



## Teachers' Corner

### Teaching Pyramid Model in Pre-K Inclusive Settings



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Social-emotional competence in young children is highly associated with their long-term success in school (Fantuzzo et al., 2007). Social-emotional competence has been defined as “a set of skills including self-regulation, self-concept, self-efficacy, and prosocial behaviors with teachers and peers” (Fantuzzo et al., 2007, p. 46). There is growing evidence of the existing relationship between social-emotional competence and other developmental skills such as cognitive and communication skills (Brown & Conroy, 2011).

Research shows 10% of kindergarten children exhibit challenging behaviors (Kuperschmidt, Bryant, & Willoughby, 2000). These behaviors can be targeted early on during preschool years. However, many preschool programs respond to challenging behaviors by expelling children from the program. A national study revealed 9.5% of preschool teachers in federal-funded programs reported having expelled at least one preschool child within 12 months (Gilliam, 2005).

#### Why Do Preschools Expel Children?

Previous research indicated many early childhood teachers do not have the resources to implement evidence-based practices (Carter & Norman, 2010), nor do they have the training to use preventative strategies to support young children with challenging behaviors in the classroom (Branson & Demchak, 2011). Therefore, it becomes critical to provide teachers with ongoing individualized training to work with children with challenging behaviors in Pre-K settings.

#### What is Teaching Pyramid Model (TPM)?

This comprehensive model consists of three different levels: promotion, prevention, and intensive intervention. The uni-

versal promotion level includes approaches that should support all children in the classroom. It targets forming responsive relationships with children as well as arranging a supportive environment. Examples of this level include structuring smooth transitions between classroom activities, posting and reviewing a classroom schedule, engaging in supportive conversations with children, helping children in selecting center activities, using simple and specific directions, and providing descriptive feedback for appropriate behaviors (Fox, Dunlap, Hemmeter, Joseph, & Strain, 2003).

The prevention level focuses on providing explicit instruction of social and emotional skills to young children who need specific supports, in addition to those provided in the first level. In this level, teachers provide systematic intentional instruction. Examples of social-emotional skill teaching include using strategies such as modeling, role-play, or discussion to teach turn-taking, sharing, emotion expression, or problem solving (Fox et al., 2003). For instance, teachers can invite non-targeted children to model turn-taking during center activities and then have the target child demonstrate this skill.

Another example of social-emotional instruction is brainstorming ideas with children to solve a problem. Let's say children are fighting over paper money in the housekeeping center. The teacher can have a discussion with the children and guide them to come up with a solution. A solution could include taking a turn, creating more money with paper, or splitting up the money. It is worth noting that teaching social-emotional skills can occur during large-group or small-group activities. For example, teachers can read books which teach social-emotional skills during circle time and have a subsequent discussion about the books.

The intensive intervention level of the TPM involves providing children with persistent challenging behaviors individualized behavior support plans (BSPs). When teachers consistently implement practices related to the first two levels of the pyramid, fewer children will need this intensive level of intervention. At this level, challenging behaviors of a child are observed to determine the maintaining variables and find out what the child is trying to communicate through her behavior (Fox et al., 2003). The goal of BSPs is to replace challenging behaviors by teaching the child appropriate behaviors. At this level, more professionals are typically involved in creating a BSP including the parents of the target child.

#### How to Support Teachers

Research has indicated providing teachers with ongoing individualized support with feedback on their implementation of evidence-based practices has more lasting effects than a one-day workshop (Wayne, Yoon, Zhu, Cronen, & Garet, 2008).

\*Winner of the Student Poster Presentation Award at the 2017 DADD Conference

## President's Message

Elizabeth A. West



With 2018 right around the corner, we are all looking forward to the 19th International DADD Conference in Clearwater Beach, Florida at the beautiful Sheraton Sand Key Resort on January 17th–19th. This past year went by quickly, and my year as president of DADD is drawing to a close. I feel thankful to have had the opportunity to serve as the president, and I truly appreciate all of the support I have received throughout the year. I continue to be amazed by our dedicated members and Board of Directors, a group of individuals who inspire me and encourage me to lean in to the work—especially on those days where it feels like the barriers are insurmountable.

I would like to thank the outgoing Board members for their service and welcome incoming members. Special thanks to David Cihak, Past President and Beth Kavanaugh, Canadian At-Large Member who are transitioning off the Board. You both have done an outstanding job, and I have no doubt that you will continue to serve at many levels. We have been fortunate to have you as part of our Board. Welcome to Ginevra Courtade, our new Vice President and Kimberly Maich, Canadian At-Large Member. Thank you for your willingness to serve DADD!

