

Stratenotes

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Socially Wise

The **Socially Wise Program**, developed by **Sue Vernon** and described in this issue, teaches social skills to adolescents and was created as an intervention for at-risk students. Earlier this spring, SIM Professional Developer **Jayne Jarrett** of Citrus County Schools, Florida, forwarded a letter to us from a student who has experienced great success using the Socially Wise Program. Jarrett, an ESE specialist with the school district, had asked teacher **Maryellen Brown** to evaluate the program after using it with her students. Hear about their success directly from Brown's student, **Maggie Stephens**, in the letter she graciously shared with us (page 2).

D. Sue Vernon

Educational Consultant, Lawrence, Kan.

Social adjustment problems are common among youth, are persistent, and often escalate from minor conduct problems to criminal offenses. Misconduct and social problems take many forms. The inappropriate behavior of some students may translate into aggression (for example, bullying), while the lack of skills by other students may increase the likelihood that they will become victims of aggression.

Many opportunities for early intervention are missed. Youth often spend several years with minor offenses and behavior problems before becoming part of the juvenile justice system. Social problems are often resistant to change and are associated with poor psychological and emotional adjustment later in life.

Unfortunately, students with learning disabilities (LD) and other exceptionalities often lack the skills to meet the social demands of school. In fact, they are often the most frequently rejected or socially isolated students in class and, alarmingly, learning disabilities are the most common disability found among incarcerated juveniles.

Social issues combined with limited skills and poor academic performance can create persistent challenges and leave students with exceptionalities poorly prepared for the 21st century workforce.

The Socially Wise Program is an interactive multimedia (IM) program for teaching social skills to adolescents and was created as an intervention for at-risk students.

This computerized instructional program is designed for use in a variety of settings, including general and special education classes, in-school suspension programs, group homes, foster-care homes, mental-health centers, probation programs, transition programs, and detention centers.

The program, available as a CD, provides self-paced instruction for youth in skills to enhance relationships with adults and peers and provide alternatives for behaving in situations that have the potential to result in negative consequences for youth if not handled appropriately. The program features youth actors and includes interactive instructional lessons, modules, and games; color graphics; animation; video segments; audio effects; and descriptive text.

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The skills in the program are basic to communication, are important when dealing with authority figures and peers, and are typically listed as areas of skill deficits for youth with social-adjustment issues. In addition, situations in which these skills can be used occur fairly frequently, and the skills can be taught as either a preventive or remedial tactic.

The Socially Wise Program teaches the following skills:

- Dealing with critical feedback
- Coping with no
- Accepting advice
- Negotiation
- Apologizing
- Involving others
- Responding to peer pressure
- Giving feedback to peers
- Designing your own social skills

Mnemonic devices have been created to help learners remember the steps of the skills. This program has been empirically validated in different types of settings with youth aged 10 through 18 years, with and without exceptionalities.

Sue Vernon is the author of the Socially Wise Program.

LETTER FROM MAGGIE STEPHENS

Hello. My name is Margaret (Maggie) Stephens. I'm a student for Citrus County Schools and currently attend the Transition Academy at WTI (Withlacoochee Technical Institute). I was approached by my teacher, Mrs. Maryellen Brown, about the Socially Wise Program. She asked me if I was interested in being the person who would try it to see what it is like and I took it to my advantage to every opportunity I had and agreed to do it.

I would like to say that the program worked very well for me and enjoyed it. The program teaches different things that are parts of everyday life, including situations that would take place at work, at home, school, in the community, etc. There are five different parts per lesson. Every section is different and they also teach you acronyms on how to remember each lesson that you learned. All sections per lesson must be completed before moving on to another lesson. At the end of each lesson, you have an option to print out a certificate of completion. I was not sure at first if I should but Mrs. Brown told me that it really is not necessary as we both knew that I would get 100 percent on everything, including the quizzes that are given.

There is a section that quizzes you to test your knowledge of everything you learned. All questions must be answered correctly when doing the quizzes otherwise, you cannot move on to the next question or section. After each lesson is completed and choosing

whether or not to print the certificate of completion, they ask if you want to do another lesson and go to the navigation guide or if you would like to exit.

