



Autism Developmental Approach Therapies Association

Spring 2017

Autism D.A.T.A.'s Spring 2017 Bulletin

Welcome to the latest from the developmental approach to autism intervention world!

Please sign up at autismDATA.org to receive your copy via email and see past issues at autismdata.org/bulletin.

If you live in Ontario, Canada, please consider adding your name to our petition at autismdata.org/petition to see Developmental Approach therapies funded.



PhD Program Focuses on Mental Health and Development Disabilities *by Ira Glovinsky, Ph.D.*

The [Infant and Early Childhood Development](#) at Fielding Graduate University is presently the only program in the world that offers a Ph.D. in Infant and Early Childhood Development with an emphasis on mental health and developmental disabilities.

The program was a result of the work by Stanley Greenspan, M.D. and Serena Wieder, PhD, who initially developed the Interdisciplinary Council for Developmental and Learning Disorders (ICDL). ICDL is an organization focusing on training professionals from many disciplines in a multi-disciplinary framework to work with children with developmental disorders—particularly children on the autism spectrum.

Professionals from the fields of mental health, education, occupational therapy, speech and language, nursing, music therapy, physical therapy, and other disciplines have come into the program to broaden their knowledge, develop a holistic view of children and their families, and to develop a multi-disciplinary lens to assess and treat children with developmental disabilities.

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Recent Conference Presentations

"Trampolines and Crash Mats or Pretend Food and Toy Cars? How Play Contexts Impact Language Production in Children with ASD." See it [HERE](#).

"Developmental Social Pragmatic Parent Coaching Intervention Increases Language-Promoting Utterances in Parents of Children with ASD." See it [HERE](#).

Building and Supporting Floortime Families

[Affect Autism](#) and [The Interdisciplinary Council on Development and Learning \(ICDL\)](#), the home of DIR® & DIR/Floortime®, have partnered to offer parents and caregivers education and support.

Parents will learn how to apply DIR and DIR/Floortime to help move their children up the developmental ladder and help them reach their highest potential.

WED, JUL 12 to OCT 25 8:30-10:00PM E.D.T. Register for the premiere **Supporting Floortime Families** online parent support group [HERE](#). * *Just for our readers: Use 50% off promo code '50SPECIAL' when you register!* *

MON, JUL 24 8:30-10:00PM E.D.T. The next brief introductory online parent course is now open for registration [HERE](#). Only a small \$10 registration fee!

MON, SEP 18 to MON, OCT 23 8:30-10:00PM E.D.T. Registration for the next six-week parent course is [HERE](#).



DIR Summer Camps for Children

[DIR/Floortime Summer Camp](#) in Seattle, Washington
[Limitless 2017 Summer Program](#) in Denville, New Jersey

Link to this bulletin online [HERE](#).

Submissions for bulletin: affectautism@gmail.com

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The doctoral research that students do is varied with a focus on autism spectrum disorders. Dissertations have included a Developmentally-Based, Individual Differences, Relationship-based (DIR®) framework to treating young children with autism.

One student completed her work by training parents of children in Barbados to be more reflective with their children and to use the DIR® model. Parents became more aware and attuned to their children's needs, and as the parents became more reflective there were significant improvements in their child's overall functioning.

One student wrote her dissertation on the use of humour in therapy with children on the autism spectrum. The literature on the use of humour in treating children with autism was highly unique as many people in the field feel that children on the autism spectrum do not understand humour. This dissertation clearly showed that humour was a "portal of entry" into the treatment process.

Another looked at communication skills in children with autism focusing on pre-verbal communication.

Our program is an international program and an exciting dissertation that is being done in Hong Kong is looking at depressed mothers and their autistic children. The focus of this study is the effect of maternal depression on the development of very young children with autism.

The work is "cutting edge" and providing insights into the field of autism spectrum disorders. We are very excited about developing training programs that will help professionals across the globe understand the problems that interrupt development and learning in autism spectrum disorders, and provide a model for teachers and educators that will enable them to develop skills to make learning experiences for children on the spectrum who evidence emotion dysregulation optimal and successful.

Faculty member Dr. Ira Glovinsky is a clinical psychologist in Ann Arbor, Michigan, specializing in autism spectrum disorders, an Expert DIR/Floortime Practitioner, and a Clinical Consultant to ICDL.

Research Incubator Update *by Dr. Josh Feder*

The Fielding Ph.D. Program has a research incubator! This spring, there has been progress on many projects:

- * Completed the first pilot of the [Profectum Parent Toolbox](#), showing the feasibility of studying how this free online parent training program can help parents to help their kids with developmental challenges.
- * Revamped the protocol for studying the Fielding Connection Coding Paradigm, an efficient video coding method for use at home, in clinics and in research. [SymPlay](#) continues to work on the accompanying app, currently in alpha level trials.
- * Development of a new test for empathy in preschool settings: the Pink Pencil test. This was tested in two different cities. Preliminary findings show girls more likely to act directly to solve problems and boys more likely to tell others how to solve problems.
- * First study of a DIR-based social skills group in teens.
- * Efforts to operationalize the process of helping clinics to take data that might be used in meta analysis to look at treatment efficacy for developmentally-based intervention programs.
- * A survey of parental understanding of and allowance of exposure to screen time in their toddlers. Knowledge doesn't necessarily reduce exposure.
- * Roll out and trials of a youth-friendly version of Dungeons & Dragons to promote relationship-based learning in teens and tweens.

Go Woodpeckers!



Have an idea for our next newsletter? Let us know!

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