This past year has brought a lot of change to my life as I transitioned into a new position as Director of Special Ed-

ucation for a public school district. I have already learned so much and continue to think of ways to influence outcomes for learners with disabilities and their teachers. I realize now how privileged I was at a University where I had ready access to the cutting edge of everything—research, resources, and conversations that shaped and fine-tuned my practice and the practice of those special educators with whom I worked. I now find myself in a situation where these things aren't readily available, and I am learning an entirely new skill set. I continue to consider the context that I am working in and ponder questions such as: How do we provide professional development that is meaningful and sustainable? How do we access appropriate curriculum? How do we collaborate to ensure teachers are knowledgeable about evidence-based practices? Time and time again I have turned to DADD for resources and have disseminated these to the teachers. Whether it has been the journal, online journal, website, or social-media, we have many venues for sharing research, information, news and tips. I feel that the division is in tune with the pulse of education and works to ensure that information is accessible and useful for special educators. I am thankful that I have been part of such an organization.

In closing, I wish to thank the members of the DADD Board of Directors who have provided me with so much support. I am excited about the year ahead as incoming President, Jordan Shurr, takes the reigns. Jordan has already contributed in many meaningful ways to the division, and I am certain he will continue to do so in his Presidential role.

I look forward to seeing everyone at our conference in January!



## Legal Brief

### 'Hanging Out': Meeting IDEA's Requirements for Recreation Planning



Juliet E. Hart Barnett & Stanley H. Zucker  
Arizona State University

Participation in recreation and leisure activities offers social and therapeutic value for youth with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or other developmental disabilities (DD; Duvdevany & Arar, 2004) including improved quality of life (Kleinert, Miracle, & Sheppard-Jones, 2007) and social acceptance, particularly as adolescence approaches (Dodd, Zabriskie, Widmer, & Eggett, 2009). Participation in structured physical activities also increases social interaction and friendships with typically developing peers while improving social and adaptive skills of youth with ASD/DD (Auxter, Pyfer, & Huettig, 2005).

However, adolescents and young adults with ASD or other DD are frequently described as having few friends, limited engagement in organized or unorganized social interactions or recreation, and accessing a restricted range of integrated opportunities in spite of the value of participating in recreation and leisure (Abells, Burbidge, & Minnes, 2008). Research suggests youth with high functioning autism participate in a narrower range of physical activities or formal recreational activities than

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their same-age, typical peers; most commonly, these recreation or leisure activities take place in their own homes or the homes of relatives (Potvin, Snider, Prelock, Kehayia, & Wood-Dauphinee, 2013).

## How Does IDEA Address Recreation and Leisure?

Recreation as a “related service,” according to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act regulations (2012), includes therapeutic recreation services, leisure education, and recreation programs in schools and community agencies (34 C.F.R. § 300.34[c][11]). These services are intended to help children with disabilities learn how to use their leisure and recreation time constructively; services can be offered during or after the school day and in the community (National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities, 2010).

As part of providing this related service, persons qualified to provide recreation assess a child’s leisure interests and capacities, provide recreation therapeutic services and activities to develop a child’s functional skills, train parents, and identify community resources (Mattson, 2001). Educators, school therapists, and family members have unique knowledge and skills to share with coaches or volunteers who lead community- or school-based leisure and recreational activities. The IEP and transition planning process offers a natural context for implementing a collaborative team approach to explore recreational and leisure activities (Menear & Smith, 2008). A particular concern for youth with ASD or other DD is the fact that independent living, including recreation and leisure, often receives less IEP attention (Potvin, Prelock, & Snider, 2008).

## Strategies for Promoting Recreation/Leisure Activities

Unlike most typically developing peers, many youth with ASD or other DD need more explicit instruction in leisure education that generalizes to unstructured settings or more structured support for organized recreational and leisure activities, whether in integrated or segregated settings (Cuhadar & Diken, 2011). Strategies to consider may be grouped by those that specifically target engaging family, peers, and community partners in order to provide students with the social skills needed to successfully engage in recreational and leisure activities.

