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# The RESOURCE

*Creating Avenues of Success for Dyslexics!*

The  
International  
**DYSLEXIA**  
Association

Vol. 35

founded in memory of Samuel T. Orton

Fall 2020

## *Living in the Now and Looking Towards the Future*

In this issue you can read  
about:

- Supporting the family in the time of COVID-19
- IEPs and COVID-19
- What it takes to succeed in College
- Getting Support in College... and much more!

So CA Tri-Counties Branch — Online — [social.dyslexiaida.org](https://social.dyslexiaida.org)

*By Brad Snyder, Ed.D. Director of Educational Service Programs, Diocese of Orange*



This last spring all of our lives changed from one day to the next. Routines were altered, and constants in our lives suddenly became very uncertain. Many of us lost employment, and those of us who kept our jobs wondered if we were next to be furloughed. Churches were closed to us and friends and family were now off limits. Perhaps no one felt

the scale of the change greater than our children. Schools closed and their world became very small very quickly. Something called Distance Learning kicked in and we found ourselves being teachers. Our children struggled through it with varying degrees of success and we did our best to be positive by saying, just a few more weeks. Now fall approaches and the uncertainty is still with us. Churches, schools and a simple haircut are closed to us. How long before we get close to anything remotely resembling normal? The uncertainty takes a toll on all of us especially our children. The good news is that schools can help regardless if we are in Distance Learning or back on campus.

Schools understand children and the emotional impact the current pandemic is having on them. Which is why schools implement a process called Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) to support students. SEL is a multi-step process that happens throughout the day in every class by every teacher and is not just a 30 minute add-on once a week. First, the schools identify the socioemotional needs of their unique community and determine which evidencebased program(s) meet those needs. Next, they train their staff in that particular program and check for fidelity of implementation: are all the teachers following all the steps of the program throughout the day? Schools create feedback loops in which they collect data to determine how successful the program is and whether more training or support is needed. SEL is successful because it is a process that also supports the adults' socioemotional competence so that everyone in the school can model and reinforce these skills.

A foundational element in SEL is school climate. School climate refers to an environment where students feel a sense of belongingness, where their voices are nurtured and respected, and where they experience positive relationships with both peers and adults. Schools that have integrated SEL in their systems have shown improvements in academic achievement, improved student behavior, and overall mental health and

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## **A Message from Your President**

*By Elaine Offstein*

Hello Dear Friends,

As I write this letter it is July 2020 and we are all still enmeshed in the consequences of the Covid-19 virus. Businesses are closed, people are unemployed, large gatherings are out of the question. Many of us are feeling the pressure of an unknown economic future.

Most importantly, our children have been unable to attend school since March and there is doubt that many schools will open for the coming school year. While it is true that virtual learning has been available, not all children have access to computers and not all children can benefit from virtual learning.

Being isolated from a traditional learning environment is particularly difficult for children with learning difficulties, dyslexia, and special educational needs. It is because of this that IDA instituted a Covid-19 relief program. IDA has raised more than \$30,000 to provide scholarships for families with children with dyslexia and language learning difficulties to receive services such as tutoring, computers, and special virtual education.

Our branch received applications for Covid-19 educational relief from more than 11 families. All applications were accepted, and these families have been granted their requests by the IDA home office.

As you can imagine, IDA received thousands of application requests. The only obstacle standing in the way of granting every request was funding. Within only a few weeks of announcing the program, the money was spent. No application has been denied and requests that were not met have been placed on a waiting list, to be granted as funds become available.

IDA is committed to granting as many requests as possible. IDA relies on donations to do research and provide access to information and services. Your membership dues help make programs like Covid-19 relief possible. When you become a member of Tri-Counties Branch, your dues help maintain both our branch and the IDA home office.

We realize that people are struggling during these difficult financial times. Non-profit organizations are particularly hard hit. That is why Tri-Counties Branch is so appreciative of your continued support.

Thank you for being a member of Tri-Counties Branch. Our goal, our mission, our vision is that every child can read.

Sincerely,

*Elaine Offstein*

### **Newsletter Mailing Policy**

**Adopted at August 2020 Board Meeting**

**We will no longer mail the newsletter to TCB members.  
Everyone will have access to the newsletter online.**

**<https://social.dyslexiaida.org/>**

**Go to "[Tools, Information & Resources](#)".**

**Nonmembers are invited to join IDA and TCB - (go to [About Us](#) on website). Or, you may subscribe to the Resource - see page 2.**

