

WWW.NILDCANADA.ORG

519-886-8633

In This Issue

Interview with

Wendy Stanton

Upcoming Events

Questions and Answers

Teachers Make the
Difference

UPCOMING EVENTS:

FALL SEMINAR

Saturday 15 October
2011

9:30 am — 4:30 pm

Registration

begins at 9:00

Redeemer University

College

777 Garner Rd East

Ancaster ON

**Register
Online!**

Search and Teach
Training

November 19 & 26

Niagara Christian
Community of
Schools

Fort Erie

Watch for news
about our Spring
Conference!!

Greetings! Fall is in the air with the cooler temperatures and the changing leaves. We find ourselves once again anticipating what this new school year will bring for us and for our students. I am excited for the adventures and learning experiences we will participate in this year. I look forward to hearing about how you have empowered your students, brought about change and helped shape their lives for the better! Enjoy this edition of Discovery Digest!

Interview with Wendy Stanton

Interview by Jane Hoogendam

Wendy Stanton is a “tried and true” Discovery Therapist working in the Orillia region! I first met her when we lived together for two weeks taking Level II. She is witty, intense, enjoys swimming (I think) and expresses a great love for her students. Wendy struggled with the traditional approach to teaching the Resource Program in the 1980’s, feeling it was “patchwork”, and no one ever “graduated” from the program. Wendy shared that “I was challenged by the Board at Orillia Christian School to research the problem, contacted York University and found no answer there. After much prayer, the Lord led me to an Educational Therapist who was a relative of one of my students. She encouraged me to take the NILD training that was being launched in Canada that summer.” After applying, Wendy found out she didn’t have the books and it was suggested to wait a year. Through prayer and perseverance, she motored down, collected all the books, read them intensely, and started the course the following Monday!

Wendy says, “The NILD program was a ‘eureka’ experience for me, and seemed the most practical approach to learning problems with young students. I had questioned my professor at York University, during my Special

Education training, about what worked for students with auditory processing difficulties or visual-spatial problems, and was told to use “whatever worked” because there was no instruction manual! I discovered that NILD had a working manual that was getting good results, and the intense two-week training session opened a whole new approach to learning that did not just support the student but changed the way the student processed information. Orillia Christian School began a one-year trial program with four students who had been tested and fit the criteria for Discovery. The results were amazing, and each student made a two-year jump in reading, spelling and mathematics. Since 1992, I have not veered from the path God has laid out for me. Many of my former Discovery students are university graduates, married and have children of their own, and it is heartening to meet them years later and have them encourage me to keep doing the Discovery program!”

When asked what difference NILD can make for the child, Wendy sees improvement of their self-image as the major change. “A little positive encouragement can go a long way with students accustomed to failure,” she states. “One student always felt uncomfortable with spatial relationships between his body and the objects around him, which

caused him to feel threatened by running or playing sports. Rhythmic writing helped him, and in his first year of Discovery, he took part in Track-and-Field day and completed the 1500 metre run! Another student, who suffered from an acquired brain injury, went from huddling under my table to finishing the grade eight curriculum and graduating into high school with his peers.”

Wendy appreciates the willingness of NILD to research and develop new avenues to reach more children. “NILD has been open to addressing the cost of therapy and the new ET2 training has allowed me to offer therapy to families who could not afford the full sessions. It is also helpful when preparing a student to graduate from the program, which can be a difficult transition year for them. The group therapy training now being developed will also address these important issues of time and money.”

When asked what makes a good therapist, Wendy summarized it well. “A good therapist needs to have a passion for working with students who struggle with learning, a humble and teachable spirit, and a keen desire to understand how students are thinking, not just what they are thinking.” What a passionate therapist who has touched many lives! Thank you, Wendy!

Teachers Make the Difference

Teachers Make a Difference



Found in an SRA book:
To teach well one must be part clown, part actor, part drill sergeant, part friend, and part parent.

For every class clown to tolerate there is a genius in the making. If a student develops a sense of purpose, he has said, "thank you" to his teacher (therapist).

The teacher (therapist) who takes the time and has the patience to connect with a troubled child is never forgotten. (AMEN)

For every former student who returns to say "thank you" there are 100 who have said "thanks" in their hearts. (Good reminder)
A true teacher (therapist) never stops learning.

To say you have taught when no one has learned is like saying you have written when your pen is out of ink.

Have a wonderful day!

Serving you for the kids,
Bridget Hughes, M.Ed.
NILD email moderator

Questions & Answers

Question:
Does anyone have an opinion/experience in delivering ET or GET to students with autism? Is there research that supports that ET is effective with dev. disabled students?

Megan Howell
Director of Supplemental Services
Trinity Classical Academy

Answer:
I have been working with a student for the past 6 years who was diagnosed with autism. When he first came into our program in the first grade, he was only diagnosed with learning disabilities. It became apparent very quickly there was more involved than just learning disabilities. I recommended to the parents they get additional testing done. The results indicated "autism"; however, from my observations, he is either high functioning autism or Asperger's.

Over the past 6 years he has made tremendous gains in reading (decoding, comprehension, fluency, vocabulary) and oral and written language. He continues to have poor gross and fine motor skills, but has

shown improvement in his writing ability (mechanics as well as content). His cursive writing continues to improve and has become more legible, as well as his ability to use the margins and lines appropriately. Unfortunately the parents aren't consistent with rhythmic writing at home so progress has been slow. Math continues to be the area he struggles with the most. Currently as a 7th grader, he is doing the 4th grade math curriculum at home with his dad. After reading many of your comments on Math-U-See and looking into the program, I recently encouraged the family to make the change. We have set up a calendar plan through high school to help him hopefully get caught up by the 12th grade!

When my student first entered the Discovery program and was subsequently diagnosed with autism, I wasn't sure how much progress we could make or if our school was the correct placement for him. Now six years later, I am amazed at the gains he has made, not only in academics, but also in behaviour and social skills. His parents have been proactive in obtaining services from the county, including

social skills, occupational therapy, and behaviour skills. These services were recently discontinued because he had reached his goals. In February he was named by the middle school teachers as the "Christian Character Student of the Month", which was the highlight of this school year for him.

On Fridays I have this student during the last period of the day. It's been difficult timing for him because he does expend a lot of energy during the day. As we were finishing up testing, he said to me that "his brain was smoking". I chuckled at what he said, and then he went on to say, "Anymore thinking and the thought organ will become loft space." I knew I had to share that with his mom! She responded to me, "Oh that boy....I tell you he is too funny for sure. Brings so much joy to our family, really don't know what I would do without him for sure." Those words are my sentiments also ~ he brings much joy to our Discovery department and enriches our school.

Lorraine Long
Discovery Program Coordinator
Hillcrest Christian School

A Warm Welcome to our Newest Level I Therapists!!

Congratulations to the nine students who graduated from Level I Therapy Training, summer of 2011... one from Quebec, one from Nova Scotia, one from India, a New Tribes missionary from Papua New Guinea and the rest from Ontario. They were eager learners and worked hard to master the techniques. They are also the first group to be assigned a mentor who will be of assistance to them and view their therapy either personally or through videos before they attend level II.