**Engage families.** Families are key to ongoing social participation as youth with ASD or other DD transition to adulthood. To engage families, create a space (whether online, on a bulletin board, or in a newsletter) featuring upcoming opportunities for recreation and leisure; students can help with the link and site maintenance. Send e-mails or newsletters; students can help or take the lead on adding information about recreational and leisure opportunities of interest to them. Create a class calendar; add important dates regarding school events, extracurricular opportunities, sports clubs, community events, and other opportunities. Have students create videos about their recreational and leisure interests to send home to their families.

**Develop peer partners.** There are many formal and informal ways to promote friendships for teens with ASD or other DD in school, starting with a simple lunch buddy program involving typically developing peers at a critical hang out location, the lunchroom. Start a Project Unify Club in your school using the resources from Special Olympics web site. Develop a mentor program by partnering with your local college or university, or even a local sports team. Create your own e-mail pen pal program between your class and another class of typically developing students.

**Employ research-based practices.** To experience success, youth with ASD or other DD often need direct instruction or other supports to prepare them for participation in these integrated events. Social stories—individualized stories that direct an individual on a particular behavior—have been shown to increase positive interactions with peer partners (Delano & Snell, 2006). Similar to social stories, video modeling is a technique teachers can use to demonstrate a particular behavior (Ganz, Earles-Vollrath, & Cook, 2011). Videos can utilize peers and other individuals for models, or they can use a self-modeling approach in which the student would be videotaped performing the particular behaviors and shown the video as both a reminder and to reinforce the learned behaviors (Ganz et al., 2011).

**Investigate apps.** Tablet or iPad applications that support communication or provide prompts for peer conversation are also a viable option to prepare students for the social interactions requisite for active participation in recreational activities. Applications such as iPrompts allow individuals to create visual schedules including timers and pictures, which can inform the youth of what comes next and build preparation for that next step. Conversation Builder is an iPad application that teaches children the main elements of having a conversation with a peer: introductions, changing the topic, sharing information, etc.

**Collaborate with community partners.** To access recreational and leisure opportunities, partnerships with community organizations and agencies are vital. Teachers can create a community map of options for students and identify people to partner with. It is advisable to start with a local city or county web site, which will typically list county agencies such as Parks and Recreation. Agencies advertise activities and opportunities, either free or with a fee, as well as service opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Conducting a web search for recreational opportunities for youth with ASD or other DD will result in links to a variety of web-based or downloadable resources. To students who are often served, the opportunity to serve others is transformative in many ways.

## Conclusion

For students with ASD and DD, structured physical activities increase social interaction and friendships with typically developing peers and improve social and adaptive skills. IDEA mandates concerning recreation represent an important area for consideration by education teams.

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## DADD Awards Presented at the 2017 CEC Annual Convention

A wonderful group of individuals received awards at DADD's General Business meeting held during the CEC annual convention in Boston, Massachusetts. Following are the awards and award winners for 2017:

The **Teacher of the Year Award** was given to Barbara Putnam, an educator in Charlotte, North Carolina. A teacher for over 20 years, Ms. Putnam was described as a dedicated professional who goes above and beyond to provide the best for her students.



The **Para-educator Award** was presented to Heather Mills, a para-educator in Illinois. Ms. Mills was described as someone who is patient, dedicated, and a leader for teachers and paraeducators alike. Her enthusiasm and commitment to the field is evident in her work as well as in her pursuit of a Master's in Special Education.



The **Tom E. C. Smith Early Career Award** is given to someone who is in the beginning of his or her career and showing promise in contributing greatly to the field. This year's winner was Dr. Carly Roberts, *University of Washington*, whose research focuses on improving outcomes for learners with severe disabilities in the areas of literacy and science as well as on the use of evidence-based practices in classrooms.



The **Research Award** was given to Emily Bouck, *Michigan State University*, for her years of contributions to the field. Dr. Bouck's work has focused on math education, daily living supports, and technology integration for learners with intellectual disability, autism, and developmental disabilities.



The **Burton Blatt Humanitarian Award** is given to someone who has been a leader and

advocate for many years in the area of intellectual disabilities. This year's recipient was Stanley Zucker, *Arizona State University*. Dr. Zucker is a dedicated leader and advocate for individuals with intellectual disability, who has mentored and taught hundreds, if not thousands, of special education professionals who continue to impact classrooms and higher education today.



## DADD Election Results!

DADD is proud to announce the results of the election for board members starting in January, 2018; congratulations to those elected and thank you to everyone who ran for office. Also, thank you to all the members who voted in this year's election.