# IEPs AND COVID-19...WHAT IS A PARENT TO DO?

*By Elena Alvarez, M.A.*

Given the rapid shut down in March, school districts worked quickly to figure out how to provide meaningful education through distance learning. At home, we all struggled in understanding and living distance learning with our children. If general education suffered, so did special education services. Flexibility became a key concept to live by for both the adults and children. Throughout this time, districts and parents have been looking for guidance from the government regarding special education services. On 3/21/2020 the U.S. Department of Education published a fact sheet which described flexibility of instruction modality such as "... distance instruction provided virtually, online or telephonically" for the provision of Free and Appropriate Education (FAPE). (ED., 2020, para. 5). In California, Governor Newsom's executive order N-26-20, required the California Department of Education to provide guidance to districts as well. The California guidance was last updated on April 09, 2020. The document is in a question and answer format, and is available at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/specialed-covid19guidance.asp>. The document answers a variety of questions and of special interest is question 3.-

If distance learning is provided in some capacity but does not mirror the offer of FAPE in the IEP, will compensatory services be required once an LEA resumes the regular school session?

Once the regular school session resumes, LEAs should plan to make individualized determinations, in collaboration with the IEP team, regarding whether or not compensatory education and services may be needed for a student. Educational need can be measured by assessing whether or not the student continued making progress in the general education curriculum, or alternative course of study specified in their IEP, or toward meeting their individualized IEP goals and/or if any regression occurred during the period of school site closure. (California Department of Education, 2020)

The interesting item will be how this determination will be conducted and what would the parameters be, that would determine whether or not regression exists. To assist the school and more importantly, to make sure our children's educational needs are met, a suggestion is for parents to keep detailed records. Especially, since the fall semester will more likely continue to be in an on-line format.

As an example, in a journal,

- Write the entry date, time it took to complete assignment and amount of support needed.

9/10/2020, 45 minutes to complete Math review XYZ assignment, with 1:1 support (i.e. meaning he could not

have done it alone or with minimal guidance/support)

09/11/2020, Mary worked for 2 hours on her writing assignment XX, using voice to text and guidance from me for editing mistakes.

- Write patterns that you have identified

09/14/2020, I noticed my son does not yet understand adding and subtracting with negative numbers because of the errors he made in the X, Y and Z assignments.

09/15/2020, I noticed that my son's reading continues to be laborious and can not decode multi-syllable words correctly such as XXX and WWW. We used the electronic reader to finish the reading assignment.

- If you are unable to identify patterns, write down examples of errors

09/16/2020, My son read sand instead of stand, banking/baking, and could not decode "inequality" after several attempts.

The information that you gather and take to the IEP, once school resumes, will be useful in determining whether regression did or did not occur. In addition, you are providing evidence regarding the amount of time your child takes to do the work assigned, the type of support he/she needs, and the type of assistive technology that he/she uses. The error lists will be useful to the RSP teacher and/or reading specialist who can use them to identify patterns and determine needs. Always remember that you are an important member of the IEP team and that working collaboratively with the school is the best way for everyone to understand your child's educational needs and agree upon needs and services.

References:

Special Education Guidance for COVID-19 - Health Services & School Nursing (CA Dept. of Education). (n.d.). California Department of Education. Retrieved July 26, 2020, from <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/specialedcovid19guidance.asp>

United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. (2020, March 21). Supplemental Fact Sheet Addressing the Risk of COVID-19 in Preschool, Elementary and Secondary Schools While Serving Children with Disabilities. <https://bit.ly/2VdoJn6>



# GETTING SUPPORT IN COLLEGE: ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL

*By Karen Lerner, M.A.*

Educational Therapist/Professional  
The College Blueprint, Irvine, CA



We are beginning this article with the understanding that a student waives goodbye to his IEP when college begins. With this reality, comes another one: Selecting the correct school for a student with any unique learning challenge is crucial to having a successful scholastic experience and outcome. In other words, one needs to set the student up for success. With this in mind, let's explore the 3 Tiers of Academic Support that exist to help a family choose the right academic institution for their student.

However, before we begin, you first need to identify your student's academic, social, and/or emotional obstacles. The follow-up to this is to describe how these problems have affected your student's performance in high school; what is either helping your student be successful or needs to be created for the next institution to keep him on-task and engaged. Like buying him a pair of shoes, you need to know his size before he tries- on the shoe, right?

Tier One:

If a college receives any federal funding, it is obligated to provide equal access to the curriculum through accommodations that address your student's disability. Think of this as one huge 504 accommodation plan. Most colleges

and universities fall into the Tier One category, where basic accommodations, such as extended time for assignments, alternative sites for taking assessments, and writing-lab support are stable features. If a student uses minimum support in high school, then enrolling in a Tier One college, sometimes with the additional aid of a tutor, often is all that is required.

Tier Two:

Some colleges offer more support to students qualifying for these intensive programs by implementing separate admissions requirements. Services such as tutoring, academic coaching, addressing of executive functioning skill deficits, and testing support are often the main features of these programs. There usually is a separate admissions application for Tier Two programs, with an extra fee attached. Educational testing reports with a diagnosis often accompany this separate application, along with the high school's IEP, 504 Plan or Service Plan.

