



Teachers' Corner

Angi Stone-MacDonald
University of Massachusetts



Importance of Positioning and Mobility Equipment for Active Classroom Participation

Students with moderate/severe intellectual disability who use a wheelchair for mobility can sometimes be restricted to that wheelchair for long periods of time because it is more mobile than the student. These students also frequently use many different types of equipment to help them sit, walk, and stand better. Unfortunately, all that equipment can be very intimidating for new special education teachers or general education teachers. They may feel more comfortable leaving students in the wheelchair where all the physical supports are present to best position the student correctly. Nevertheless, all students need opportunities to be in different positions and have the ability to practice many different movement patterns to promote both fine- and gross-motor development. Teachers need support and training from special educators or related services professionals, such as physical therapists or occupational therapists, regarding how to (a) position students with moderate/severe intellectual disability and (b) make the most of their equipment adaptations (Buysse, Wesley, & Able-Boone, 2001; Frazier Cross, Traub, Hutter-Pishgahi, & Shelton, 2004).

For students who move between self-contained and general education settings, different types of mobility equipment will support their physical or occupational therapy goals as well as the academic and communication goals. Implementing adaptations, such as the use of equipment, helps children with moderate/severe intellectual disability engage in play and learning that will support their IEP goals (Wolery, 1994). Research has shown that children with moderate/severe intellectual disability become dependent on adults to support their peer interactions, but the following suggestions demonstrate ways to use equipment so that students can self-initiate peer interactions (Correa-Torres, 2008a, 2008b; Hanline & Correa-Torres, 2012). Because these students often use a communication book

or device, that item needs to be readily available so students can participate actively in the classroom. Proper positioning in a stander, gait trainer, or walker is also essential for students to use their communication tools or devices more effectively and to engage with their teacher and peers during a lesson or an activity in their inclusive classroom.

Become Familiar with the Equipment

My experience is as a preschool teacher for children with severe disabilities and medical concerns, but these suggestions can be applied across the age range in classrooms from preschool to Grade 12. When I started teaching students who used gait trainers, walkers, standers, and different types of chairs, such as corner sitters, I scoured the catalogs of products, watched promotional online videos of the different products, and looked for pictures of children using the different mobility equipment. I wanted to be very familiar with the products my students were using and examined the student schedules for ways to help my students combine their standing and walking time with communication and academic goals.

Employ Checklists to Track Usage

Because my students were so young, the main foci of their goals were communication and mobility. I made a checklist of their goals for my clipboard, with boxes on the side to make sure that they used different mobility equipment and communication devices or forms each day. This checklist not only helped me to keep track of their progress on their IEP goals but also to check if, for example, Jonas worked on walking in the gait trainer on that day or Sara worked on sequencing with both picture matching and a step-by-step communicator. I could then prioritize for the next day the activities that students did not get to the previous day. Most of the time, the wheelchairs were parked at the door of the classroom and students spent time in gait trainers, walkers, three to four different chairs, tummy time, and standers while at school.

Adapt Equipment Use Depending on the Activity

When students go into the general education classroom, they can go in a stander or take a corner chair. The corner chair with a tray can be used for floor activities like morning meet-

President's Message

Nikki Murdick



By the time you see this message, the DADD conference in January in Hawaii and the CEC convention in April in San Antonio will have occurred. Many thanks to all of you who submitted proposals to the DADD conference and/or to the CEC convention. They would not be the great success they are without your willingness to participate. Both events provided all of us, as attendees, the chance to meet with friends and make new ones, "recharge" our professional batteries, and come away with new ideas that we can use in our classrooms. All of us who work in the field cherish these times to reconnect with people who share our passion for working with children and adults with autism and intellectual disability.

These are trying times as we watch and wait to see what impact the budgetary changes of federal sequestration will have on our field. In addition, the No Child Left Behind Act should be considered for revision and reauthorization that will lead to the same action for the Individuals with Disabilities Education

Improvement Act. Pay attention and be involved at this critical time in the education and special education fields.

My service as president is half over, and I would like to thank all of those individuals who have supported me and provided me with assistance during this busy year. Past President **Richard Gargiulo** and President Elect **Amanda Boutot** have been tremendously supportive and always there when I needed assistance. Former president, and our incoming executive director, **Teresa Taber-Doughty** has also provided me with invaluable support. And during the conference and convention preparations, **Cindy Perras**, our conference coordinator, has been ready to provide help any time I needed it. One of the greatest strengths of this organization is the willingness of our membership to support each other and volunteer for whatever jobs need to be done.