**Vice President** – Ginevra Courtade  
**Canadian At-Large Member** – Kimberly Maich

See the next issue of DADD Express for more information about our newly elected board members!

## Editor's Note

Ginevra Courtade



Please note, we are looking for a new Editor of DADD Express! See p. 6 for a description of the role and application process. Also, feel free to contact me with any questions about what it is like to edit the newsletter.

Interested in writing for DADD Express? We are soliciting articles for: Teachers' Corner, and our EBP and Legal Briefs sections. If you would like to contribute, please contact me with ideas or questions ([g.courtade@louisville.edu](mailto:g.courtade@louisville.edu)).

See you at the DADD conference in January and at the CEC conference in February!

## Students' Corner

### Only YOU Can Prevent Burnout!



**Autumn Eyre**  
University of Washington

Despite promises to work on my R&I (research and inquiry project) all summer, the days ticked by and I had yet to check my university email, let alone engage in academic writing. After two years of this doctoral program and my previous school experience (yes, I'm a 22nd grader), *emotional exhaustion* hit me like a ton of bricks. This emotional state is one of three dimensions of burnout as defined by Maslach (2003), along with depersonalization and feelings of lacking accomplishment. As it turns out, many graduate students experience feelings of burnout which can lead to stress, loneliness, and ultimately poor health (Boren, 2013; Cornér, Löfström, & Pyhältö, 2017; Devine & Hunter, 2017). Here are some tips to not only mitigate burnout but prevent it from happening.

#### Turn Off Devices

A constant influx of social media push-ins can overstimulate and overwhelm (Florida National University, 2001). Unplugging from technology daily (e.g., cell phones, computers, television, etc.) allows for peace and relaxation (Gray, 2015). Bilton (2013) provides practical solutions for not going cold turkey, such as (a) creating a gadget-free zone in your house, (b) turning off your Wi-Fi to reduce alerts, and (c) going on long drives to areas without cell phone coverage.

#### Be Social!

Rather than telling friends or family “No, I can’t because I have too much work,” say “Yes!” As it turns out, social support networks can act as protectors against stress and reduce feelings of burnout (Boren, 2013).

#### Allow Multiple Breaks

Resist the urge to work all day from sunrise to sunset, because taking breaks can prevent you from burning out in the first place (Hoffman, 2017).

#### Naps Aren’t for Kids

Your brain learns while it sleeps, so a lack of rest can hurt your attention span, working memory, mood regulation, logical reasoning and much more (Medina, 2014). Listen to your body if you’re tired – take a nap! A study of NASA pilots found taking a 26-minute nap improved performance by 34 percent (Rosekind et al., 1994).

#### Watch Out for 3:00 pm

According to Medina (2014), our bodies slow down around 3:00 p.m. He suggests not scheduling exams, important meetings, etc. during these times if possible. Also, Medina notes this is an excellent time for that power nap!

#### Move It!

Exercise is sometimes the first thing to go as September responsibilities pile up on us. According to Medina (2014), exercise increases oxygen flow to the brain, improving cognition, focus, emotional well-being, and overall health.

#### Turn to Your Advisor

Sometimes the first instinct with an advisor is to come across as competent and able to handle graduate school independently. Devine and Hunter (2017) found that supportive supervision reduces feelings of burnout.

#### Conclusion

It’s easy to focus all our energy and passion on graduate school, but it’s important that we engage in self-care. Graduate school is a marathon and sprinting will only lead to burnout and possibly not finishing. The most important tip to remember is reaching out to your advisor and social network. For the first time this year, I doubted my ability to continue with my doctoral program, but it was my advisor, friends, and a few of these strategies that reinvigorated my passion for this work.

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# DADD is searching for a new DADD Express Editor!

## Job Description

**Purpose:** To coordinate the various aspects of publication of the division newsletter. The newsletter is published four times a year and inserted in membership issues of the journal, *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities*.

**Term of Office:** Appointment, three-year term, may be renewed a second term

## Responsibilities:

- Establish content and list of articles for each issue.
- Request articles and photos from various sources, primarily from DADD board members.
- Set due dates for submission of articles in a timely manner, corresponding to meet journal publishing deadlines.
- Remind authors of articles of publication deadlines.
- Review all submissions for content and edit for grammatical errors.
- Format each article such as headings, and photos to be included and their descriptions.
- Organize submissions and make a draft layout of the newsletter with approximations of article placements.
- Coordinate all logistics of layout and printing with publisher (i.e., Hammill Institute).

- Proofread typeset copy and make corrections.
- Coordinate with publisher regarding any problems in the process.
- Work with the publisher to create a formatted Web-ready pdf file.
- Work with the DADD Web coordinator to place the pdf file on the Web site.
- Send individual articles and photos to the Web coordinator for posting on the Web site.
- Participate in the activities of the DADD.
- Bring camera to the DADD activities and take pictures or arrange for photos to be taken for the newsletter and Web site.

## Qualifications:

- Must be a member of DADD.
- Must be organized and able to meet timelines.
- Must have writing and editing skills.
- Must be able to commit the time to complete all the listed responsibilities.

## To Apply:

- Submit a letter to Emily Bouck ([ecb@msu.edu](mailto:ecb@msu.edu)), Communications Chair, outlining your qualifications for the position and your involvement in DADD
- Applications due 1/10/18



(*Teachers' Corner*, continued from page 1)

Accordingly, we conducted a single-case study to examine the effects of individualized coaching and feedback on the use of TPM practices by three Head Start teachers. Coaching entailed goal setting with each teacher, developing an action plan, and providing suggestions and performance feedback. As we shared in our results at DADD Conference 2017, teachers' skills in implementing TPM practices increased after introducing the intervention.

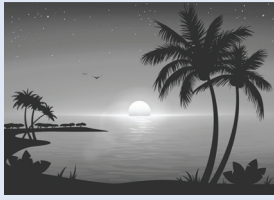
## Conclusion

TPM is a model designed to help teachers implement evidence-based practices to support social-emotional development of young children. It encompasses three levels: promotion, prevention, and intensive intervention. Teachers could likely benefit the most from this model when provided individualized coaching based on their needs to implement TPM practices.

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## DADD Conference Meetings and Social Events

Sheraton Sand Key Resort, Clearwater, FL

January 17–19, 2018

### WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17TH

Pre-conference Sessions (8:30–3:30)

Opening Keynote (4:30–6:00)

President's Reception (6:00–7:30)

Student Social (8–10 pm)

### THURSDAY, JANUARY 18TH

Early Career Lunch (11:45–12:45)

Conference Committee Meeting (11:45–12:45)

Awards Committee Meeting (1:30–2:00)

Critical Issues Committee Meeting (2:00–3:00)

Communications Committee Meeting (3:00–4:00)

Finance Committee Meeting (4:00–5:00)

General Business Meeting (5:00–6:00)

### FRIDAY, JANUARY 19TH

Membership Committee Meeting (9:00–10:00)

Publications Committee Meeting (11:00–12:00)

Student Lunch (11:45–12:45)

Diversity Committee Meeting (12:00–1:00)

Subdivisions Committee Meeting (1:30–2:30)

Closing Keynote (2:15–3:15)

(*Legal Brief*, continued from page 3)

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(*Student's Corner*, continued from page 5)

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## Top Ten Reasons to Attend DADD's 2018 International Conference on Autism, Intellectual Disability & Developmental Disabilities!

1. Connect the dots: *Research-Informed Practice*. Presentations focus on evidence-based and practice-informed strategies and interventions.
2. Value added alert: **BACB CEUs** at no additional cost!
3. Networking opportunities: connect with peers and colleagues at the President's Reception, luncheons, in the exhibit hall, and at poster presentations.
4. Timing is everything: it's in January **AND** it's in Clearwater Beach, Florida.
5. Professional Development: PDHs and Attendance Certificates included with registration.
6. Program depth and breadth: 200+ interactive lectures and poster presentations.
7. Great value: an outstanding 3-day program **AND** breakfast and lunch are included with registration.
8. Location, location, location: Clearwater Beach is one of the best in the world!
9. Go deeper with your knowledge base: choice of two in-depth, pre-conference training institutes—*Using Current and Emerging Technologies to Enhance Outcomes for Students with ASD and/or Intellectual Disability: Practical Training for Educators* or *Ethical and Supervising Considerations When Working with School-based Teams*.
10. Be inspired: self-advocate and author, Robert Pio Hajjar, is a keynote speaker.

For further information, please contact Cindy Perras, DADD Conference Co-ordinator, at [cindy.perras@gmail.com](mailto:cindy.perras@gmail.com). Please visit our website, [www.daddcec.org](http://www.daddcec.org) for the link to register for the conference!