Tier Three:

These are either specific programs within the college or entire colleges devoted to students with learning differences, autism, ADHD, etc. The supports are comprehensive and embedded into the schedules and the delivery of the curriculum, so that there is maximum accountability offered from Tier 3 schools. Documentation of disability, diagnosis, high school accommodations, and perhaps an interview should be expected prior to acceptance.

The way to align college programs to your student is by looking at the Disability Services Pages on college websites. There are also excellent lists of colleges and their supports in the K&W Guide to Colleges, the edition that is written just for students with learning disabilities and ADHD. There are also college counselors who specialize in working with students who require special consideration in identifying the appropriate setting. So, remember, just like a pair of well-fitting shoes, when it's the right fit, your student can keep moving forward without pain or discomfort.



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# SUCCESS IN COLLEGE...WHAT DOES IT TAKE?

By Kara Scanlon, M.Ed.



This thesis summary focuses on understanding the factors that contribute to the educational success of students with learning and/or attentional issues in undergraduate education. Greenbaum, Graham, and Scales (1996) found that college graduates with special learning needs had higher levels of success including salary, job title, and quality of life. Therefore, students with special needs should have the correct supports to college graduate and improve their life situation. Because of the disproportionate graduation rates between students with and without educational special needs, support in colleges and universities should be more focused.

Common factors perceived as beneficial by upperclassmen and college graduates with learning and/or attentional issues confirmed the literature of the past thirty-five years. Upperclassmen and college graduates with learning and/or attentional issues maintained the importance of study skills, time management, organization, parental emotional support, disclosure of their eligibility identification, awareness of their eligibility identification, and disability student services. An interesting addition to the literature was two unexpected results. Eighty percent of the students noted their family's value or cultural belief that education was important. One student said that this belief was necessary to ameliorate the pressure and stress of college. The other unexpected factor was the importance of self-care including hiring outside help for non-academic support.

Students with special needs had to be their own advocates to explain to teachers and other educators that extra support was indeed fairness and equity in action. Despite the laws in place, students with special needs still needed to advocate for their disability. For most people, it was easy to see that a person with a loss of sight needed a cane or a seeing-eye dog. However, the analogy becomes harder with a hidden

disability that was misunderstood as laziness. Unfortunately, the explanation was left to the students with special needs. The explanation usually only came when students fully accepted their disability and used their self-awareness to explain proficiently to others the importance of their support as mandated by law.

Also, all students found awareness and disclosure of their identification helpful in working with professors and talking to other students, which was suggestive of the literature. Because of the factors of awareness, advocacy, and disclosure, the implications for funding include more individualized supports, appropriate numbers of disability student services professionals, and possibly providing housing with minimized academic and non-academic distractions.

Parental emotional support was a generative theme throughout the literature. Parental financial support, as a factor, was lower than expected. This might be because some students were receiving federal financial aid rather than parental financial aid which was cited by the participants.

Finally, the researcher realized through the many interviews that success is a communal effort reminiscent of the African proverb is "it takes a whole village to raise a child." The responsibility does not lie solely on students with special needs; it lies on the community from the institution of higher education, support services personnel, parents, current professors, and past teachers creating an extended "family" for the success of the individual student.

We need to make sure that professionals (disability student services professionals, educational therapists, tutors, learning support specialists, and college counselors), the students themselves, and parents know the types of supports that are effective. In high school, students need modeled support to effectively learn organizational, time management, and study skills to properly prepare them for college. In college, the same skills might need to be reinforced at the beginning of their college career to prepare students for the rest of their college experience. Some students stated that they used the same strategies in college as well as in their current jobs. Because successful time management and organization are just as important in college as in a job, study skills classes can be seen as life skills.

An interesting discussion brought about by one student was the need for non-academic strategies to support a decrease in distractions. A parent or professional in the student's life should remind the student of how far they have come and the extent to which they can use their "team" of support and supporters to succeed. Then, parents should determine the "best fit" college including dorm life and academic supports

*continued on p. 15*

*By Elena Alvarez, M.A.*

The world of IEPs end when our children leave the k-12 system. The laws that guarantee a free and appropriate education and parent participation are no longer applicable in college. When our (adult) children enter college, we experience mixed feelings - Joy, yes..trepidation - absolutely!

Instead of special education, colleges support students with disabilities with services and accommodations that are attained through the Disability Support Services office. Dr. Renee Mills at Fullerton Community College and Mr. Chen Ko at UCI, both disability specialists, graciously answered a multitude of questions regarding eligibility and services through their respective schools.

It was noted that their college system's eligibility requirements and type of services offered, differ from the k-12 system and from each other. Both colleges require documentation of the disability. While Fullerton College documentation requirements are flexible, UCI has delineated very specific requirements that are explained in detail on their website.