And last I would like to thank **Tom Smith** for his tenure as executive director. He has been a strong supporter of this organization for more than 25 years. Throughout this time the organization has grown and changed but continued, and continues, to be a strong force in providing a vital base of support for those of us who work with individuals with autism and intellectual disability.

DADD Award Winners

Dagne Fidler

Awards Chairperson

At the annual CEC convention in San Antonio, Texas in April, the DADD board honored several deserving individuals with awards:



Legislative Award: **Mike Fasano**, State Representative, Florida Legislature, for his dedicated work on behalf of individuals with disabilities

Herbert J. Prehm Student Presentation Award: **Carol Sparber**, doctoral student, Kent State University, for her poster session on social story interventions

Practitioner Presentation Award: **Katie Smith**, middle school teacher, Normal, Illinois, for her presentation on students with ASD in general education classrooms

John W. Kidd Subdivision Award: **Ontario DADD** for their continual work in keeping the organization viable and active

Research Award: **Dr. Stan Zucker**, for his years of work keeping our publication ETADD one of the most valuable journals in the field

Burton Blatt Humanitarian Award: **Dr. Tom Smith**, for his continuing efforts to advocate for individuals with autism and intellectual or developmental disabilities

Shriver-Kennedy Student Achievement Award: **Jesse Harbison**, Fairbanks, Alaska, who through his training and display of character has achieved Black Belt level in Tae Kwon Do.

We congratulate all of the award recipients for their hard work and dedication.

We will be accepting nominations for next year's awards very soon. Please see our future newsletters for more details. I may be contacted via email (Dagny@mchsi.com).



Executive Director's Corner

Tom E. C. Smith

Passing the Torch



Well, it is official; the new executive director of DADD is **Dr. Teresa Taber-Doughty** of Purdue University. Teresa will be only the fourth executive director of DADD. **Dr. John Kidd**, a pioneer in CEC and DADD (at that time CEC-MR), was the executive director for more than 25 years. Next came **Dana Anderson**, who was the executive secretary of the division for two years. I assumed the role 20 years ago. Prior to taking this position, I had served as a regional member, vice president,

president-elect, president, and past president. Those many years on the board gave me a great deal of experience that was very useful over the next 20 years. I was able to observe John Kidd guide the division from its small beginnings to one of the strongest divisions in CEC. To this day, we still owe John a great deal of gratitude for his leadership and commitment to the division.

Teresa has served on the board for several years, including in the capacity of vice president, president-elect, president, and past president. She is a professor at Purdue University, where she has also served as a Leadership Fellow in the dean's office and provost's office. I know Teresa will do a great job of providing support to the Board of Directors and DADD's membership. Yes, it's time to pass the torch, and I am very pleased to be passing it to an incredibly capable professional. Congratulations to Teresa, but more important, congratulations to DADD.

DADD Call for Nominations

Each year, the Nominations/Elections Committee is charged with the responsibility of soliciting from the DADD membership a listing of nominations for vacancies on the Board of Directors. Nominees must be (a) members at the time of nomination and election and throughout their terms of office, (b) willing to participate for their entire term of office, and (c) willing to serve as a chair of a committee as needed. In addition, nominees for regional members must reside in their respective regions. Vacancies for which nominations are requested include:

Vice President (4-year term: Vice President, President-Elect, President, Past President)

Responsibilities: The Vice President acts in the place of the President-Elect with his or her authority in case of absence or disability of the president-elect and shall act in the place of the president with his or her authority in case of absence or disability of both the president and the president-elect. He or she also serves as the division's representative for advance program planning for the Annual Convention, which will take place during his or her term as President-Elect, and serves as co-chair with the president-elect for future special conferences sponsored by the division.

Southeast Representative (3-year term)

Responsibilities: Serves as a regional representative, assists in developing and supporting subdivisions in the represented region, participates in all Board Meetings, and resides in one of the states listed: AL, AR, FL, GA, LA, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, VA, WV.

