



Special
Education
Alliance
200

SEA Scrolls

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Seeing the ability in every child

February 2010

Please join SEA200 for an informative presentation:
How to Manage Behavior Problems in Children with Autism

Featuring: **Cynthia A.W. Brouillard, Psy.D.**

of **Little Friends Center for Autism**

from 7-9 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 23

at **Monroe Middle School, 1855 Manchester Road, Wheaton**

This presentation is free and open to the public.

Dr. Brouillard will review the underlying cause of common behavior difficulties seen in children on the autism spectrum. She also will discuss proactive, skill-building intervention strategies to address these behavior issues. Time will be provided for discussion and problem-solving of specific behavior challenges that parents attending the forum present.

Dr. Brouillard holds master's and doctorate degrees in clinical psychology. She has received specialized training in administering diagnostic instruments specific to

autism spectrum disorders at the Developmental Disorders Clinic at the University of Chicago.

Dr. Brouillard has worked with children with developmental disabilities and autism since 1990. She currently heads the team of diagnosticians for the Little Friends Center for Autism in Naperville.

She has presented at numerous workshops on pervasive developmental disorders and behavior management, and also serves as a consultant to several schools throughout Illinois.

Visit www.sea200.org after 5 p.m. on the day of SEA200 presentations to check for any cancellations.

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SEA200 is an independent, not-for-profit organization that assists families of children with special needs in the communities that make up CUSD200. For details, call SEA200 President Theresa Hinck at 630-653-3224 or e-mail tthinck@aol.com.



SEA200 is pleased to announce that we will offer:

Wrightslaw: From Emotions to Advocacy Training

with Pat Howey, paralegal and advocate

Saturday, March 20

8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Northern Illinois University, 1120 E. Diehl Road, Naperville

Cost: \$40 per person, which includes snacks, lunch and a copy of *Wrightslaw: From Emotions to Advocacy, 2nd Edition* (\$19.95 retail value)

Parent advocate Pat Howey will teach you how to take an active role in managing your child's special education, the gentle art of disagreeing and how to maintain healthy working relationships with the school.

You will learn:

- about IDEA 2004
- how to assess your child's strengths and needs
- how to prepare a Parent Report for the IEP team
- how to understand testing
- how to build healthy working relationships with school personnel

- how to document information that may prevent or resolve disputes
- how to participate as an equal member of your child's IEP team.

Wrightslaw programs are designed to meet the needs of parents, educators, health care providers, advocates and attorneys who represent children with disabilities regarding special education. The program is not disability specific.

0.6 Continuing Education Units will be available for an additional \$9 fee. Bring a check made out to UMKC (University of Kansas).

This training program is possible thanks to support from Central DuPage Hospital and the Village of Winfield.

To registration for From Emotions to Advocacy training, visit www.sea200.org. Space is limited, so sign up today.

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Psychologist describes symptoms of common mental illnesses

by **Carla Kemp** • SEA200 Newsletter Editor

Your son never sits still, talks excessively and has trouble focusing on his homework. You think he might have attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

Your daughter is extremely shy and has few friends. Could she have social anxiety?

Your teenage son spends a lot of time in his room and has missed four days of school in the past month. Is he depressed?

Diagnosing mental illness in children can be very difficult, according to clinical psychologist John M. Glennon, Ph.D., who spoke at SEA200's January meeting.

If you page through the manual that mental health professionals use to diagnose mental illness, you may see yourself in a lot of the descriptions. "Everyone has some symptoms," noted Dr. Glennon, clinical director of the GlenOaks Therapeutic Day Schools, which specialize in the treatment of emotionally disabled children and adolescents. The key thing to keep in mind is that the frequency and intensity of symptoms must be out of the ordinary, and they must interfere with a person's ability to function.

Seeing mental illness

Several factors can prevent parents from recognizing mental illness in their children, Dr. Glennon said.

First, they may have a limited frame of reference. If parents don't spend a lot of time with children besides their own, they may think their child's behavior is normal.

Second, some illnesses like depression can ebb and flow. So a child may exhibit symptoms at school where the demands are high but seem fine at home.

Parents also may develop a tolerance for certain behaviors and start to believe they are normal. Or they may feel guilty that they did something wrong and therefore blame other people.

Dr. Glennon encouraged parents to listen to teachers, who see a lot of children and know what's typical behavior and what's not. He also advised parents to seek information, question whether they are being overly defensive and get a professional consultation from a third party.

"It's important to get a diagnosis so you know what's going on," Dr. Glennon said.

Left untreated, mental illness can lead to loss of self-esteem, negative labels at school, and the child can fall behind academically, socially and emotionally.

Dr. Glennon described symptoms of the following mental illnesses:

ADHD

ADHD is a common mental illness affecting 1 in 20 children, Dr. Glennon noted.

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Mental Illness - from Page 3

There are three types of ADHD: inattentive type, hyperactive-impulsive type and combined type.