### In college, students should

- Be comfortable in disclosing their disability
- Understand and be able to explain educational implications of the disability
- Be self-advocates

It was explained that the eligibility process and determination of services and accommodations is an interactive and individualized process between the student and the disability specialist. No more parents, just as you were informed at the IEP meetings, the responsibilities and rights belong to the student once they turn 18. Therefore, students need to be comfortable in disclosing their disability, understanding the implications of the disability and learning to be their own advocates.

In addition to the typical accommodations such as extra time for tests, Fullerton College offers an adaptive computer lab class. This class is similar to the study skills class in many high schools. The lab is a formal class that earns units, therefore, there is a time commitment to spend a specific number of hours at the lab. The disability specialist, through a conversation with the student, will determine need and eligibility for this class.

At UCI, the counselors at the disabilities office are divided by majors to facilitate communication with faculty



and guidance to students. Mr. Ko explained that each faculty member has his own style, therefore, each class is unique. Thus, it is recommended that students do the research on each class. For example, asking peers, looking at syllabi and using faculty office hours to speak with professors to determine if the class is a good fit for them or not. Accommodations are flexible, the type and number of accommodations and services change depending on student needs. If a student feels that an additional accommodation is needed, a conversation with the disability specialist will help determine if the eligibility criteria is met for that specific accommodation.

The accommodations and services provided by the Disability Support Services (DSS) help students by ameliorating the impact of the disability, by leveling the playing field, per se.

Unfortunately, not all students access DSS. The stigma that surrounds mental health issues and other disabilities, along with cultural differences and personal beliefs, are some of the barriers in accessing services. The key is not being afraid to ask for help. Whether a student approaches a faculty member, other staff or even peers, the student will most likely be pointed to the disabilities office. A conversation with a DSS counselor can be the difference between drowning or passing classes in college.

To be successful in college, Dr. Mills stated students should be ready to learn. She pointed to classes available through the NOCCD extended education program which students can take to bolster their skills before entering college. Mr. Ko's advice is for students to Take time to choose what is best for you... Both, Fullerton College's website <https://dss.fullcoll.edu/> and UCI's web page <http://dsc.uci.edu> for their respective disability offices hold a wealth of information regarding specifics about eligibility, types of accommodations and tips for parents and students. Do check them out and start your research!



**We are a volunteer organization with a strong working board. The strength of our organization relies on the interest and commitment of its volunteers. Won't you help us in our goal of Facilitating Literacy Success in Our Communities? Just contact us and let us know your interest - <https://socal.dyslexiaida.org/>**

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### TCB-IDA offers free Parent Support Groups in both Riverside and Orange County.

The support groups enable parents to come together to provide support, encouragement, and share challenges as well as successes of raising a child with dyslexia, processing or learning differences. Orange County also offers a private Facebook support group.

#### Join Us!

##### Riverside County

Every 4th Thursday  
7:00 pm to 8:00 pm  
Education Services  
2769 Tibbetts Street, Suite I, Riverside, Ca 92506

#### Please RSVP to:

Christine Denison: [dyslexiamom13@gmail.com](mailto:dyslexiamom13@gmail.com)  
Regina Manning: [reginamanning12@gmail.com](mailto:reginamanning12@gmail.com)

##### Orange County

Monthly meetings  
7:00-8:30pm  
Ortega Professional & Law Office Bldg  
2735 Ortega Hwy, San Juan Capistrano

#### For more information:

[hayasakadjian@gmail.com](mailto:hayasakadjian@gmail.com)

# THE SETTLED SCIENCE OF TEACHING READING

*By Marisa Ramirez Stukey, Gina Fugnitto,  
Valerie Fraser, and Isabel Sawyer*

Educators have been discussing the “right” way to teach reading for decades. While “balance” was called for nearly 20 years ago, dissension has reared its head again and arguments are breaking out among educators on social media. At the heart of the disagreement is the dichotomy between phonics instruction (the explicit teaching of letters and sounds) and a whole language approach (a focus on discovery and making meaning). While “whole language” as a term is not often used now, there are many who believe the term “balanced literacy” is simply a substitute for whole language.

In spite of the current discussions, the science on this instructional issue is settled. Castles, Rastle, & Nation (2018) lay out that there is a clear progression to effective literacy instruction. First and foremost, children need to understand the principles of spelling-sound correspondences and to solidify a store of high-frequency words to read words and phrases fluently. Most children need explicit teaching to build this knowledge. After decoding and high-frequency words are established, more attention can be devoted to comprehension with a focus on making meaning. Castles et al. (2018) offer a logical and research-based model. In spite of this research, educators remain without consensus about what is most important—phonics instruction or a focus on comprehension.