Far West Representative (3-year term)

Responsibilities: Serves as a regional representative, assists in developing and supporting subdivisions in the represented region, participates in all Board Meetings, and resides in one of the states listed: AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NM, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY

Nominations for these positions must be received by **June 30, 2013**. The person submitting the nomination and the person being nominated must be members of CEC-DADD. A brief bio of the nominee should accompany the nomination, which should be sent via email to **Teresa Doughty** (tabert@purdue.edu).

Watch for online voting (contact Teresa if you want a paper ballot).



Call for Papers



15th International Conference on Autism, Intellectual Disabilities & Developmental Disabilities: Research to Practice

January 21–23, 2014



Clearwater Beach, Florida

CEC's Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities (DADD) will host the 15th International Conference, which is both research and practitioner-focused. DADD welcomes submission of innovative, evidence-based proposals in the following topical areas:

- ◆ Autism Spectrum Disorders
- ◆ Collaborative Partnerships
- ◆ Mental Health
- ◆ Paraprofessionals
- ◆ Post-Secondary
- ◆ Assistive & Adaptive Technology
- ◆ Intellectual Disabilities
- ◆ Multiple Disabilities
- ◆ Parental Engagement
- ◆ Transitions

Proposals (submitted in Word) should include the following information:

- ◆ Presenter name(s), affiliation, contact information (including e-mail)
- ◆ Session title, 50-word abstract, 300-word summary, three learner outcomes, and information as to how the proposal addresses diversity
- ◆ Session format—poster session, lecture, or panel presentation

Please submit proposals to:

Cindy Perras, Conference Coordinator

cindy.perras@cogeco.ca

www.daddcec.org

Submission Deadline: June 1, 2014

Membership Committee News

Debbie Wichmanowski

Chairperson

Dear DADD Members:



The CEC International Convention & Expo in San Antonio, Texas, was a huge success, and we know that our members in attendance found all of the workshops and conference-related activities to be very beneficial to their professional development. Held just a few steps away from the historic Alamo, the convention provided attendees many opportunities to grow professionally, network with colleagues, and make new friends.

While in San Antonio, I met many new people and was thrilled by how many stopped by the DADD booth to pick up information about our division. Many individuals expressed their intention to join DADD, and several discussions were held with individuals who are interested in starting subdivisions in their home state. Please watch for further information about joining your colleagues and fully experiencing the benefits that come from belonging to CEC-DADD. If you are interested in starting a subdivision, please contact me (dwichman@pasco.k12.fl.us).

Since the last report, DADD has seen another decrease in membership; we therefore need the assistance of all our members. Please help promote membership in DADD by getting the word out to your friends, colleagues, and college students about this division and the benefits of becoming a member. If each of us made it a personal commitment to recruit one new member to CEC-DADD just think of the impact it would have on our organization, and even more important, the impact it would have on our students. Here's some important information you may want to share regarding DADD membership benefits:

- Payment of dues in 3 easy installments via your credit card
- Four issues of the journal *Education and Training in Autism and Developmental Disabilities* (ETADD)
- Four issues of the journal *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities*
- *DADD Express Newsletter* four times per year
- Access to Position Papers developed by DADD
- Outstanding networking and conference opportunities

If you have any questions or need any assistance, please contact your Regional Membership Representative.

Representative	Region	States & Provinces
Beth Kavanagh	Canada	Any Canadian province or territory
Angie Stone-MacDonald	NE	CT, DC, DE, MA, MD, ME, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT
Debbie Wichmanowski	SE	AL, AR, FL, GA, LA, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, VA, WV
Lynn Stansberry-Brusnahan	MW	IA, IL, IN, KS, KY, MI, MN, MO, ND, NE, OH, SD, WI
Debra Cote	FW	AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NM, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY



Editor's Note

Ginevra Courtade

Another successful convention! Many of you presented great ideas at the annual CEC Convention & Expo in San Antonio. If you are interested in sharing your work in *Express*, please contact me! If you have ideas for teachers, please submit an article for our Teachers' Corner. If you would like to get information to

our student constituents, please submit an article for our Students' Corner.

Please get involved with DADD! One of the best ways to start is by joining a DADD committee. Check our website (www.daddcec.org) for more DADD news and information. Photos and information from the CEC convention will be posted on the website and our Facebook page. If you have any questions about the newsletter, would like to contribute, or have any comments, please contact me (g.courtade@louisville.edu). [Please notify CEC if you have a change of address.] Enjoy your summer!

