



The Insider

Life Span Institute at Parsons

November, 2004

Pat White, Editor

Honors

Kate Saunders has been appointed by the Association for Behavior Analysis International as its delegate to the Federation of Behavioral, Psychological, and Cognitive Sciences. The Federation is a coalition of Science Organizations that represents the interests of researchers in all areas of psychology. Efforts are focused on legislative and regulatory advocacy, education, and the communication of information to scientists.

Kate Saunders has also been appointed as the Coordinator of Science Policy and Research Board for the Association for Behavior Analysis International.

Grants Submitted

Pamela Cress submitted her fourth-year, continuation "Great Plains Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center" to the University of Missouri-Columbia on September 22, 2004.

Rachel Freeman and Chris Smith submitted their fourth-year continuation "Kansas Institute on Positive Behavior Support" to the Kansas Department of SRS on October 12, 2004.

David Lindeman, Bobbi Wells, & Jeanne Fiscus submitted a new, eight-month proposal "Child Care Focus: Resource and Referral Center Expansion" to the Kansas Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (KACCRRRA) on October 25, 2004.

Sara Sack submitted her sixth-year continuation "Assistive Technology Services for Vocational Rehabilitation Customers" to Kansas Department of SRS on October 15, 2004.

Richard Saunders, Janet Marquis, and Lisa Chaney submitted an R01 to the National Institute on Aging entitled "Aging, Executive Processes, and Stimulus Equivalence" on October 1, 2004.

Muriel and Richard Saunders will be resubmitting their R03, with Joe Donnelly, to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, entitled "Effective Strategies for Weight Loss in People with MR" on November 15, 2004.

Chris Smith received his second-year continuation "Technical Assistance in the Area of Early Childhood Mental Health Services" from SEK-CAP.

Presentations

Benham, T. (2004, October). *Professional Development Resources: What they are and where to find them*. Presented at the Southeast Kansas Association for the Education of Young Children Mini Conference, Parsons, KS.

- Cress, P., & Jones, C. (2004, October). *Assistive technology: Explore the possibilities*. Presentation at the 42nd Annual Conference of the Kansas Federation of the Council for Exceptional Children, Manhattan, KS.
- Doughty, A. H., Williams, D. C., & Saunders, K. J. (2004, October). *Human transitive inference using verbal and nonverbal procedures*. Poster Presented at the Southeastern Association for Behavior Analysis, Charlotte, NC.
- Doughty, S. S., Anderson, C. M., Doughty, A. H., Williams, D. C., & Saunders, K. J. (2004, October). *Establishing control of self-stimulatory responding by an antecedent stimulus using differential punishment*. Poster presented at Southeastern Association for Behavior Analysis, Charlotte, NC.
- Goosen, M., & Nelson, C. (2004, September). *Asking the right questions, getting the right answers: Evaluation young children for special education services*. KITS Workshop, Salina, KS.
- Lindeman, D. P. (2004, September). *KITS: Training for early childhood professionals*. Presented to the Kansas Deaf-Blind Consortium, Topeka, KS.
- Miller, C., & Rose, S. (2004, October). "The odd kid" dealing with children with sensory integration dysfunction. Presented at the Southeast Kansas Association for the Education of Young Children Mini conference, Parsons, KS.
- Olson, K. M., & Smith, K. K. (2004, October). *Hiring and training personal assistants*. Presented at the 2004 Self Advocate Coalition of Kansas (SACK) Conference, Wichita, KS.
- Stiffler, K., Crawshaw, J., & Olson, K. M. (2004, October). *Building careers for direct support professionals: Credentialing, apprenticeship, and on-line training*. Presented at the 2004 Annual InterHab Conference (Taking Root), Wichita, KS.
- Olson, K. M. (2004, October). *Dual diagnosis: Communicating effectively during diagnosis and treatment*. Presented at the 2004 Annual InterHab Conference (Taking Root), Wichita, KS.
- Olson, K. M., Emrick, S., Knauff, P., McManaman, L., Walter, K., & Williams, S. (2004, October). *Removing the revolving door: Things we've learned from the Kansans Mobilizing for Direct Support Workforce Change Project*. Presented at the 2004 Annual InterHab Conference (Taking Root), Wichita, KS.
- Saunders, R. R. (2004, August). *Stimulus equivalence made relatively easy*. Workshop presented at the 13th Annual Meeting of the Brazilian Association for Psychotherapy and Behavioral Medicine and the 2nd International Conference of the Association for Behavior Analysis, Campinas, Sao Paulo, Brazil.
- Saunders, R. R. (2004, August). *An alternative explanation of gradual emergence in equivalence test results: Examining the role of latencies*. Invited address at the 13th Annual Meeting of the Brazilian Association for Psychotherapy and Behavioral Medicine and the 2nd International Conference of the Association for Behavior Analysis, Campinas, Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Saunders, M. D., & Saunders, R. R. (2004, August). *Balancing the right to personal liberties: When should we limit the doughnuts?* Paper presented at the 13th Annual Meeting of the Brazilian Association for Psychotherapy and Behavioral Medicine and the 2nd International Conference of the Association for Behavior Analysis, Campinas, Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Saunders, R. R., & McEntee, J. E. (2004, August). *Some effects of including stimulus labels in instructions to equivalence research participants with mental retardation.* Paper presented at the 13th Annual Meeting of the Brazilian Association for Psychotherapy and Behavioral Medicine and the 2nd International Conference of the Association for Behavior Analysis, Campinas, Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Smith, C. L. (2004, November). *Hitting a moving target: Building a collaborative evaluation process during times of great organizational change.* Presented at the Annual conference of the American Evaluation Conference, Atlanta, GA.