Another current topic of discussion is the part knowledge plays in learning to read. While the importance of knowledge has been clear for over 40 years (see Cervetti & Wright, in press), current curriculum conversations have included demands to “build a body of knowledge.” In this discussion, often only one way to build that knowledge is acknowledged: using connected text sets around specific topics. Research tells us, however, that there are many ways to build a body of knowledge and connected text sets is only one.

## ABOUT COLLABORATIVE CLASSROOM

**Our mission as a nonprofit is to help students grow as readers, writers, and thinkers while they develop the social and emotional skills necessary to thrive. Founded in 1980, Center for the Collaborative Classroom conducted seminal research on social development. Collaborative Classroom has evolved into a partner for schools and districts that is dedicated to transforming the school experience, developing students, and empowering teachers as they engage students.**

Our goal in this article is to wade through the soundbites, Tweets, and blog posts, and outline the settled science of teaching reading. While the arguments rage on, students are impacted (both negatively and positively) and teachers are often left unsure as to how best to teach. We hope to shed light on the issues and offer guidance and instructional considerations—all based on research. While we certainly won’t address all the issues, we will tackle two topics in particular that have surfaced recently—explicit and systematic phonics instruction and building a body of knowledge.

*The full article is available online at:*

<https://social.dyslexiaida.org/tools-information-resources/articles/>

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# MAKING IT STICK: MEMORABLE STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE LEARNING

By Regina Richards

Originally published on LD Online <http://www.ldonline.org/article/5602/>

Think about how you remember something:

When you want to remember a phone number, do you repeat it to yourself several times until you get the whole number dialed?

When you get to the grocery store and want to remember four items, do you hold up four fingers to cue yourself to remember?

When someone asks you about a wedding you went to a few years ago, how do you call up the memory? Some people may first think of the food. Others may recall the bride's dress. Still others may recall the décor. Once you have a hook into the memory, each recall seems to trigger additional aspects of the event.

What do you do to remember an important phone call you must make as you're driving home? You know that when you enter the house the dog will be barking and your children will each have something urgent to tell you. You don't have any paper to write a note. Some people may sing a little song or chant: "call so-and-so, call so-and-so." Others may visualize an association so that when they walk into the den to put down their package, that action will trigger a reminder to make the call.

Using strategies intrinsically mean slowing down when you do something. It's a process of deceleration so you can exercise quality control. -Mel Levine at a workshop presentation, Enabling Without Labeling. Sponsored by Inland Empire Branch of the International Dyslexia Association, Ontario, CA, in May 2000

We all use strategies throughout our day to remember the variety of facts and ideas we need to retain. Strategy use forms a critical part of our learning experience. Strategies help us organize information into patterns and encourage purposeful learning. Our brains are selective. Brains tend to remember information that forms a memorable pattern.

It is valuable for us, as teachers, therapists, and parents, to have a basic understanding of how we remember

information so we better appreciate the need for strategies. As we understand the purpose, we become better equipped to help our students understand and use strategies.

## The memory process

Memory is a highly complex process involving multiple components working simultaneously. Our description of isolated components is only a representation because in reality our brains process information in an integrated fashion.

Everything begins as sensory input from our environment. Using our sensory systems, we see, taste, hear, or feel a sensation or stimuli. We have a mechanism to filter out and discard irrelevant or unnecessary data, such as the feel of the carpet as we walk or the sound of the air conditioner. This same filtering mechanism organizes relevant data into meaningful patterns. In figure 1, the funnel and the filter represent these processes: sensory input and sensory memory.

The full article is available online at:

<https://social.dyslexiaida.org/tools-information-resources/articles/>

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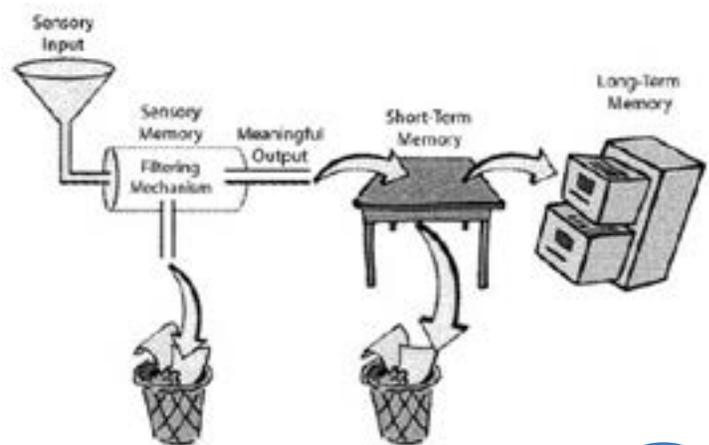


Figure 1 Memory process schema

## Attention IDA members:

If you live, work, or go to school in TCB's service area, you're eligible to apply for a TCB scholarship. For more information, visit

<http://social.dyslexiaida.org/tools-information-resources/scholarships/> .