Symptoms of inattentive type include:

- can't pay attention to details, daydreaming;
- avoids, dislikes or is reluctant to take part in activities that require sustained attention;
- highly distractible, forgetful, disorganized;
- often does not finish school work;
- doesn't listen to or follow through on instructions.

Sometimes, parents insist that their children cannot have ADHD because they can focus for hours on video games.

Ironically, children with ADHD can focus on subjects they like, Dr. Glennon explained. In fact, they may hyperfocus on something, tuning out everything else around them. These children tend to focus better in one-on-one situations and when they are in a new situation (think levels in video games).

Symptoms of hyperactive type include:

- extreme physical agitation, fidgets, can't sit still;
- interrupts, talks excessively;
- is "on-the-go" and acts as if "driven by a motor";
- resorts to even more inappropriate behavior when reprimanded.

These children are referred for evaluations more often because they get in trouble, Dr. Glennon noted.

Combined type ADHD includes symptoms of both inattentive and hyperactive-impulsive ADHD.

Medication can be used to treat ADHD. "If you can get away without it, great," Dr. Glennon said. "But if you need it, you need it."

Oppositional defiant disorder (ODD)

The key feature of ODD is inflexibility. If you change the child's routine, he becomes hostile or defiant. Other symptoms include:

- persistent arguing with adults, belligerent, obstinate;
- feels entitled to make unreasonable demands;
- touchy, resentful, spiteful; and
- blames others when apprehended.

To get a diagnosis of ODD, the child must exhibit symptoms for six months to a year, Dr. Glennon said. In addition, his behavior must cause problems in two areas such as at home and at school.

About 40% to 50% of children with ADHD also have ODD. Therapy is used to treat ODD; there are no medications to treat ODD.

Conduct disorder

Conduct disorder can be described as ODD stepped up. It is a learned disorder that starts out as ODD.

Symptoms include:

- aggression and cruelty toward people and animals;
- bullying with weapons;
- destructiveness, e.g., setting fires;
- deceitfulness, e.g., lying, stealing;

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- disobedience; and
- lack of remorse for antisocial behavior.

Major depression

Two percent of children have depression, even as young as 2, 3 and 4 years of age, Dr. Glennon said.

Depression manifests itself differently in children than in adults. For example, children don't show their sadness by crying, but instead are irritable. They also may have stomachaches, headaches and sleep problems. In addition, they may be able to hold it together while in public but struggle when they get home.

When adolescents are depressed they may feel sad, hopeless or empty. They may cry at school, appear lethargic, overreact to disappointment, stop caring about their appearance and have thoughts of death.

Dr. Glennon noted that in his 25 years' experience in DuPage County, he has seen an increase in depression among children here.

It's important to be on the lookout for depression because it can lead to suicide; 90% of adolescents with a diagnosis of depression who commit suicide have used drugs or alcohol.

Early onset bipolar disorder

Bipolar disorder used to be called manic depression, and it was thought that it did not affect children. However, the majority of mental health professionals now recognize that children can develop bipolar disorder, Dr. Glennon said, adding that genetic history is important when making a diagnosis.

Like depression, bipolar disorder looks different in children and adults.

Symptoms include:

- arousal system is set off by the slightest irritant or change;
- multiple mood shifts, i.e., the child acts like two different people (angel/devil);
- grandiose behavior;
- overt hypersexual activities and comments;
- sensitive to temperature; and
- insatiable craving for carbohydrates.

Bipolar disorder emerges over time in children and will get worse if not treated, Dr. Glennon said.

Anxiety disorders in children

These disorders become apparent when a child does not want to go to school, Dr. Glennon said. They include:

- separation anxiety (fear of being away from parent);
- over anxiousness (excessive, unwarranted worrying); and
- social phobia (severe shyness and avoidance of social contact).

Anxiety disorders in adolescents/panic disorder

Adolescents may try to hide their symptoms, which can include:

- palpitations, chest pain and shortness of breath;
- sweating, trembling, shaking;
- feeling of choking, nausea and dizziness;
- feelings of unreality; and
- fear of dying, losing control or "going crazy."

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Mental Illness - from Page 5

Social anxiety disorder

Everyone has fear in social situations, but for it to be a disorder, the fear must interfere with the child's ability to go to school, Dr. Glennon explained.

Symptoms include:

- fear of specific social or performance situations;
- dread of being humiliated or embarrassed by doing something wrong in front of others; and
- avoidance of feared situations or enduring them with intense distress.

Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)

This disorder is characterized by the development of rituals to deal with

◆ *Workshops & events*

The following meetings are sponsored by groups not affiliated with SEA200. For more information, call the numbers or visit the Web sites provided.

