

## Four-Day Teacher Reading Academy

Staunton, VA

July 31 to August 3, 2007

9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily

To register for the four-day intensive academy visit <[www.readingfirst.virginia.edu](http://www.readingfirst.virginia.edu)>. Online registration for the four-day academy will begin on April 2, 2007. Questions regarding this academy should be directed to <[www.readingfirst.virginia.edu](http://www.readingfirst.virginia.edu)> or call 877.827.3237.



### Certificate in Autism Studies at James Madison University

James Madison University offers a certificate program in autism designed to enable those in the field to increase their knowledge and understanding of students with a disability in the autism spectrum and to engage in the practice of assessing, planning, and implementing programming for this population. The graduate level "Certificate in Autism Spectrum Studies" (11 credit hours of study) has been developed based on competencies developed and reviewed by many stakeholders in Virginia. It is designed to give in-depth study of the provision of services for this population. Early childhood, initial evaluation, transition, adult needs, programming and life planning, learning, communication, behavioral issues, sensory motor components, related service needs, related and comorbid medical conditions, social skills and support, and peer networks are all included in the competencies and are covered in the courses. Students complete three courses and a practicum designed to put into practice the skills learned during coursework. An undergraduate certificate (9 credit hours of study) is available that does not include the practicum work. The undergraduate certificate would be most suited for those without direct responsibility or exposure to students with autism and those who do not hold an undergraduate degree.

For more information contact Brenda E. Fogus, Instructor for Special Education, James Madison University, 3225-C Memorial Hall, MSC 6908, Harrisonburg, VA 22807, 540.568.2877 (phone), or by e-mail at <[fogusbe@jmu.edu](mailto:fogusbe@jmu.edu)>.

## Surfing The Web

The Web site <[www.speakingofspeech.com](http://www.speakingofspeech.com)> provides hundreds of activities that are made with Boardmaker. Pick your activity and print. There is a forum to evaluate new materials and a place to ask questions. There are numerous resources at this site. Take a look...it is great!

(Thanks to Linda Cole, Staunton City Schools, for sharing this information with us!)

Looking for a cool Web site with a bibliography of children's books that include characters with disabilities? Visit <[www.kidsource.com/NICHCY/literature.html](http://www.kidsource.com/NICHCY/literature.html)>.

The U.S. Department of Education's FREE (Federal Resources for Educational Excellence) Web site has been redesigned to better help users navigate the more than 1, 500 resources from more than 35 federal agencies. The online collection is organized into eight categories: language arts, math, science, U.S. history, U.S. time periods, world studies, arts & music, and health & physical education. Each category contains subgroups. For example, science covers applied, earth, life, physical, and space sciences. FREE also includes information on days for special observance (Veterans' Day, Sept. 11, etc.). Visit the site at <<http://free.ed.gov>>

(*The Achiever*, 6(1), January 2007)

### WELCOME TO 2-1-1 VIRGINIA

2-1-1 VIRGINIA is an easy to remember phone number connecting people with free information on available community services. When you dial 2-1-1, a trained call specialist will listen to your situation and provide referrals to health and human services using one of the largest databases in Virginia. Non-profit organizations and federal, state, and local government agencies are included in the database so that you can access services in your community and statewide. Services include basic human needs, physical and mental health resources, work initiatives, support for seniors, and those with disabilities, volunteer opportunities, and support for children, youth, and families. During times of disaster, 2-1-1 VIRGINIA will also provide an additional channel of communication for citizens of the Commonwealth. 2-1-1 VIRGINIA may also be accessed at <[www.211virginia.org](http://www.211virginia.org)>.


## For the preschool crowd \*\*\*Many resources

### States Key to Ensuring Access and Quality of Effective Preschools, Says State Boards of Education Association

Quality pre-school programs have proven themselves so successful at boosting student achievement that states should expand high-quality preschool systems to as many children as possible as soon as possible, concludes a new study by the National Association of State Boards of Education.