When I first started with the program, they introduced what the program is, what it is about, and what they will teach you throughout. When using the program, there are two options of logging in. No username or a certain password is required as it's not like using e-mail or logging on a school district's computer where it is required. What you need to do though is that when you return to using and the two options come up, you choose the returning user option. When choosing this option, they give you a code to type in so you can return to where you left off at whether you exited in the middle of the lesson or finished it and deciding to exit. The program does that so you do not have to restart the entire program. The codes have two letters (both capitalized) and three numbers following the letters. An example would be AB123 or CD456. You must type it in as it shows. An example would be like having to remember a password for an account that you have and if it has capital letters and numbers, you have to remember to put it in just like the password says each time as you would do the first time. For each time that you return, you choose returning user and put in the code when the user mode menu comes up. You don't use the same code to return to every lesson. You get a different code

for each time you exit the system.

I would recommend this to any special education student who has a hard time socializing with other students and people, getting along with other people and especially anyone that has behavior problems as it might and could make an impact and make a difference to how they used to act and how they act now.

It has made a difference in my behavior and I'm socializing more, which made a huge impact on everyone around me espe-

cially in school, at my job placements, and in the community. My teacher has even noticed a huge difference in my behavior this year in school.

I would also recommend wearing headphones and plugging them into the computer as computer volumes can be loud sometimes and easily distracts classroom and instruction time, especially if there are other students around and it can get annoying if anyone complains while working on the program.

ABOUT MAGGIE STEPHENS

My name is Maggie Stephens. I'm 21 years old and I have been an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) student since the age of three. I was born and raised in Toledo, OH. I am the youngest of three children having an older brother (27) and an older sister (25). I have a disability of autism. Being more specific about it, I have what's called Asperger's Syndrome, which is the highest end of the autism umbrella that you can go. I have been to three different school districts my whole life while attending school. I currently attend the Transition Academy at WTI (Withlacoochee Technical Institute) in Inverness, FL., which is located in Citrus County, FL., and I'm in my third school year. I will be aging out of the school district in December. I have been with the work program since I was 18 years old when I moved down. In my leisure time, I like to try to volunteer as much as I can and what I'm hoping for one day before I age out of the school district is to get a job, keep it and get paid. I don't have high hopes, but it would help if I got a job before I age out as that is a part of what the Transition Academy does to try to help with students that have disabilities.

CLARIFICATION

In the February-March issue of *Stratenotes*, we presented a snapshot of the state of SIM professional development, January-December 2012. The article included the number of professional development sessions reported to us by state/country and the strategies and routines presented. It should be noted that numbers reported for Florida reflected only partial-year data. Florida's total number of professional development sessions reported for 2012 was 139.

Be counted!

Visit the following link to submit a report of your professional development activities electronically.

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/PostIPDDataSubmissionSurvey>

Alternatively, you can send paper reports to Director of Professional Development, KUCRL, 1122 West Campus Road, JRP 517, Lawrence, KS, 66045.

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2013 INTERNATIONAL SIM CONFERENCE

July 10-12, 2013 • Lawrence, Kan.

Thirty-five years—35!

The 2013 International SIM Conference (July 10-12) will celebrate our achievements as a Center and as a SIM Network during the past 35 years, since a small group of researchers won the grant that established the Institute for Research in Learning Disabilities. We'll also look forward to our goals and challenges for the next 35.

KEYNOTE

One sure highlight of the conference will be the keynote address by Elaine Allensworth, interim executive director of the University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research.

Allensworth is well known for her research on issues related to education policy, especially her studies of high school graduation and college readiness. She also has published work related to school leadership and school organization and is one of the authors of *Organizing Schools for Improvement: Lessons from Chicago*. Her research on early indicators of high school graduation, including the study "What Matters for Staying On-Track and Graduating," has been used to create student tracking systems used in Chicago and districts across the country.

Her keynote, *School Practices that Matter Most for High School and College Readiness*, will address her work conducted at CCSR. She will share lessons from studies she has conducted in high school curriculum, the transition to high school, and non-cognitive factors (academic behaviors, perseverance, mindsets, learning strategies, and social skills) leading to college readiness.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

In addition to the special anniversary events, the most significant change to the schedule this year is the elimination of preconference workshops. Low attendance in recent years led to our decision to take a break from preconference offerings. We may reconsider for future conferences, depending on feedback we receive from participants.

See page 6 for a tentative schedule, which includes the following events:

- The conference will begin Wednesday, July 10, with a welcome and keynote address, followed by breakout sessions and then lunch on your own.
- The popular strand format returns on Wednesday and on Thursday, July 11. Strands are extended sessions, designed to allow you enough time for in-depth learn-

ing centered on a single topic. Topics include the Fusion Reading story; learning strategies and the Common Core State Standards; content enhancement and the Common Core State Standards; and evidence-based professional development practices.

- The 35th anniversary banquet celebrating the longevity of the Center will be Wednesday evening. The gathering will also provide a formal opportunity to wish Don Deshler well in his retirement.
- The conference will wrap up with a general session on Friday, July 12. Don will lead an interactive session on research, work in schools, SIM, and the future. Watch *Stratenotes* and SIMTRAINER-L for more information, including suggested articles to read ahead of the conference so you get the most out of this session. You won't want to miss this!
- Presentation of iBook format for the new *Cause-and-Effect Routine* and *Text Pattern Strategy*.
- The conference will end at noon Friday.

A tentative schedule, which is subject to change, appears on page 6. Space is limited, so please register early to secure your place at the conference.

HANDOUTS

All conference handouts will be posted to the conference website, and you will be able to download them to your laptop or print them before your arrival in Lawrence. **We will *not* distribute handouts on a USB drive or on paper; handouts will be available *only* on the website.**

VISIT THE CONFERENCE WEBSITE: [HTTP://SIM.CONFERENCE.KUCRL.ORG](http://sim.conference.kucrl.org)

The conference website is open for business. Visit to find up-to-date information and multiple ways you can stay in touch as conference plans come together.

The Contact & Connect page offers an easy email form for sending us questions or suggestions, and the Airport Transportation Buddy list (find it here: <http://sim.conference.kucrl.org/registration/hotels>) is a way for you to plan to share rides to and from the airport.

CONFERENCE INFORMATION

How many previous International SIM Conferences have you attended? _____

This is my first as a professional developer

We may distribute or post a list of participant names and email addresses on paper or electronically. If you do not want to be included, check here:

Video release

KUCRL will videotape this conference for use in future educational and publicity products. By attending, you consent to our use of any video in which you may appear.

EVENTS & MATERIALS

With your paid registration, you also receive professional development materials distributed during the conference, refreshments during breaks, and admission to the social.

HOTEL & TRANSPORTATION

Coming soon: Visit <http://sim.conference.kucrl.org> for more information about the conference, including hotel and transportation details.

CANCELLATION POLICY

If you cannot attend the conference, you must **notify KUCRL by July 2, 2013**, to receive a refund (minus a \$25 processing fee) of your registration fee. We will be unable to issue any refunds after July 2, 2013.

*Return completed registration to
KUCRL, Joseph R. Pearson Hall, 1122 West
Campus Rd, Rm. 517, Lawrence, KS 66045-3101
Fax: 785.864.5728 • Email: pmynsted@ku.edu*

NOT A SIM PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPER?

Individuals who are not certified SIM Professional Developers may attend the conference with a SIM PD sponsor. The registration fee is \$375 (\$35 late fee after June 11, 2013). **Space is limited. For registration forms and more information, contact Patty Graner (pgraner@ku.edu) or Mona Tipton (monatipton@ku.edu).**

TENTATIVE AGENDA

Wednesday, July 10

7-8	Registration
8-8:30	Welcome
8:30-9:45	Keynote Elaine Allensworth
10-11:45	Breakout Sessions
11:45-1	Lunch on Your Own
1-3:30	Strands
3:45-4:30	Certificate Ceremony
4:30-5:30	Social
6:30-8:30	35 th Anniversary Banquet, Kansas Union Ballroom

Thursday, July 11

7:30-8:15	Registration
8:15-9	General Session: IES Report on Content Literacy Continuum
9:15-11:45	Strands
11:45-1	Lunch on Your Own
1-3:45	Breakout Sessions
4-4:45	Poster Session

Friday, July 12

8:30-9:45	Breakout Sessions
10-Noon	General Session Don Deshler

Anniversary Banquet

The 35th Anniversary Banquet will be held Wednesday evening, beginning at 6:30, in the ballroom of the Kansas Union on the University of Kansas campus. The dinner buffet will consist of your choice of two salads, three entrees, three side dishes, and dessert. Coffee, tea, and water will be served.

