Related Services Assistant Mentorship Project Seminar Televideo Dates

Three dates have been chosen for televideo seminars for RSAs in FSM for the fall. The dates have been booked through PeaceSat in Honolulu. They are:

Honolulu
Seminar will be held at Wist Hall on the University of Hawaii campus in Manoa.
Tuesday, September 18, 3:00 – 6:00 PM
Tuesday, October 23, 3:00 – 6:00 PM
Tuesday, December 11, 3:00 – 6:00 PM

Kosrae/Pohnpei
The seminar will be held in:
Kosrae: Toful, Dept.of Education (Lugo Skilling 625-5340)
Pohnpei: COM FSM (Joe Habuchmai 320-2482)
Wednesday, September 19, 12:00 PM – 3:00 PM
Wednesday, October 24, 12:00 PM – 3:00 PM

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Related Services Assistant Summer Institute in American Samoa

Seventeen RSA students continue summer training

A six-week summer Institute was held for RSA training in American Samoa. Instructors included: Nancy Robinson, PhD, CCC-SLP (speech pathologist), Robyn Wong, MPH, RD (nutritionist), and Kathy Ratcliffe, PhD, PT (physical therapist). Content for the summer institute included speech and language acquisition, feeding, nutrition, and creating adaptations for positioning and mobility. We learned how to walk using crutches, teach crutchwalking skills, woodworking skills, basic video skills, and created “books” for each of the children served by the program. We also did an evening of water therapy for children and had a lot of fun in the pool, learning how to use water as a therapeutic modality. ☺️
**Televideo Dates, Continued**

**Kosrae/Pohnpei, continued**
Wednesday, December 12, 12:00 PM – 3:00 PM

**Chuuk**
Seminar will be held in Chuuk State School System Office (Karatin 330-2202)
Wednesday, September 19, 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Wednesday, October 24, 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Wednesday, December 12, 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM

**Yap**
Seminar will be held in Yap State Education Enterprising Department multimedia lab.
Wednesday, September 19, 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Wednesday, October 24, 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Wednesday, December 11, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

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**NewsBits** (Submit more Newsbits to Kathy for publication in the next newsletter.)

Mellanie Lee, MA was in Hawaii this summer with her husband John Enloe. They traveled from their home on Enewetok in June, and were on the Big Island of Hawaii for most of July and some of August. Mellanie stopped off on Ebeye and saw Romeo on her way to Hawaii. She and John traveled to California in August. It is not clear what their plans are after that.

Nancy Robinson, PhD, CCC-SLP, was in American Samoa working for the Special Education Department, and teaching in the RSA summer institute for a month in May and June. She then spent a month in Hawaii, with her partner George Moore. She has returned to Chico State University in California to continue her teaching responsibilities there in the fall.

Henry Yangireitig, RSA, and Paul Tapang, RSA were on Yap proper for the summer, working with Francesca Tinmad, RSA, and Berna Mamreng, RSA. They returned to their respective islands in August.

Kinenchy Esa, RSA, traveled to Hawaii in June from this light and sturdy walker, made for a 5-year old boy with spastic diplegia (cerebral palsy) out of PVC pipe, cost less than $10.00 to make. It was made by Tuaotala Faalilo, American Samoa RSA student.

Josh stands in his custom adapted stander, made by Merenaite Siaosi, American Samoa RSA student. She used pieces from recycled chairs, bamboo, and bicycle handlebars to build the stander. It is tied together with strips of bicycle innertube.

Gertrude Rueppin, RSA, is now living with her daughter on the Big Island of Hawaii, caring for her grandson. She keeps in contact with Mellanie and Kathy.

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**NewsBits, continued**

Chuuk to visit his son. He was able to visit Jan Fried and Kathy Ratliffe, but missed Mellanie Lee.
Televideo, Continued

Majuro: Seminar will be held at CMI (Treavor Chunestudy or Staner Lorennij 625-5340)
Wednesday, September 19, 1:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Wednesday, October 24, 1:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Wednesday, December 12, 1:00 AM – 4:00 PM

American Samoa: Seminar will be held at LBJ Medical Center (Ray Tulafono)
Tuesday, September 18, 2:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Tuesday, October 23, 2:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Tuesday, December 11, 2:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Please make every effort to attend, and bring one or more children to present to the Hawaii team for consultation. We will plan a continuing education presentation for RSAs as well as consultation around children with whom you are working. Doctors, nurses, family members, and others are invited to attend the seminar also.