# A CONVERSATION ABOUT THE SCIENCE OF READING AND EARLY READING INSTRUCTION WITH DR. LOUISA MOATS

By Kelly Stuart



**For decades Collaborative Classroom has been dedicated to developing curricula aligned with the research that informs today's "science of reading" conversation, and our commitment to this work continues to this day. We recently had the great pleasure of sitting down with Louisa C. Moats, EdD, the nationally recognized researcher and authority on literacy education who has written widely on topics including reading instruction, the professional development of teachers, and the relationships among language, reading, and spelling. In this interview with Dr. Kelly Stuart and Dr. Gina Fugnitto of Collaborative Classroom, Dr. Moats shares her insights about the current discussion of the science of reading, her reflections on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for early reading, the types of training that teachers of reading need, and her assessment of how the SIPPS (Systematic Instruction in Phonological Awareness, Phonics, and Sight Words) program aligns with the research about successful reading instruction. We hope that you find this interview stimulating and helpful for your own practice.**

Dr. Louisa Moats: The body of work referred to as the "science of reading" is not an ideology, a philosophy, a political agenda, a one-size-fits-all approach, a program of instruction, nor a specific component of instruction. It is the emerging consensus from many related disciplines, based on literally thousands of studies, supported by hundreds of millions of research dollars, conducted across the world in many languages. These studies have revealed a great deal about how we learn to read, what goes wrong when students don't learn, and what kind of instruction is most likely to work the best for the most students.

Collaborative Classroom: What is your perspective on the current national discussion about the science of reading? For example, Emily Hanford of American Public Media has done significant reporting that has really elevated the conversation.

Dr. Louisa Moats: These days I have moments when I feel more optimistic. Emily Hanford's reports have been the catalyst sparking our current national discussion. A growing number of states are confronting what is wrong with the way many children are being taught to

read. I'm inspired by the dialogue and courage of the people who know enough about the science of reading to offer a vigorous critique of those practices, programs, and approaches that just don't work for most children. I am also optimistic about the recent report out from the National Council on Teacher Quality. There's an increasing trend of new teachers being trained in the components of reading, and I think that many veteran educators are open to deepening their learning.

However, there's still a long way to go. In general our teaching practice lags far behind what the research tells us. We consolidated the research on what it takes to teach children to read way back in the early 1990s, and yet today a majority of teachers still haven't been given the knowledge or instruction to effectively teach children to read.

*Permission granted by the Center for the Collaborative Classroom*

**The full article is available online at:**

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The RESOURCE

Fall 2020

So CA Tri-Counties Branch of IDA

*By Cathy Johnson, SLP.*

Literacy is one of the cornerstones of academic success. Educational attainment has risen steadily this century as a direct result of literacy demands. However, literacy has been a national concern since the mid-1900s. "It is widely acknowledged that these increasing demands for higher levels of literacy in the workforce require that we do better than we have before in teaching all children to read" (Torgeson, 2005). Despite literacy's importance in our society and our understanding of it, we continue to fail students. In fact, the National Institute of Literacy estimates that 19% of high school graduates cannot read.

The annual International Dyslexia Association conference is an event that I look forward to each year. The world's top cognitive neuroscientists, reading specialists, psychologists and other professionals gather in order to present the latest science on how the brain reads and what to do if there are difficulties in that process. People from around the globe come to learn more about the reading brain as well as the numerous interventions, curriculum and accommodations that benefit students with dyslexia.

One of the highlights of the annual conference is the presentation by an individual who is recognized for their global achievements in the field of dyslexia research which is known as the Samuel Torrey and June Lyday Orton Lecturer award. In 2019, Mark Seidenberg, Ph.D. was recognized for his outstanding contribution to the field of dyslexia. He is a Vilas Research Professor and Donald O. Hebb Professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of Wisconsin. He is a cognitive scientist/neuroscientist/psycholinguist who has studied language, reading and dyslexia since the 1970's. He attended Columbia University as an undergraduate where he also received. In his lecture, Dr. Seidenberg stated "For children with dyslexia, reading aloud is public humiliation".

We have known how to teach children with dyslexia for 30 years. The science is clear. However, we are so entrenched in how we have been teaching for over 100 years and can't seem to get the science of reading to be taught in order to benefit children with dyslexia. We need a change and the time is now. As Dr. Seidenberg stated in his lecture, we have mothers against drunk drivers (MADD). Now, we need mothers against dystachia.

The 2020 Virtual IDA Conference is scheduled for November 13-14 <https://dyslexiaida.org/dyslexiacon20/>



## Dovid Richards Memorial Scholarship Fund

Contributions to the Dovid Richards Memorial Scholarship Fund are welcome to help provide scholarships to parents and teachers to expand their knowledge of dyslexia. The fund was established by Regina and Irv Richards in memory of their son Dovid, who was in a fatal car accident shortly after his 21st birthday.