Smith, C. L., Freeman, R., Kimbrough, P., & Zarcone, J. (2004, November). *How to use evaluation concepts and values to guide project development.* Presented at the Annual conference of the American Evaluation Conference, Atlanta, GA.

Spellman, C. (2004, October). *Reading program that works for students with autism and other significant cognitive disabilities.* Presentation at the 42nd Annual Conference of the Kansas Federation of the Council for Exceptional Children, Manhattan, KS.

Stroup-Rentier, V. L., & Miksch, P. (2004, September). *Conducting appropriate evaluations for infants and toddlers.* KITS Workshop, Salina, KS.

Stroup-Rentier, V. L., & Thompson, T. (2004, October). *The individual family what? IFSP: What it is and how care providers are included.* Presented at the Southeast Kansas Association for the Education of Young Children Mini Conference, Parsons, KS.

White, L. A., & Semrad, C. (2004, October). *Making a positive impact on families: Implementing skills into family/child care routines.* Presented at the Southeast Kansas Association for the Education of Young Children Mini Conference, Parsons, KS.

Williams, D. C., & Perone, M. (2004, October). *Deleterious effects of signaled incentive shifts: Translational research and the human laboratory.* Invited address to the Mid-American Association for Behavior Analysis, Indianapolis, IN.

Publications

Saunders, R. R., Chaney, L., & Marquis, J. G. (in press). Equivalence class establishment with two-, three-, and four-choice matching to sample. *Journal of the Experimental Analysis of Behavior.*

Project Highlight

Kathy Olson

Kansans Mobilizing for Direct Support Workforce Change Project

The Kansans Mobilizing for Direct Support Workforce Change Project (KMFC) focuses on improving the recruitment and retention of direct support professionals (DSPs) who work with people with developmental disabilities. Turnover of DSPs is unacceptably high. Kansas, with an average annual turnover rate of over 50%, shares a problem seen nationally. Turnover affects the lives of people with disabilities. High turnover is associated with poorer outcomes for persons served in safety, inclusion, feelings of well-being. Additionally, it is a waste of time and money to hire and train DSPs who have only short tenure. Kathy Olson, Patty Black Moore, and Kelly Perry staff the multifaceted KMFC project. Strategies and resources utilized by KMFC were developed by collaborating research partners at the University of Minnesota.

Fifteen community service providers have been involved with the project over the past 2 years, addressing issues related to recruitment, retention, training, and enhancing the status of DSPs. Representatives from participating organizations along with other Kansas stakeholders comprise the advisory committee that directs KMFC. This year they will expand their involvement by providing training and meeting with other community providers to encourage them to implement strategies available for little or no cost through the project. One participant spoke of the benefits of the project:

The best benefit to our organization was the excellent materials that were provided to us FREE. Our job was to understand how the tool could be used and then decide if it was something that we wanted to implement within our own organization. Then we decided how and when we wanted to implement it. Even though there is a time commitment involved to be part of a project like this, you have benefits that will be long lasting – ultimately a better and more stable workforce.

Attracting the right people for a DSP position is a key factor in reducing turnover. A substantial amount of turnover occurs during the first 6 months after hire. Several KMFC interventions target recruitment and hiring. A marketing toolkit includes templates for ads, flyers, and brochures that target specific untapped audiences (e.g., retired individuals, students, immigrant workers, homemakers). A realistic job preview helps applicants become aware of the job challenges and rewards prior to accepting a position. KMFC developed a realistic job preview video/DVD featuring direct support professionals sharing their experiences and providing a realistic picture of the good and bad parts of their jobs. Viewing a RJP can help potential job applicants decide if the job "is for them" before completing the application process. Structured interview strategies can assist human resource personnel in identifying the best job candidates. The right applicant may take longer to find, but the investment is worth it. A 2-day training, *Removing the Revolving Door*, provides training in these hiring strategies as well as other approaches to improve the skills of frontline supervisors. The resources and training sessions will be available to every Kansas service provider during the next year. *Peer Empowerment*, which addresses mentoring strategies, and the *Power of Diversity*, focusing on supporting a culturally diverse workforce, will also be offered to all Kansas service providers.

Training DSPs is also important. The College of Direct Support (CDS) is online multimedia training developed by national experts for DSPs. Currently there are 13 courses. KMFC has customized the content for Kansans. CDS is available to service providers and other Kansans who self-direct services. The ability to access training any time, anywhere makes training readily available, avoiding scheduling and travel nightmares while providing quality training. One supervisor observed changes in a DSP who enrolled in CDS:

I have seen some changes in how she delivers services. I think the pilot

project has opened her eyes as she is able to look at situations differently with every lesson completed. I think she sees what people are capable of doing as opposed to what they are not able to do. The project has given her a different mindset and I hope she can convey that to her co-workers. She is more open to new ideas and is willing to come up with new and exciting activities so that those we serve are receiving the best services possible.

A representative from the Department of Labor is working with KMFC to develop apprenticeship standards for direct support professionals. Two organizations have piloted a credentialing program for DSPs with the first cohort achieving certification in September. Certification will be expanded during the next year. In addition to developing the standards, the project is developing a state review process.

A newly formed chapter of the Kansas Alliance of Direct Support Professionals is also enabling DSPs to develop their professional identity. Patty Black Moore is putting the finishing touches on their website.

A highlight of the KMFC project was when Governor Sebilius proclaimed July 20, 2004 as Kansas Mobilizing for Direct Support Workforce Change Day.

The first 2 years of the project, funded by the Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities, was a collaborative relationship between KUCDD, the University of Minnesota, Human Resources Research Institute, and MC Strategies. In this third year, the Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation will fund KUCDD to continue and expand the initial work.