The format for the RSA televideo seminars will be as follows:

Hour 1 & 2: Consultations about children served by RSAs in FSM. RSA will introduce child and say what the concerns are. The Hawaii team will ask follow up questions and make recommendations. Please e-mail Kathy Ratliffe at ratliffe@hawaii.edu or write her, or call her at (808) 956-9502 as soon as possible to let her know the names and concerns of children who will be presented. She can then make sure that appropriate team members are present.

Hour 3: Continuing education presentation. Topic to be announced over e-mail. If you have requests for continuing education topics, please let Kathy know soon so she can set it up.

This seminar is for YOU- the RSAs. We can all take advantage of the opportunity to get information and support from colleagues around FSM and the Pacific, and from therapists and other experts in Hawaii. It will be great to see each other!

Adapted Wheelchair Headrest

What do you do if the headrest is broken on a child’s wheelchair, or if the child doesn’t even have a headrest?

PVC pipe, used for plumbing is available most places in the Pacific. Different size diameters are available and different shapes including straight or curved (to go around corners).

Find a curved corner piece about one inch or less in diameter, and pad it by wrapping it in foam, padded fabric, or other soft material. Then cover it with soft material that may or may not be waterproof. A sleeve from an old shirt that is tied off at the ends works well.

It can be attached to the wheelchair using strips of inner tube wrapped around the new headrest and an upright support (wood screwed into the wheelchair back, or existing headrest).

Mine Tuitele, American Samoa RSA student, demonstrates a hand splint that she made for three-year old Annemarie. She used a smooth shell wrapped loosely in a strip of cloth for each hand. Then she tied the cloth loosely around Annemarie’s hand. Using this splint, Annemarie learned to keep her hands open for longer periods of time. A smooth rock, soft foam, or thick fabric wrapped in cloth would also work well.
**Questions From RSAs**

**Question:** We have a pair of twins who have recently been diagnosed with mild autism. They are five years old. They can imitate simple words and produce some speech sounds but with different pronunciation of words. Their language appears made up because they use different kinds of words, or maybe they just pronounce the words differently. The children are difficult to understand. They can understand receptively but have a hard time expressing their feelings or ideas verbally.

There's no problem with gross and fine motor areas. The twins can grasp and hold small or big objects purposefully. They have problems holding onto things for more than a few minutes since they want to change activities every minute and tend to destroy whatever they touch. Their attention span is very short, they act impulsively and are not afraid of strangers. It's hard to tell if they can recognize or identify letters or numbers since they cannot tolerate any activities. They can imitate pointing to a letter or number but when asked it's hard for them to identify or say it out loud. It depends on whatever is presented but they like most to interact with manipulative activities.

**How can we help them with language and communication, and with paying attention to tasks?** (Henry Y., Yap)

**Answer:** Identify a routine for the day, and routines for specific activities throughout the day at school and at home. For example, when the children get up in the morning, their routine might be: 1) wake up, 2) wake up older sister or brother to take them to the bathroom, 3) use the bathroom, 4) wash hands and face, 5) dry hands and face, 6) clean up sleeping area- fold up mats, put away, 7) get dressed, 8) eat breakfast.

A communication board can be made with each of these steps on it- and a picture as well as simple words to describe each step. Then the board can be used to reinforce language skills as well as to reinforce the routine of the day. Parents, teachers, and brothers and sisters can prompt the children using the board about what the next step will be, and reinforce their language skills too.

Boards can be made for lots of other routines during the day, for instance snack time at school, reading time at school, bathing, meals, etc. The children can be coached about what will happen next during the day, or during an activity, by looking at the communication board. If they need to communicate to other people, the board may be helpful to express themselves.

The content of the boards needs to be decided by people who have the most interaction with the children (parents, brothers and sisters, teacher, etc.). If you are able to laminate the board(s), they will last longer.

This kind of structure can be really helpful to children with attention problems.

Please submit questions by e-mail to ratliffe@hawaii.edu, or by mail to the address on the front page.