Students' Corner

Leah Wood

University of North Carolina
at Charlotte



My socks don't match. I have a small pillow and blanket shoved in a drawer in my office because I regularly take naps under my desk. A main staple in my diet is sushi from the convenience store in the Student Union. Like the rest of you, however, I am here, trudging through a doctoral program because I so earnestly want to be a PhD. Inevitably, I find myself in need of some uplifting self-talk, and I am willing to bet many of you can relate. The following suggestions are a compilation of ideas and insights I have gleaned from professors, other students, and my own experiences. Whatever the particular make-up of our graduate programs, we are all working towards the same common goal: Supporting the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities and autism. Of course, to do this, we will need to survive the next couple of years.

1. Set goals, and reward yourself for achieving them. This is the sage advice from some of the most accomplished and respected professors in our department. These goals and rewards can be as simple as: "If I write two more pages, then I can ___ (go on a walk/go buy a coffee/email my friend)." Sometimes I try to trick myself with things that are typically aversive but in comparison to my task actually seem desirable. For instance, "If I write two more pages, then I can ___ (fold one load of laundry/empty the dishwasher/clean the bathroom)." This is kind of pitiful, but it works for me.

2. Take care of yourself. I'll never forget the horror stories I heard when I started the PhD program two years ago. Things like, "I haven't been on a date in over a year," "I haven't watched a movie since I started the program," "Forget about time off: It no longer exists. If you're lucky, you won't be asked to do anything on Christmas day, but everything else is fair game." It's a wonder any of us stuck around after those speeches. But the truth is, I do watch movies. Sundays are "bake something with mommy day" for me and my children. I have kept my YMCA membership expressly for the steam room and sauna that I make

sure to visit at least once a week. Next to my office nap pillow is a pair of yoga pants, and there is a rolled up mat in the corner. I go outside as often as I can manage and just sit on a bench so that I can be sure I have soaked up vitamin D at least a few minutes each day.

3. Laugh. I search for belly laughs (this is a crucial), and if not laughter, then some kind of grand expression of something. Usually that means singing loudly in my car. I have a playlist on my phone named "Happy Songs." I am not kidding. These are songs that I can sing along to so emphatically that I end up hoarse by the time I get home. And when the effect wears off, I change the playlist. Also, I recommend listening to audiobooks in the car. Car rides in general are such golden opportunities for recharging our emotions and either winding down or gearing up for whatever comes next in our day. I generally listen to really funny books, which has served me well so far.

4. Balance. I have learned this from my observations of mentors in the program. We must be highly professional, ethical, and sincere in all of our efforts and endeavors. Our efforts should be firmly rooted in our beliefs about the significance and importance of the work we do, but embedded in these beliefs should be perspective. We cannot allow ourselves to be unnecessarily dismayed or discouraged. On the one hand, we are taking classes . . . just classes. There are assignments . . . just assignments. And we are earning grades . . . just grades. I believe we can have tremendous respect for the significance of the work we are doing while also accepting the truth that we are imperfect, we will make mistakes, and that is perfectly ok.

5. Reflect. I have pictures of my former students in my office, as I imagine many of us do. I love these pictures. I imagine we all have times where we struggle to remember why we willingly chose to leave something we loved doing to essentially develop carpal tunnel syndrome and eye strain. Reflecting on the bigger picture by drawing on the memories and inspirations from our past that led us to our current paths—that's how I survive.

What have I missed? Please write me (algermel@uncc.edu) and share your own stories or suggestions for how you are coping with the demands of being a doctoral student. I hope to post some of your feedback in the next edition of the Student Corner.

Reviewers Needed to Evaluate 2014 Conference Proposals

DADD is in need of reviewers to evaluate proposals submitted for the 2014 CEC Convention & Expo in Philadelphia. The overall quality of our division's program is directly linked to the quality of the proposals selected. If you have expertise in the areas of intellectual disability, autism spectrum disorders, and/

or other areas of developmental disabilities, please consider this professional service opportunity. Contact **Amanda Boutot** via email (eb15@txstate.edu) to express your interest and indicate your area of expertise. Proposal reviews are typically conducted in late June to early July.



