact Lorraine Brown at 609-392-4004 ext. 532.

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