



*The Insider*

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*Life Span Institute at Parsons*

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*November, 2007*

*Pat White, Editor*

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## **Contracts/Grants**

Kathy Olson's contract with SRS for the Kansas College of Direct Support was renewed for \$41,630.

### Previous Awards

Dean Williams received a new, 2-year subcontract "Translational Analyses on NCR Interventions for Behavior Disorders" from the Kennedy Krieger Institute, prime contractor to NICHD that began May 1, 2007.

Chris Smith received a new, 13-month contract "Kansas Early Head Start Comprehensive Evaluation: from KsSRS that began June 1, 2007.

David Lindeman received a new, 1-year award "Kansas Family Service Coordination Training Project" from KsDE that began July 1, 2007.

Sara Sack received a new, 1-year award "Tiny K-Infant Toddler Assistive Technology Services" from KsH&E that began July 1, 2007.

### Prevision Submissions

Kathryn Saunders and John Colombo submitted a new, 5-year proposal "Postdoctoral Training in Translational IDD Research" to NICHD on May 25, 2007.

David Lindeman submitted his 8<sup>th</sup>-year continuation "KITS-Kansas Inservice Training System" to KsDE on June 1, 2007.

Pam Cress submitted a 7-month supplement "Great Plains Disability and Business TA Center" to SEKRS on June 6, 2007.

David Lindeman submitted his 10<sup>th</sup>-year continuation "KITS—Infant and Toddler Expansion" to KsDE on June 7, 2007.

David Lindeman submitted his 17<sup>th</sup>-year continuation "Southeast Kansas Respite Care Services" to PSH&TC on June 7, 2007.

David Lindeman submitted his 15<sup>th</sup>-year continuation “Dual Diagnosis of Persons with Disabilities” to SEKRS on June 7, 2007.

David Lindeman submitted a new, 1-year proposal “Kansas Family Service Coordination Training Project” to KsDE on June 8, 2007.

David Lindeman submitted his 21<sup>st</sup>-year continuation “Active Treatment Training Program” to KsSRS on June 15, 2007.

Jerry Rea submitted his 3<sup>rd</sup>-year continuation “SEK Pilot Project to Replication of the Oregon Model of Intervention with Antisocial Youth Families” to KsSRS on June 15, 2007.

Chris Smith submitted his 5<sup>th</sup>-year continuation “Kids Crew: The Independence Community Learning Center” to USD #446, prime contractor to DE-OSERS-OSEP on June 29, 2007.

David Lindeman submitted his 8<sup>th</sup>-year continuation “SEK-CAP” to SEKRS on July 6, 2007.

Sara Sack submitted her 2<sup>nd</sup>-year continuation “Expanding Assistive Technology Reutilization Efforts to Include Organizational, Navigational and High Cost Technologies” to DE-OSERS-NIDRR on July 13, 2007.

Kathryn Saunders and Dean Williams resubmitted a 3-year proposal “Computerized Instruction of Prerequisite Skills for Success in Early Reading Instruction.”

Sara Sack submitted her 3<sup>rd</sup>-year continuation for “Kansas State Plan for Assistive Technology” to DE-OSERS-RSA on August 1, 2007.

Richard Saunders, in collaboration with the University of Washington, PI Lesley Olswang, submitted a 5-year supplement to the “Communication of People with Mental Retardation” program project to NICHD on August 1, 2007.

David Lindeman submitted a new, 1-year proposal “The Early Childhood Leadership Project: A Collaboration with the Kansas Inservice Training System” to KsDE on August 28, 2007.

Chris Smith submitted a new, 9-month proposal “Let Us Play Head Start: Program Evaluation Proposal” to the National Head Start Association on September 7, 2007.

Dean Williams and Kathryn Saunders resubmitted their respective portions of an overall 5-year program project “Translational Analyses of Chronic Aberrant Behavior Across the Life Span” to Kennedy Krieger Institute, prime contractor to NICHD, on September 25, 2007.

Chris Smith submitted a new, 1-year proposal “Technical Assistance Services (Data Management and Mental Health Consultation) to SEK-CAP” to SEK-CAP on October 25, 2007.

Sara Sack submitted a new, 1-year proposal “Assisting Medicaid Beneficiaries in Accessing Assistive Technology: to the Kansas Health Policy Authority on October 25, 2007.