As a 501(c)(3) organization, donations are tax deductible. Donations are a meaningful way to remember a loved one, honor a special occasion, or show appreciation for someone. Just send a note with your donation, indicating "in memory of" or "in honor of." Include the name and address of the person you wish to receive the acknowledgment. You will also receive acknowledgment of your contribution. ♦

<https://socal.dyslexiaida.org/donate-to-our-branch/>

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improvements in academic achievement, improved student behavior, and overall mental health and well being of students. (CASEL 2017). At home, we can also easily create a positive home climate that supports both the children and the adults through a few intentional practices.

This is the definition of Social and Emotional Learning from The Collaborative for Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL):

*Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.*

We can create a positive home climate by focusing in on CASEL's framework which identifies 5 core competencies: Self-Awareness, Self-management, Social Awareness, Relationship skills, and Responsible decision-making. We can positively affect our home climate and support our well-being, and that of our family during the current COVID-19 situation by engaging in the following activities:

**Normalizing the situation** (addresses self awareness, self management, social awareness, and relationship skills)

- To yourself

If you find yourself feeling unusually upset or anxious... close your eyes and acknowledge these feelings. Take a few minutes to breath and tell yourself it is ok and normal to be feeling this way. Then, take the time for a re-set, do something for yourself. Take a walk, a bath, talk to someone you enjoy and laugh. Engage in an activity that reminds you of joyful times, like looking through pictures of a vacation, listening to music from high school...whatever it is that brings you happiness.

- With others

Talk with friends and family about your situation given the current crisis. You will soon realize that we are all experiencing similar feelings, frustrations and understandings. Share your desperate search for toilet paper and hand sanitizer..and have a laugh, all is not bad.

- With your family

Be intentional about taking time to talk with your children about what is happening. Ask them about what questions or concerns they may have. Remember

to be honest and age appropriate in your answers. Talk at their level, not yours. It is critically important that you remind your children and adolescents that they are safe and loved. You will get through this together as a family.

**Practice mindfulness meditation** (addresses self-awareness and self-management)

Mindfulness meditation is something many of your children are probably learning in school as an SEL practice. The American Psychological Association defines mindfulness as "...a moment-to-moment awareness of one's experience without judgment." Mindfulness means focusing on what you are feeling, seeing, tasting, hearing at the particular moment. This takes practice because we typically are thinking about a million things at the same time, so make sure you practice it daily. Set a time and place for mindfulness and don't skip it. The benefits are many and wonderful.

According to the American Psychological Association, benefits of mindfulness include reduced rumination, stress reduction, improved working memory, cognitive flexibility, attention, and decreased emotional reactivity among other benefits. (Davis & Hayes, 2012). This sounds great, but how does one practice mindfulness? Do you just close your eyes?

There are many sites that have information on mindfulness, but one of the better ones is by CHOC Children's Hospital. CHOC created a series of short, practical mindfulness videos that will help. Two are Mindful Noticing: Know your penny <https://youtu.be/6ifUyCMReMc>, and Mindful grounding <https://youtu.be/6k-NkAB4tBM>. In the same Youtube channel, there are a series of guided imagery videos that are good for reducing stress and are created with the whole family in mind.

For younger audiences, Sesame Street has wonderful videos (and an App!) that are truly a pleasure to see. Sesame street Monster Mediation #1: I-Sense with Cookie Monster and Headspace <https://youtu.be/J9nE4RE8uiQ> is just an example of many in their SEL series. You will find yourself thoroughly engaged and feeling better with this one as well.

For additional mindfulness videos, you can explore UCLA's Mindfulness Awareness Research Center website <https://www.uclahealth.org/marc/mindful-meditations> for guided meditation recordings, videos, and information about conferences. And, yes, there is an App for that... UCLA Mindful.

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Practice diaphragmatic breathing (addresses self-awareness and self-management)

Deep breathing is a powerful yet easy activity to do as a family. Practicing diaphragmatic

breathing on a regular basis reduces stress, focuses attention and decreases chronic pain which are

just some of the many well-known benefits. Watch CHOC Children's videos for a wonderful guided

breathing exercise. Mindful Breathing: Diaphragmatic or Belly Breathing. <https://youtu.be/TbxeJE0SylM>

For younger children, Sesame Street also has a series of videos that teach 'belly breathing.' The Count, Breathe, Relax <https://youtu.be/n66r5Y6wguc> is one of them.

