



▶ CAN WE PREDICT FUTURE SUCCESS THROUGH EXAMINATION OF OUR UNDERGRADUATE CLINICAL EXPERIENCE? 2



▶ ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTION WITH FEEDING ISSUES 2



▶ THE RAPID ASSESSMENT OF PROBLEM SOLVING IN ADULTS WITH TBI 2

Research focus

ADVANCING KNOWLEDGE THROUGH INVESTIGATION, & IMPROVING LIVES BY ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS IN OUR COMMUNITIES & PLANTING THE SEEDS FOR A SUCESSFUL FUTURE.

Creating a Sense of Community for On-line Learners

By: **Jo Shackelford Ed.D.***

I am completing a quantitative descriptive study designed to determine which types of learner-learner and learner-instructor interaction are most predictive of student sense of community (SoC) in online graduate courses at a regional comprehensive university. Analyses also identified which interaction types offer the highest yield to the instructor who seeks to efficiently facilitate SoC. Results indicated that learner-learner interactions that were most predictive of SoC were introductions, collaborative group projects, contributing personal experiences, entire class online discussions, and exchanging resources. Learner-learner interactions that were

most predictive of sense of community were introductions, collaborative group projects, contributing personal experiences, entire class online discussions, and exchanging resources. Learner-instructor interactions that were most predictive of sense of community were instructor modeling, support and encouragement, facilitating discussions, multiple modes of communication, and required participation. Experience with online learning was contributive to sense of community. The interaction items offering the highest yield were exchanging resources and instructor modeling. Future studies of online SoC would benefit from including multiple



universities to provide a more broad and diverse population, addition of qualitative methods to assist in interpreting quantitative results, investigation of alternative education models such as cohort and blended models, and comparison between faculty and student perspectives on interaction in SoC.

***Be sure to Congratulate Jo on the successful defense of her dissertation on 2/20/12!**



Best Buddies Faculty Advisor: Leisa Hutchison

WKU Chapter of Best Buddies was started by our undergraduate students in CD with a vision to facilitate a global volunteer movement that creates opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment and leadership development for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Best Buddies, a nonprofit organization, was founded in 1989 by Anthony Kennedy Shriver. This organization has grown from one original college chapter to more than 1,400 college, high school, and middle school campuses across the globe. Check out the organizations site @ www.bestbuddies.org and fan our WKU chapter's Facebook page by typing "WKU Best Buddies" into your search bar and following the link.



Assessing and Treating Pediatric Feeding Issues

Caroline Hudson and Leisa Hutchison have initiated a multi-agency group project designed

to consult, assess and refer individuals with feeding issues. The team will also begin seeing some clients for treatment, particularly those with behavioral feeding issues. During the Summer clinic session, they led a feeding treatment group consisting of student clinicians

and feeding clients. Both Hudson and Hutchison felt the group went well for all involved. This pilot group allowed those involved to assess and strategize to improve clinical services for individuals with feeding issues as well plan their next steps.

Training Volunteers to Support Conversations with Communicatively Impaired Individuals

Barbara Brindle is making plans to extend her current efforts at Western Kentucky Active Adult Day Center to include a training project for volunteers assisting with conversational activities of those with communication

impairments. Currently, both SLPs and student clinicians lead small group therapy sessions but some of the more communicatively challenged adults do not fully participate. This

project will be a ripe opportunity for both student clinicians and student researchers to become involved with efforts to improve quality of life with this population.

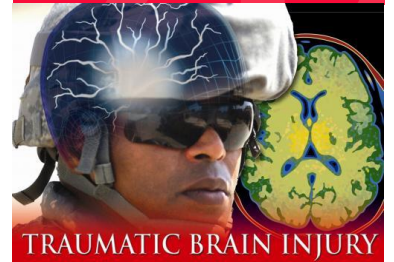
Collaborative Research with Children with Autism

An exploratory investigation will be led by Janice Smith to evaluate the utility of the RAPS with children with autism by comparing the results to the best available measure of executive functioning—the Behavior Rating Inventory of EF (BRIEF). The study will

have two components. First, individuals with autism will participate in an assessment using the RAPS. Second, parents of individuals with autism will be 1) interviewed to obtain demographic data and other information of interest and 2) asked to assess their child using the BRIEF. Participants will

be recruited through the Kelly Autism Program (KAP) at Western Kentucky University and through other professional contacts. As many as 25 children between the ages of 8 – 17 years who have been diagnosed with autism and their parents will participate in this investigation.

RAPID ASSESSMENT: Problem Solving in Adults with TBI



Dick Dressler continues to learn more about the abilities of individuals with TBI through the help of soldiers at Fort Campbell. He is coordinating research that utilizes a promising new-to-TBI measure to quickly and effectively measure problem solving abilities in those with a TBI. The Rapid Assessment of Problem Solving (RAPS) was developed by Robert Marshall Ph. D. and colleagues in 2003. The RAPS has been successfully used with traumatic brain injury, both acute and chronic and was able to detect significant differences between group means for number of questions needed to solve the problem (Marshall, McGurk, Karow, & Kairy, 2007).

In the Popper...

 *Mary Lloyd Moore*

Investigation into how the undergraduate clinical experience predicts success during the graduate experience.

 *Lauren Bland*

Literature review of strategies to improve literacy in older populations and conduct a study of the effectiveness of literacy intervention in low literacy adults.

 *Kimberly Green*

Review of how SLP students are prepared for addressing culturally and linguistically diverse populations.

 *Joe Etienne*

Survey research with school personnel and teachers in order to investigate potential new programs for the CD department.



For more information Contact: Janice Smith & Research Coordinator & 270-991-4973