## Presentations

- Baynham, T. Y., Weaver, M. N., Skinner, J., & Saunders, K. J. (2007, October). *Instructional programming for letter naming: Printed-letter identity matching*. Poster presentation at the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Association for Behavior Analysis, Athens, GA.
- Brewer, A. T., Stein, J. S., Johnson, P. S., Smith, N. G., Pinkston, J. W., Williams, D. C., & Madden, G. J. (2007, October). *Pre-ratio pausing following rich-to-lean transitions on multiple schedules in Fischer 344 and Lewis rats*. Poster presentation at the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Association for Behavior Analysis, Athens, GA.
- Cress, P., & Peters, L. (2007, November). *Web accessibility 101: The human side of web design*. Presented twice at Emporia State University, Emporia, KS.
- Goosen, M. (2007, October). *Kansas early learning document training*. Training held at Topeka, KS.
- Hornback, M. (2007, October). *The logistics and benefits of research partnerships at state and local levels*. Round Table presentation at the Division for Early Childhood Conference, Niagara Falls, Ontario, CANADA.
- Lindeman, D. P., Rinkel, P., & Goosen, M. (2007, October). *Best practices awards: A statewide system for recognizing components of exemplary programs*. Poster presented at the DEC 2007 23rd Annual International Conference on Young Children with Special Needs and Their Families, Niagara Falls, Ontario, CANADA.
- Marvin, C., Ballard-Rosa, M., Coston, J., & Lindeman, D. P. (2007, October). *DEC's information technology committee*. Poster presented at the DEC 2007 23rd Annual International Conference on Young Children with Special Needs and Their Families, Niagara Falls, Ontario, CANADA.
- Olson, K. (2007, October). *What's happening with the Kansas College of Direct Support?* Presentation at the InterHab Annual Conference, Real People, Real Lives, Wichita, KS.
- Olson, K. (2007, October). *Building direct support professional careers*. Presentation at the InterHab Annual Conference, Real People, Real Lives, Wichita, KS.
- Olson, K., & Smith, K. (2007, October). *Use the College of Direct Support to train personal assistants*. Presentation at the Annual Self Advocate Coalition of Kansas Conference, Wichita, KS.
- Page, K. (2007, October). *Kansas inservice training system: Initiatives and services*. Two poster presentations at the Kansas Association for the Education of Young Children Conference, Manhattan, KS.

Rinkel, P., & Page, K. (2007, September). *Supporting early childhood professionals and families in Kansas: How KITS fits*. Presentation to the Head Start Collaboration Council in Topeka, KS.

Saunders, R. R., & Saunders, M. D. (2007, October). *Life Span Project: Reducing the incidence of obesity in adults with developmental disabilities in Kansas*. Invited Address at the Annual Meeting of the Missouri Association of County Developmental Disabilities Services, Lake Ozark, MO.

Skinner, J., Baynham, T. Y., Weaver, M. N., & Saunders, K. J. (2007, October). *Instructional programming for letter naming: Spoken to printed-letter matching*. Poster presentation at the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Association for Behavior Analysis, Athens, GA.

Stein, J. S., Brewer, A. T., Williams, D. C. (2007, October). *Maladaptive behaviors following rich-to-lean transitions on multiple schedules*. Poster presentation at the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Association for Behavior Analysis, Athens, GA.

## Publications

Doughty, A. H., & Saunders, K. J. (2007). Decreasing errors in reading-related matching to sample using the delayed-sample procedure. Manuscript accepted pending revision in *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*.

Woods, J. J., & Lindeman, D. P. (in press). Gathering and giving information with families. *Infants and Young Children*.

## Project Highlight

### **Recombinative Generalization of Within-Syllable Units in Intellectual Disabilities**

**Funded by NICHD**

**Kate Saunders**

Many individuals with mental retardation (MR) read at levels below what might be expected based on other cognitive skills. Further, reading instruction historically has emphasized sight words, and this emphasis limits reading vocabulary to words that have been taught directly. There is a critical need for effective methods to teach word-attack, or decoding, skills to this difficult-to-teach population. Word-attack skills enable reading words that have not been taught directly.