*Practice gratitude* with your family (addresses all 5 competencies)

"Research shows that gratitude is a predictor of both physical and mental well-being and can be regarded as a moral emotion related to recognizing the feelings and intentions of others. In turn, gratitude can lead to increased motivation to reciprocate and extend generosity to others." Making Caring Common (2020)

Being grateful is an intentional act and one our catholic faith calls us to. Pope Francis says that to follow God's law, begin with gratitude. For Catholics, living a life of gratitude is a matter of faith and is choice we make daily. Just like breathing, mindful meditation, and talking to your children about their feelings, gratitude takes effort. Practice being grateful as a family by taking a few minutes to say what you are grateful for at the dinner table, before bed time, or anytime the family is together. You can also, as a family, write a few sentences of gratitude each night before bed time. The benefits of living a life of gratitude are well known. According to psychology today, these are improved physical health, improved psychological health, better sleep, improved self-esteem, and improved mental health. (Morin, 2015)

We hope you take these suggestions to heart. Now is the time when children, and parents, need to focus on psychological well-being. Of course, we all need to keep

practicing the 'typical health routine' of sleeping well, eating nutritious food, and getting plenty of exercise. When you take care of your psychological as well as physical well being, you are in a better place to take care of your family.

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**The So CA Tri-Counties Branch of the International Dyslexia Association sincerely thanks the Riverside County Nonprofit Assistance Fund at Inland Empire Community Foundation for their donation of a grant to our Nonprofit Agency. This will greatly help us continue our mission of sharing information about dyslexia via aspects such as our Newsletters, Webinars, and Facebook posts.**

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such as assistive technology training, study labs, study skills classes, peer tutors, and on-site supports such as Project Eye-to-Eye.

The researcher concluded that organization, time management, and study skills learned and perfected before college could be effective for better academic grades in college from the generative themes of the interviews and the research literature. These skills could be taught or reinforced at the start of college with an academic skills class that incorporates technology with organization, time management, and study techniques. Students deemed disability student services professionals useful when professionals listened to student needs even if the professionals could not solve their problem. Professionals' individualized support to teach the use of resources, encourage self-awareness, and encourage exploration and utilization of the student support systems may make students more successful. This can also include helping the students understand their legal rights to accommodations and other support. From the interviews, it was concluded that parents can be a factor in success especially when they instill the importance of education in their children.



### College success takes:

- **Study Skills**
- **Time Management**
- **Organization**
- **Parental emotional support**
- **Understanding of the disability**
- **Disclosure of disability**
- **Use of Disability Student Services**
- **Families' value of education**
- **Self care, including hiring outside help for non-academic support**

**Success takes a village  
Students, parents, college staff,  
professors, past teachers...**

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### IDA DISCLAIMER

The International Dyslexia Association supports efforts to provide dyslexic individuals with appropriate instruction and to identify these individuals at an early age. The Association believes that multisensory teaching and learning is the best approach currently available for those affected by dyslexia. The Association, however, does not endorse any specific program, speaker, or instructional materials, noting that there are a number of such which present the critical components of instruction as defined by the Task Force on instruction as defined by the Task Force on Multisensory Teaching which works under the guidance of the Association's Teacher Education Issues Committee. Refer to IDA's Comparison Matrix of Multisensory, Structured Language Programs on our website.

- 10/06 Watch Party, *Embracing Dyslexia* - video  
<https://embracedyslexia.eventbrite.com/>
  - 10/12 The Gift of a Dyslexia Mind: Growing up with Dyslexia - webinar
  - 10/17 Benefits of Taking Research into the Classroom - Virtual Mini Conference  
<https://researchtoclassroom.eventbrite.com>
  - 11/10 Structured Literacy: It's much more than just phonics - webinar  
<https://tinyurl.com/y2tlg7v6>
  - 12/07 - 12/09 Wilson Reading System Introductory Course (co-sponsor)  
[www.wilsonlanguage.com/workshops](http://www.wilsonlanguage.com/workshops)
  
  - 04/10/21 The Effect of Reading Comprehension on Unique Minds. - Virtual conference  
<https://rdgcomp2021.eventbrite.com>
- To register for upcoming webinars or view upcoming events, visit our page: <https://socal.dyslexiaida.org/>



### Become a member!

By joining our organization, you will be in the company of the world's foremost researchers, teachers, professionals, and parents dedicated to helping individuals with dyslexia, their families and those that support them. Your membership will not only give you exclusive access to this extraordinary community but will also help support Structured Literacy teacher preparation and training required to help thousands of children in the years to come. It's an exciting time to be a part of IDA! There are many membership levels, some of which are: Teacher \$50, Professional \$100, Parent \$50, Senior / Retired \$65 and Student \$30 (yearly fees). Join us!  
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## The Effect of Reading Comprehension on Unique Minds

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9:00 am - 2:00 pm

<http://conf.dyslexia-ca.org/>

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER**  
**DR. PETER MUNDY**

The Difficulties of Autism Spectrum Disorder and Dyslexia

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