New Class of RSAs in Palau

A new group of 34 RSA students began their RSA Training Program in Palau in March. They are:

From RMI:
- George Seimera
- Kanjen Kumtak
- Bobby Lomae
- Nelani Lalimo

From Yap:
- Sariang Adelbai
- John Bugulrow
- Clayment Harongareg
- Mary M. Laabrug
- Mary Layan
- Terry Manna
- Stanley Salugmai
- Thomas Sefairal

From Palau:
- Sergina Uywan
- Pius Yalisman
- Delfina Demei
- Demei Elehuus
- Lorraine Emul
- Sterlina Gabriel
- Darlene Hicks
- Kubarii Joe

Also from Palau:
- Toshiwo Kelmal
- Nerlina Mereb
- Angelina Ngemaes
- Alfonsa Ngiramengior
- Decendra Ngirbauliad
- Jeniffer Ngual
- Roman Oseked

From Yap:
- Sariang Adelbai
- John Bugulrow
- Clayment Harongareg
- Mary M. Laabrug
- Mary Layan
- Terry Manna
- Stanley Salugmai
- Thomas Sefairal

Top: Yap Participants- (back) John, George, Pius, Mary, Stan, (front) Mary, Sergina, Terry
Bottom: Marshall Islands Participants- Nelani, Kanjen, Bobby
RSA Veterans Provide Mentorship for New RSAs

RSAs in Yap and Majuro, and Related Services Providers in Palau are providing mentorship for new RSA students. They are as follows:

Majuro: Romen Laibwij

Yap: Paul Tapang, Francesca Tinmad, Henry Yangireitig

Palau: Roland Tangelbad, Jason Nolan, Sadaria Fritz

The mentors will be resources for new RSA students, as well as help them with learning to provide hands-on services to children and families in their home states. The new RSA training program works on an institute model, with two weeks of intensive classes, then time at home to practice the skills learned.

Thank you all for being willing to share your knowledge! Knowledge not shared becomes old. Sharing what we know is the best way to keep it fresh.

RSAs in Palau learn to lift each other using good body mechanics.

Above: Bobby and George help a child use her hands to play.

Above: Mary and Terry help a child to walk using a walker.

Above: John, Sergina and Pius learn how to facilitate walking in a child with low muscle tone.

Roland Tangelbad, an RSA mentor, and a physical therapist assistant, provides physical therapy services for children in school. He encouraged Yapese and Marshallese RSA students to observe and participate in PT sessions.
Bag of Toys for Children with Significant Disabilities

This list of toys may be helpful to those of you serving children with significant disabilities. If you carry these around with you, you will have many options for activities when you see children.

1. **Boppe Pillow** - This U-shaped pillow can be used to position children in supine (with head and shoulders supported), prone (under chest), or sidelying (curled inside U). For children with more mobility, it can be used as part of an obstacle course - as a bridge to crawl under or an obstacle to crawl over. It can be laid down as a goal for ball rolling, or held up as a "wicket" to roll balls through. There are many other uses of the Boppe pillow.

2. **Soft ball** - A plastic or rubber ball of between 4 and 10 inches in diameter can be used for many activities. If you don't have a ball, you can make one using plastic grocery bags rolled and tied together into a ball. It can be rolled, thrown overhand, thrown underhand, kicked, batted or punched. It can be tossed to another person, into a container, or to knock down objects (cans, bowling pins, plastic water bottles, etc.). It can be used in art activities too. Roll it in paint or mud and then roll it across or bounce it on paper. Draw designs on it with paint, then roll on paper. Use it for sensory input - roll it across a child's body or bounce it gently off a child's body.

3. **Storybook with cardboard pages** - A story book can be handmade or bought in a store. Cardboard pages will allow a child with limited motor ability to turn to pages more easily. Bind the book together with yarn or string. You can work on picture recognition, listening skills, sequencing pictures or parts of a story, pointing, anticipating what will happen, or retelling a story. The child can participate in making the storybook by telling the story, writing words, drawing pictures, choosing pictures (from a magazine), spreading glue, cutting, threading string (to bind the book), or tying string.

4. **Container with small toys** - A container, such as a can or small bucket, can be filled with small objects to create a versatile toy. Make sure that the objects are big enough that a child who likes to put things in his/her mouth cannot swallow them (at least 2 inches diameter). Objects can include found objects such as shells, rocks, sticks, or household objects such as spoons or film canisters. You can use objects that are the same, or objects that are different. You can also use bought objects such as small action figures, small plastic animals, or other small toys. This toy can be used to teach skills of grasping, releasing, taking out, putting in, matching, grouping, or ordering (smallest to largest). A child can be involved in creating this toy by decorating the container or choosing objects to go inside. You can put a lid on the container with holes cut out. Children can learn to match objects to the hole, and put them in the slot. This toy can be a motivator to crawl, cruise, or walk.
What is a Developmental Disability?

A developmental disability is a severe, chronic disability that:

- Is a mental and/or physical impairment that starts before age 22, and is likely to continue throughout life,
- Substantially limits functioning in three or more of the following areas: self-care, receptive and expressive language, learning, mobility, self-direction, capacity for independent living, or economic self sufficiency; and
- Results in a need for individualized, interdisciplinary services of extended duration.

Some examples of disorders that would be classified as developmental disabilities include mental retardation, autism, cerebral palsy, and Down syndrome.

What is Developmental Delay?

Developmental delay is a diagnosis given to young children (under 8 years of age) who are slow in developing skills in motor, communication, social, or other areas. These delays may become a developmental disability as it becomes clear that the child has persistent disabilities, or they may fade as the child grows and catches up with other children.