Highlights from the 14th International Conference on Autism, Intellectual Disabilities & Developmental Disabilities Kona, Hawaii

Cindy Perras
Conference Coordinator



Highlights from the 14th International Conference held in Kona, Hawaii, this past January included a well-attended pre-conference training institute on ASD, led by **Dr. Brenda Smith Myles**; an author book signing for *Good Blood, Bad Blood*; and a diverse and comprehensive two-day program, anchored by poster presentations

on Thursday and Friday. Local artist and self-advocate **Joshua Pratt** opened the conference with an inspirational keynote speech, and at the closing session of the conference, **Dr. J. David Smith** presented a thought-provoking keynote talk, "Beyond Genetics: This Is a Human Being." For the first time, Continuing Education Units (CEUs) were made available; CEUs and other forms of accreditation and certification will now be offered at Division conferences.



Brenda Smith Myles leading the Pre-conference Training Institute

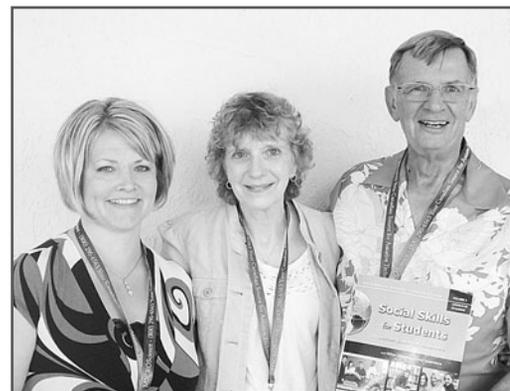


David Smith and Michael Wehmeyer speaking about their book Good Blood, Bad Blood

Delegates, presenters, and exhibitors all enjoyed a fabulous conference experience! Please visit the DADD website conference page (<http://daddceec.org/Conferences/DADDConferences.aspx>) or our Facebook page ([Division](#)



DADD Members enjoying the conference!



Toni Cook, Darlene Perner, and Larry Sargent, authors of Social Skills for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders and Other Developmental Disorders: Secondary School Lesson Plans



Keynote Speaker Joshua Pratt

on Autism and Developmental Disabilities) for more pictures from the conference.

SAVE THE DATE! DADD's 15th International Conference will be held in Clearwater Beach, Florida, **January 21–23, 2014**. Clearwater Beach was recently voted the top beach town in Florida in a *USA Today* readers' poll! The Call for Papers is included on p. 4 of this newsletter and our division website. For further information on presenting, exhibiting, or sponsorship opportunities at the Clearwater Beach, Florida, conference, please contact me (cindy.perras@cogeco.ca).

ing, group reading, or center time. The student will be on eye level with peers, and he or she can keep the communication device or book on the tray to participate in the activity. If other students are sitting at desks, students with disabilities who need extra positioning can use a special chair with supports, such as a Rifton chair.

If students are standing or—depending on their height—at tables, students with disabilities can also use a stander with or without a tray. If children are sitting at tables for center time or in a cooperative group work, sometimes a stander will work well because the student is working on physical therapy goals and developing leg strength while also participating with peers in a math or science activity. Trays are always important because they hold the communication device or book so that the students can be active participants or can hold additional materials that all the students are working with.

Find Ways to Use Equipment with non-Academic School Tasks

Students who use a wheelchair for mobility also typically practice walking with a gait trainer or walker for support. In my classroom, my students walked in gait trainers to take the attendance to the office and to run errands and deliver mail for teachers. Johanna, a 4-year-old girl with cerebral palsy, learned to use a communication device to supplement her five words and signs. Because she was very social and loved to talk to the older children, we walked with her in the hallways during lunch and recess. She could work on her walking and communication goals simultaneously while entertaining the K–5 students waiting in line for lunch. Students who are assigned jobs that require

travel around the classroom or school can accomplish tasks in a gait trainer or walker.

In combining activities to address physical, social, occupational, and/or academic simultaneously, students are practicing their skills, working toward IEP goals, and doing so in authentic ways and natural environments.

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Attention Members!

DADD members, please remember that our website (<http://daddcec.org>) allows members to log in to access member-only materials (e.g., the ETADD journal). In addition, visit our site for important information about conferences and other division activities. We also encourage DADD members to **find us on Facebook** (Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities). If members have suggestions for other materials for the website or ways we can better communicate with the members, please contact the **Communications Chair, Emily Bouck** (bouck@purdue.edu).