In the literature on reading instruction for normally developing children, the major scientific development of the last few decades has been the identification of prerequisite and component skills that help to make decoding instruction successful. There is now incontrovertible evidence that phonological awareness, especially the ability to perceive sounds that make up spoken syllables, facilitates the acquisition of word-attack skills. Examples of phonological awareness include recognizing rhyming words, and recognizing that several words begin with the same sound. Phonemes are the smallest within-syllable units of sound that make a difference to

meaning. It is important to note that learning to produce individual phonemes to corresponding printed letters (a part of phonics instruction) does not automatically ensure the awareness of phonemes within syllables. This is because phonemes within syllables are “smeared together,” they do not have discrete boundaries (this characteristic is called *coarticulation*).

Our long-term goal is to develop computerized instructional programming to teach foundational skills for reading to individuals with MR. The current project will take a step towards that goal by addressing the most neglected area of instruction for this population: the critical early reading skills of phonological awareness and the related concept that print maps the sounds that comprise syllables. The scientific foundation for our work lies in the conclusion of the National Reading Panel (2000) that phonological-awareness training that involves linking letters to sub-syllable sounds is more effective than training that is conducted only in the auditory mode. Thus, we plan to study the development of these skills using a word-construction task, in which the participants build words that they hear by touching individual letters in a pool of letters on a touch-sensitive computer screen. The word-construction procedures have several benefits. They promote left-to-right scanning and attention to each letter in a word. Further, if carefully composed sets of words that have subsyllable components in common are taught, these procedures can simultaneously promote the development of generalized sound-print relations and phonological awareness.

We will know that a participant has learned generalized skills when the participant can construct words that are composed of new combinations of sound-letter relations contained in words that the participant has learned to construct. For example, if a participant learns to construct the words cat, rat, and ran, and then proves able to construct can, even though can has not been taught, s/he has demonstrated generalization of the sound-letter relations across words. Further, our work has shown that it is not necessary for participants to be able to read words before learning to construct them. Given that the word construction task teaches component skills of individual-word reading, it is important that word-construction training can occur prior to or in conjunction with learning to read the words. This is an unstudied approach to establishing foundational skills in individuals with MR.

The project is being carried out with adults served by Community Living Opportunities and by Cottonwood, in Lawrence. Children participants come from the Educare preschool in the Dole building and we are planning for an expansion to children with intellectual disabilities in the Lawrence Public Schools. Four graduate students within the Department of Applied Behavioral Sciences are working on the project: Janna Skinner, Tanya Bayhnam, Katey Schmidt, and Megan Weaver.

## Staff News

Welcome the following as new employees:

Waylon Howard – GRA with Chris Smith’s project “Kansas Early Head Start Comprehensive Evaluation.”

Megan Showalter – RA, Tanya Bayhnam – GRA, Katey Schmidt – GRA with Kate Saunders’ project “Recombinative Generalization of Within-syllable Units in MR.

Melissa Stiffler, Andrew Tate, and John Stevens – Trainers with Jerry Rea’s project “Southeast Kansas Pilot Project to Replicate the Oregon Model of Intervention with Antisocial Youth Families.”

Margy Hornback – Technical Assistance Specialist with Dave Lindeman’s project “The Early Childhood Leadership Project: A Collaboration with the Kansas Inservice Training System Project.

Nour Abdulsalam, Brett Griffin, and Erik Hanssen are student hourly employees for the Pilot Evaluation of the Impacts of Special Olympics Healthy Athletes® Screening Events on Referral, Follow-up, and Health Behavior of Special Olympics Athletes, located in Lawrence, KS.

Kellie Hulsebus is a Research Aide for the Communication of People with Mental Retardation located in Seattle, WA.

We want to express our sympathy to Pamela Cress at the loss of her mother who passed away in September, 2007.

Sara Major, Behavioral Therapist for the Southeast Kansas Treatment Foster Care Project, placed 2<sup>nd</sup> out of all females in the Omaha, NE Marathon on 9/23/07. Her time was 3:28:22, and she received \$150 for the placing. She received recognition on the websites:

[http://www.omahamarathon.com/raceinfo\\_results.html](http://www.omahamarathon.com/raceinfo_results.html) and [www.marathonguide.com](http://www.marathonguide.com)

This was Sara’s 12<sup>th</sup> marathon and her dad has been all along the courses at all of her marathons supporting her.

On 10/06/07 Sara was the first overall female finisher in the Tour de Cure Half Marathon in Rogers, AR. She received a \$100 gift certificate to a local running store.

On 10/20/07 Sara ran the Kansas City marathon and was the 19<sup>th</sup> woman out of a field of around 6,000.