Overview of Essential Technology for Children with Special Needs

Date: Saturday, Feb. 27

Time: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Location: Pheasant Run, 4051 E. Main St., St. Charles

Cost: \$50

persistent thoughts. For example, a child may be bothered by the thought of germs in the bathroom, so she convinces herself that everything will be OK if she washes her hands for 10 seconds. If she is interrupted, she must start over.

Obsessions also can include fixation on lucky/unlucky numbers, need for symmetry and exactness (objects or furniture must be placed "just so,") and excessive doubts.

Compulsions to deal with these thoughts can include ritual handwashing, repetitive counting, writing/erasing/rewriting, or continuous checking and questioning.

The majority of children with OCD are not diagnosed, Dr. Glennon said.

Treatment includes cognitive therapy and/or medication.

Dr. Glennon concluded that many of the symptoms described above can be caused by things other than mental illness such as diet, lack of sleep, substance abuse and even brain tumors.

Therefore, when making a diagnosis, he said, "You really want to look at a lot of different things."

For information, visit www.meetup.com/Assistive-Technology

The focus of this initial training session will be on realistic strategies, effective technology and positive collaboration. Topics will include providing accessible materials; writing tools and strategies for writing, reading, studying, organization; handheld technologies - Web 2.0 tools and more. Subsequent sessions will go into various applications and methods in more detail.

6th Annual Parent & Professional Networking Conference

Date: Saturday, March 13

Time: 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

Location: College of DuPage, 245 Fawell Blvd., Glen Ellyn

Cost: \$50 for parent/\$60 for professional

For more information: visit www.autismillinois.org

Sponsored by: The Autism Society of Illinois

This conference will feature five different tracks: adult supports, advocacy, behavioral interventions, biomedical/alternative treatments, and advanced/professional. Fee includes access to exhibitor area, light breakfast, box lunch and certificate of attendance.

Chords for Kids: Chicagoland Autism and Special Needs Concert

Date: Saturday, March 13

Time: 7 p.m.

Location: Wentz Concert Hall, North Central College, 171 E. Chicago Ave., Naperville

R.S.V.P. by March 11 to the Autism Society of Illinois at 630-691-1270

This free concert is for special kids and their families. Music is presented by the North Central Concert Winds and is directed by Dr. Lawrence Van Oyen.

IEP: Infinite. Educational. Possibilities

Date: Tuesday, March 23

Time: 6:45-8:30 p.m.

Location: Community Bank of Elmhurst, 330 W. Butterfield Road, Elmhurst

Presenter: Maureen Lowry-Fritz, J.D., M.A.

Sponsored by: Center for Speech and Language Disorders

RSVP: 630-530-8551, ext. 104, or e-mail evelynm@cslid.org

Maureen Lowry-Fritz challenges parents, educators and administrators to rethink what they know about the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and IEPs. She empowers parents and educators to create IEPs that change a child's life.

The Facts and Myths about ADHD in Children

Date: Tuesday, March 23

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Location: Marianjoy, 26W171 Roosevelt Road, Wheaton

To register: Call 630-909-7102

Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) causes hyperactivity and interferes with a child's ability to focus and control his or her behavior. This presentation will explore the symptoms and causes of ADHD, how it is diagnosed, and treatment options.

Thanks to our donors

SEA200 is grateful to our contributors, whose generosity helps us educate and support children with special needs and their families. Below we have listed all those who have made contributions this past year. If you are interested in learning more about giving opportunities, contact Julie Yurko at 630-784-0206 or julieyurko@comcast.net.

Great Seahorse Society

(Gifts of \$250 or more)

Suzanne Bessette-Smith & David K. Smith

Ed and Shannon Downey: *In honor of the staff at Jefferson Preschool and Wiesbrook Elementary*

Deb Hamilton: *In honor of Emerson Elementary Students*

The Hinck Family: *In honor of SEA200 Board*

Stephen and Christine Spanola

Lisa and Michael Szudarski: *In memory of Thomas K. Ladd*

Crowned Seahorse Society

(Gifts of \$100-\$249)

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Carla and Dave Kemp: *In honor of the staff at Pleasant Hill*

Linda Knicker

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Rob and Maria Lappano

Alex and Tonie Lyubelsky: *With gratitude for all who work with Amanda*

Gennady and Larisa Lyubelsky: *In honor of Amanda Lyubelsky*

Carolyn Schierhorn: *In honor of Amy Norton*

Beth Sullivan

Jeff and Kay Summers

The Yurko Family

Anonymous (1)

Speckled Seahorse Society

(Gifts of \$75 to \$99)

Susan and Michael Bianco

Friends of Thea Hinck

Tallya Knippen, District-wide Nurse

Lisa Wagner

Anonymous: *In honor of Clayton*

Anonymous: *In honor of Sarah Kud*

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Contributions made in memory of John Peluchowski, grandfather of Jozy Spanola

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If you have questions about SEA200 or would like to get involved, visit our Web site at www.sea200.org or contact us at:

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