The year-long NASBE study examined how state policy-makers can create high-quality learning environments for all children within the current fragmented system of pre-k programs, authority, and funding that stretches from federal and state to local levels and encompasses both public and private entities. State education leaders, the report finds, can surmount this fragmentation by helping to forge a common vision and well-defined preschool standards linked to child outcomes.

The executive summary, *Fulfilling the Promise of Preschool*, is accessible on NASBE's Web site at [www.nasbe.org/publications/Early\\_Childhood\\_Study\\_Group/early\\_childhood\\_exec\\_summary.pdf](http://www.nasbe.org/publications/Early_Childhood_Study_Group/early_childhood_exec_summary.pdf) and the full report is available by either calling 800.220.5183 or ordering online.



*Effective Preschool Curricula and Teaching Strategies: Pathways to Early School Success* is a new report from the National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP) which provides information from research and practice about curricular and teacher support strategies that are critical to reducing the achievement gap for young, low-income children. Two versions (full text, summary) are available online at [www.nccp.org/pub\\_pes06b.html](http://www.nccp.org/pub_pes06b.html).

A recent research report from the National Institute for Early Education Research, *"Is More Better? The Effects of Full-Day vs Half-Day Preschool on Early School Achievement,"* discusses a randomized trial that compared children from low-income families in half-day and full-day public preschool programs. Results show that children attending full-day programs did better on mathematics and literacy tests than children in a 2.5 to 3-hour public preschool program and the achievement gains continued at least until the end of first grade. The paper is available online at <http://nieer.org/resources/research/IsMoreBetter.pdf>.

(from *Natural Resources*, January 3, 2007, Frank Porter Graham Center, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill)

Researchers at the National Early Childhood Transition Center (NECTC) have recently released findings from two studies. The first study, *Use of Transition Practices by Public Preschool Teachers*, provides information from a national survey on the use of practices to support the transition to preschool and the transition to kindergarten. Read a summary brief at: [www.ihdi.uky.edu/NECTC/Documents/researchBriefs/researchBriefpreschool%20survey1.pdf](http://www.ihdi.uky.edu/NECTC/Documents/researchBriefs/researchBriefpreschool%20survey1.pdf).

The second publication, *Strategies to Support Transition for Children with Special Needs*, highlights successful strategies that were identified via national focus group sessions. Read that summary at

[www.ihdi.uky.edu/NECTC/Documents/researchBriefs/focusGroup.pdf](http://www.ihdi.uky.edu/NECTC/Documents/researchBriefs/focusGroup.pdf).

(from *Natural Resources*, January 24, 2007, Frank Porter Graham Center, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill)

The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, Research to Practice Division is funding a new early intervention and preschool technical assistance center on the early communication, language, and literacy learning of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers with disabilities or delays. The main goal of CELL is to promote the adoption and sustained use of evidence-based early literacy learning practices by early childhood intervention practitioners, parents, and other caregivers of young children, birth to five years of age, with identified disabilities, developmental delays, and those at-risk for poor outcomes. The Center for Early Literacy Learning (CELL) is a collaboration between the Orelena Hawks Puckett Institute, American Institutes for Research, PACER Center, and the Pappanikou Center for Developmental Disabilities. Learn more about this new initiative by visiting the CELL Web site [www.earlyliteracylearning.org](http://www.earlyliteracylearning.org).

*Bilingual Infant/Toddler Environments: Supporting Language & Learning in Our Youngest Children* is a resource by Robert Stechuk, Susan Burns, and Sharon Yanadian, with support from the Academy for Educational Development, which can assist programs in their development of effective practices for infants and toddlers exposed to more than one language. Terms are defined and "research-to-practice" information is highlighted. While some of the suggestions are specific to Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Programs, most have broad applicability to any program serving very young children. Download at [www.aed.org/ToolsandPublications/upload/BITE\\_web1106.pdf](http://www.aed.org/ToolsandPublications/upload/BITE_web1106.pdf).

(from *Natural Resources*, December 13, 2006, Frank Porter Graham Center, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill)