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AMERICAN RE-EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

AREA News

President's Corner

KIT KRYGER, AREA PRESIDENT, CHRISTIECARE
k.kryger@christiecare.org

Greetings Everyone! I hope this finds you well! The theme of this edition of the AREA newsletter is change. Inside you will find articles that speak to organizational and individual change as well as resiliency and courage in the face of change. Indeed, we have to look no further than within our own organization for an example. Mark Freado, long time Executive Director of AREA announced in December his decision to resign his position with AREA and pursue familiar and exciting new interests. His love of photography being one of the forms of expression he intends to pursue as he maintains his passion for teaching, training and writing. Freado, as he is affectionately referred to, has been an integral part of AREA and Re-ED for over thirty years. He started as a Teacher/Counselor with Pressley Ridge School and has had various titles and roles since. All the while Freado has lived, breathed and preached Re-ED to any one who would listen-often times they didn't even need to be listening for him to extol the virtues and principles of Re-ED. Freado's passion and love for Re-ED and the Teacher/Counselors who make Re-ED come alive for children and families is universally acknowledged, appreciated and heart felt. As AREA adapts to this change of leadership and the future challenges of serving children and families we do so with great hope and resolve. We take heart in knowing that Freado's legacy will live on and that he himself will not be far away. We wish him all the best in his new endeavors and look forward to continuing our mission with the same passion Freado exhibited. Here's to you Freado and thank you for all you have done and continue to do on behalf of troubled children, their families and Teacher/Counselors everywhere!



"Circle Football"

Picture taken by Freado as a T/C, in 1977

Explaining Who We Are

MARK FREADO, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AREA
mfreado@gmail.com

The foundation of my work for more than 30 years has been the experience of becoming a Re-ED teacher-counselor at a time when an organization was evolving in significant ways. So Re-ED has been my platform of belief in nearly all of what I have done. Part of my professional responsibilities over the past dozen years has been to attract others to Re-ED and specifically to membership in AREA. As I work throughout the country and elsewhere in the world I am regularly asked two questions; what is Re-ED and what is AREA? I usually answer that Re-ED is, first, a wellness model and a framework of beliefs about how services are designed and delivered to youth and families. Re-ED resonates from four general tenets articulated in the twelve principles that Nick Hobbs distilled nearly 50 years ago.

Trusting relationships among children and adults (and among the adults themselves) is "essential." Without that trust it is unlikely that our work will get much traction. Learning is next and

expressed with his usual eloquence in an essay Hobbs wrote entitled a "Learning Bias." The implication here is that we also have a teaching bias and among our most important responsibilities is to prepare teacher-counselors, or whatever other name we use to describe those given the most important work in our programs, to teach in needs-based and strength-based ways. Third are experience and the Re-ED emphasis on doing rather than just talking or talking about what other people should be doing. This emphasis on action has encouraged creativity and adventure in generations of Re-EDers and provides direct support for the learning. Finally, there is spiritual health, a term I first heard used by Mary Lynn Cantrell. Our principle about joy in each day is usually the focus of this tenet but it is more than that. It is carried out in the competencies we support by having young people and families do things better than they had before, doing things that they've never been able to do before, and believing that now they can.

AREA is a supportive professional community of people and organizations that promote those ways of believing and doing. Rather than being a trade organization or a lobbying entity, AREA provides ways to enhance wellness in its members. As we have grown up as an association we have formalized efforts designed to do just that. Our communication committee now regularly produces this newsletter, our training committee is unveiling a long awaited foundational training course that is all about being Re-ED, and our research committee is working on ways to express the effectiveness of believing and doing things the way we do. Our conferences have long been a focal point of AREA as they provide a time for all of those items noted above to be celebrated and shared.

Re-ED is actually pretty easy to explain. The actualizing isn't so simple. So it's important that there is a strong foundation of belief on which to rest when hard choices have to be made.

Before I'm done I want to acknowledge the work of Carolyn Hartzell. Carolyn has worked with me for several years providing administrative support for me and the AREA board. Her efforts were largely invisible to most and much of what has worked well over that time has to do with her involvement. She is also leaving AREA. She has been, and I expect will continue to be, a good partner and friend.

Best wishes. Mark Freado, Teacher-Counselor

Lynne Saxton is Honored

ChristieCare's Chief Executive Officer, Lynne Saxton has been honored by The Oregon Council of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (OCCAP) with their Child Advocate of the Year award. The ceremony took place Saturday, February 7th at Doernbecher Children's Hospital at Oregon Health Sciences University.



This award is an acknowledgement and endorsement of the daily work done at ChristieCare to create and deliver mental health solutions to children and families. The Child Advocate of the Year award serves as a ringing confirmation of ChristieCare's dedicated pursuit of its mission to create and deliver mental health solutions for children and families. Among other things, the Child Advocate of the Year award represents Lynne's tireless efforts during her six year tenure at ChristieCare to advance children's mental health to priority status at the state and community level. The award also honors Lynne's efforts toward improved quality of care and reimbursement for mental health services; including her work spearheading the 2008 Cost Study, her service on the Board of Directors, Neuropsychiatric Institute, Oregon Health Sciences University and her position on Oregon's Statewide Wraparound Steering Committee (as appointed by Governor Kulongoski).

Lynne's advocacy for and devotion to the cause of children's mental health is perfectly in line with ChristieCare's 150 years of work serving Oregon's children and families. ChristieCare is committed to working as a catalyst, partnership with families, mental health professionals, educators, employers and other community-based organizations to increase understanding of the problems affecting our children and families and to provide the treatment critical for successful recovery and resilience.

Murals Help Celebrate Culture

JOHN BEHELER, SJIS CULTURAL SPECIALIST, ST. JOSEPH'S INDIAN SCHOOL

St. Joseph's Indian School is a residential community that provides a circle of services for Native American children in South Dakota and neighboring states. The school is home to over 200 students who live in family residence throughout the school year. Academic and residential activities encourage a holistic approach to learning. Parents are occasionally invited to stay on campus as well.

St. Joseph's provides a unique student experience that incorporates tribal culture and academic advancement. Spiritual growth is observed through both Catholic and Lakota traditions.

Hau, Kola. Is a common Lakota greeting extended to friends and relatives. In Lakota traditions, everything is related because we all share part of the Great Spirit within each of us. Finding creative ways for students to celebrate their culture is one of our goals at St. Joseph's Indian School. Recently, a project was undertaken by students and staff to create eight large murals that will grace the walls of the campus dining hall.

The project began with a vision to help students connect with their tribal identity and the tipi is a common symbol that identifies the Tetonwan, or People of the Plains. Knowing that our Native American students are visual learners, we stenciled and painted tribal flag designs on large tipi cutouts provided by our maintenance department. After the tipi murals are mounted on the walls, the Dakota or Lakota name of each tribe will be placed. Ultimately, we hope that all children served by the school will be able to point to one of the murals and proudly proclaim that they are from that tribe.



Brandon Starts to Flourish

SENORA BROWN-JONES, SECEP

Brandon is a 16-year old who has attended SECEP since he was five years old. He is very handsome and can be very charming. However, he was frequently aggressive, both physically and verbally. He had a very short attention span and he often refused to complete academic assignments. He would often need 1:1 instruction to complete assignments. Two years ago, all of that changed when Brandon was placed in Mr. Brent Lewis' class. SECEP had just purchased new reading programs called "Start to Finish" and "Word Maker". Brandon was tested and he was found to be reading on a pre-primer level. Under the watchful eye and soft-spoken voice of Mr. Lewis, Brandon started to flourish. I noticed that his vocabulary was also increasing. Brandon was re-tested and he had improved his reading ability from pre-primer to a 5th-grade level. I am so proud. His behaviors have declined significantly, he completes all his assignments, and he is an Honor Roll student.

Have you been told that you have a great idea to improve the lives of the kids and families that we serve? Then have you been told that there is no money in the budget to implement your great idea. AREA may be able to help in a small way. The American Re-Education Association provides two \$1000.00 grants each year to a deserving Teacher/Counselor that has an idea to implement in their program. The grant is called The Rico Pallotta Innovation Grant. Go to www.re-ed.org for details and the application.



Overlake Specialty School Builds Team

SAMANTHA ARONS, THERAPIST/ EDUCATIONAL COORDINATOR, OVERLAKE SPECIALTY SCHOOL

Who knew twenty-four intelligent, fairly well adjusted, motivated adults could fill 60 minutes strategizing the fastest way to get all of their bodies through a hula-hoop? This was just one of the many activities the Overlake Specialty School staff participated in during their staff building day. Before going into any more detail, a bit of background might help explain how the team found themselves suspended 35 feet in the air, on a random Friday in August.

As many in the field of education and social work know, staff turnover can be one of the most difficult aspects of the daily grind. Even though it is exciting to watch a Teacher- Counselor grow and become competent along side their student, the journey takes a lot of training and support from the leadership team. Being one of those young workers not so long ago, I do understand their journey and desire to take their new skills to the next level. It just always seems too soon, too abrupt, when a seasoned staff decides to move on and is replaced by yet another new motivated staff member eager to learn and gain experience. There is a sense of loss when a team member moves on, especially when it is someone you learned to trust, admire, and rely on throughout the school year.

It was this feeling of loss, yet need to prepare for the challenges that lay ahead which led us to a staff day on the ropes course on August 8, 2008. With the support of AREA through the **Rico Pallotta Grant**, the team of 24 participated in an all day ropes challenge course in Bellevue, Washington. The staff was about 50% new hires and 50% returning staff.

We gathered ourselves, new and returning to embark on our first shared experience as a newly formed group. The temperature immediately dropped as we departed from the open parking lot and ventured up a steep trail through the dense Pacific Northwest forest. Only bits of the morning light was able to trickle in through the tall old growth trees, forcing many of us to remove our sun glasses that just moments before felt like a necessity. Left over rain from the night before would fall upon us as the trees blew in the soft morning breeze. The chattering of staff while climbing up the trail suddenly stopped as they descended upon the clearing. The course consisted of several multi tiered high and low challenges that sparked both curiosity and fear.



Scott and two other ropes course experts introduced themselves and explained we would start with low ropes course in the early morning and eventually to the high course in the afternoon. They were clearly in tune with the group as they were quick to mention all activities would be a challenge by choice and no one would have to do anything they didn't want to do. Structuring low course activities first in the day would give time for the staff to build confidence in themselves and each other.

Modeling after the principle "the body is the armature of self", one of the hopes was for staff to build self awareness in order to be more accessible to the student's they serve. Many were surprised by the vulnerability felt when asked to participate in some of the activities. Few were expecting to be so exposed to their own weaknesses, fears, strengths and/or insecurities. Some of the strongest staff members on the floor became the most vulnerable on the course. One of our more soft spoken staff showed a fearlessness never seen before.



Another staff member mentioned how uncomfortable she felt having to trust that her colleagues would catch her fall. Surprised by her own reluctance made her more aware of her student's trust issues and how it affects the ability to try new things and take on challenges. Suspended on a rope, preparing to lunge off a platform onto a suspended net, a seasoned staff member said, "I can't believe how scared I am. I had no idea I would feel this way." When reflecting on our personal experiences in the circle-up, it was clear many were seeing themselves and others in a changed, more complex, and unexpected light.

This more layered way of looking at ourselves and each other created the platform for understanding the unseen stressors in our students. The psychological, situational, reality and developmental stressors that affect how a child responds to any given task is important information for a teacher. What may be difficult for one child, may pose no stress or threat to another. This concept became clearer to all of us as we were surprised by our own reactions to the challenges, and those of our colleagues.

The ultimate goal of the ropes course experience was to develop a cohesive group that would be ready to meet the demands and challenges of working in an EBD program. Competent, self aware and supportive Teacher Counselors are needed to be the most effective in their interventions with the students. Whether it was the joy of getting 10 people through a hula hoop in 8 seconds, the high of jumping across ten wooden planks suspended 35 feet in the sky, or the frequent reflection of what we were feeling in the here and now, this day put us one step closer to being a cohesive group of professionals ready to take on the challenges and rewards of working with the troubled and troubling child.



The Patriots Are Here!

TJ CONLEY, DAYSCHOOL PROGRAM DIRECTOR, PRESSLEY RIDGE

Pressley Ridge's Allegheny County DaySchool basketball team, The Patriots, hold the best record of the 2009 Basketball League's season, boasting an impressive 7 wins and 1 loss. The Patriots have come a long way from their humble beginning four years ago when they did not win a single game. However, throughout the entire program, the t/c coaches utilized all the principles of RE-ED to help ensure the success of the team, whether winning or losing.

The group is very important in basketball because it's a team sport and allows for players to learn from the t/c coaches as well as each other. To play the game, trust between the players and coaches is essential so they can begin to rely on each other for practices and games. For example, one of players loved to shoot three pointers; sometimes he was successful, other times, not so successful. In the beginning of the season, if he missed a shot he would become upset and felt it was his responsibility to get his own rebound. The t/c coaches addressed that feeling and helped him to see his place as part of a team. Through many conversations with the coaches and behavior modeling, he learned self control as well as the ability to trust that his teammates were there to support him. Each youth had a role to play and they saw that competence makes a difference.



The students also found time is an ally. They had to learn to manage their time for school assignments, practices and games. You can imagine the struggles they had while learning to manage the game clock-- life is to be lived now! Some of the shots taken within the last few seconds of the game are memorable!

It's important to note that the students had to *earn a spot* on the team. Students had to be in good academic standing, verbally and physically aggression free, and meet the expectations of their treatment team. This resulted in lower incidents of aggression, improved student behavior, better grades, and role modeling for students who were aspiring to join the team. Self control can be taught and participation on the basketball team was a strong motivational tool.

The basketball team was coached by the physical education staff Ken Janeway and Anthony Raco, transition specialist, Baron (BB) Flenory and supported by the entire staff. Patty Folmer, coordinator of Program Services, took on the role of athletic director, picking up responsibilities that covered everything from attending meetings of the league through laundering uniforms after the games. The success of the basketball program has encouraged Pressley Ridge to form a soccer team in the spring and a football team in the fall.

Final note: The students (Patriots) had an opportunity to play one more game at the end of the season. In March, the Patriots faced the Pressley Ridge staff team (Patriarchs) in their fourth annual meeting. The game was played at Duquesne University's AJ Palumbo Center. The Patriots defeated the Patriarchs 43-42 in a contest that was decided in the final seconds. The previous games were held once at the Mellon Arena and twice at the University of Pittsburgh, Peterson Events Center. The Patriots are undefeated against the Patriarchs and the staff members are anxiously awaiting next year's contest.



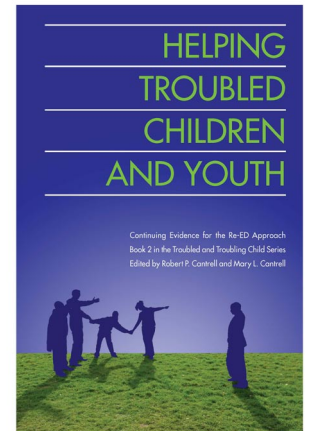
American Re-Education Association
Post Office Box 1331
Westerville, Ohio 43081-6411

Phone: (614) 783-6314
Fax: (775) 261-5462

E-mail: mfreado@gmail.com

MARK FREADO
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Visit us on the web at:
www.re-ed.org



The new Re-ED book, *Helping Troubled and Troubling Children: Continuing Evidence for the Re-ED Approach* is now available. Visit www.re-ed.org for ordering instructions, or order on-line at Amazon.com.

The AREA Newsletter will be published every other month. If you do not see your article in this issue, look for it in the June, 2009 issue.

If you have an interesting story about your work or your colleagues' work with children and families, please submit your articles to jdowd@pressleyridge.org. We'd love to hear your story, and will help you develop it into something that your peers across the country will learn from and enjoy. We can't wait to hear from you!