MY ACT OF SERVICE

In Honor of Don Deshler's Decades of Service



When we learned that Don planned to phase into retirement at the end of this year, we began casting about for a meaningful way to show our appreciation for the good he has done throughout his career on behalf of students with learning disabilities and their teachers, families, and communities. We thought, what better way to honor a man who has spent his life serving others than to participate in a day of service in his honor?

The idea is simple: **Choose any time between now and June 3 to do something nice for someone.** Your options are unlimited, but here are some ideas to get you thinking:

- Volunteer for a local literacy-related organization
- Purchase books for a library or community center
- Spend an afternoon reading to or playing with kids
- Help an elderly neighbor complete lawn or home maintenance chores
- Plant a tree or bush

After you have completed your act of service, send us a brief description of what you did, including the number of hours you devoted to the project, if applicable. We'll compile stories and statistics and present them to Don during the 2013 International SIM Conference.

We hope many of you will join us in My Act of Service in Honor of Don Deshler's Decades of Service.

In addition (or if volunteering isn't an option), we invite you to contribute to our collection of "What I learned from Don Deshler" stories. You can use the form below and on page 8 to report on your volunteer efforts and to share what you've learned from Don. You also can write a personal note to Don. We will assemble completed forms in a permanent book to be presented to Don during the conference. **Send your completed form (by mail or email) to us by June 3** to be included in the book.

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Signature: _____

MY ACT OF SERVICE

*In Honor of Don Deshler's *Decades of Service**

■ VOLUNTEER

Describe the activity you participated in. Include the number of hours you donated or the number of people you served, if applicable.

I did this to honor Don Deshler:

■ SHARE

What I've learned from Don Deshler:

■ SEND

Special message to Don:

SIM Professional Developers in Saskatchewan



In April, Patty Graner met with SIM Professional Developers in Saskatchewan. Left to right: Patty Graner, Donna Schindle, Tressa Kokona, Leanne Griffin, Cheryl Shields, Debbie Bidulka, Cathy Nichol, Susan Protz, Gina Melnyk, Brent Okrainetz, and Maria Furguele.

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SIM & KUCRL Online Resources

www.kucrl.org

Strategic Instruction Model

<http://kucrl.org/sim>

Content Literacy Continuum

<http://clc.kucrl.org>

SIM Workshops and Updates

<http://www.kucrl.org/classes>

KUCRL News

<http://www.kucrl.org/news>

Publication List

<http://www.kucrl.org/research>

KUCRL Divisions

Advanced Learning Technologies

<http://www.altec.org>

Division of Adult Studies

<http://das.kucrl.org>

e-Learning Design Lab

<http://elearndesign.org>

Institute for Health and Disability Policy Studies

<http://health.kucrl.org>

Institute for Research on Adolescent Learning

<http://iral.kucrl.org>

Kansas Coaching Project

<http://instructionalcoach.org>

Professional Development Research Institute

<http://pdri.kucrl.org>

Transition Coalition

<http://transitioncoalition.org>

KUCRL CALENDAR

May 29-31, 2013

SIM Learning Strategies for
Preservice Educators
Lawrence, Kan.
(with follow-up sessions online)

May 29-31, 2013

SIM Content Enhancement
Routines for College and
University Educators
Lawrence, Kan.
(with follow-up sessions online)

June 10-14, 2013

SIM Content Enhancement
Potential Professional Developers
Institute
Austin, Texas

June 10-14, 2013

SIM Learning Strategies Potential
Professional Developers Institute
Austin, Texas

June 11-14, 2013

SIM Learning Strategies Potential
Professional Developers Institute
Toledo, Ohio

June 11-14, 2013

SIM Content Enhancement
Potential Professional Developers
Institute
Toledo, Ohio

June 24-28, 2013

CAL-SIM Learning Strategies
Potential Professional Developers
Institute
Pasadena, Calif.

**June 25-27 and August 15-16,
2013**

SIM Learning Strategies Potential
Professional Developers Institute
St. Cloud Minn.

**June 25-27 and August 15-16,
2013**

SIM Content Enhancement
Potential Professional Developers
Institute
St. Cloud, Minn.

July 10-12, 2013

2013 International SIM
Conference for SIM Professional
Developers
Lawrence, Kan.

Dec. 5-6, 2013

Ohio Update
Toledo, Ohio

Jan. 28-30, 2014

Florida Update

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