



BEAM Newsletter

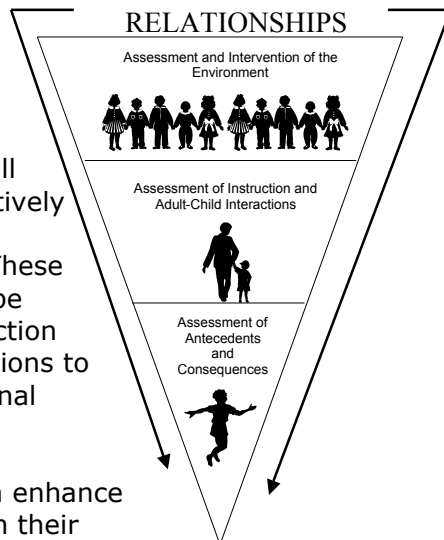
Bridging Education and Mental Health



BEAM topic: Interactions

Relationships and environments have been covered in past issues of the newsletter in accordance with the pyramid below. This month the featured BEAM topic is assessment of instruction and adult-child interactions.

Interventions for instruction and interaction are ways that teachers can create consistent, predictable, and positive climates, which are all central to the BEAM model. These interventions include providing positive attention to all children and being actively engaged with them throughout the day. These broad strategies can be embedded into instruction and everyday interactions to support social/emotional development.



One way teachers can enhance interactions is through their language. "Teacher Talk" is when teachers use the same language over and over. For example, "It's my turn to talk;" "This looks like a problem, let's solve it;" "It's almost time for...;" "We have enough ___ for everyone." Teacher talk is used to convey predictability, consistency and a positive climate. Another example is giving choices, but in a limited way. For example, "Do you want milk or water?" "You can pick up the blocks or the animals."

Use of specific social skills curriculum can teach children social/emotional skills. Mt. Olivet, our feature site this month, used several lessons from the *Second Step* curriculum to teach children about sharing and taking turns. An additional strategy is the use of inviting and containing techniques. These techniques invite children to express themselves and their emotions through symbolic play, drawing, books, and so forth.

Interactions continued...

These techniques can be as formal and structured as *News of the Day* or as informal as asking children how they are feeling throughout the day. By focusing on enhancing opportunities for more quality interactions, teachers will be creating a consistent, predictable, and contingent relationship and environment for all kids. (For more information, visit www.umn.edu/ceed)

Boardmaker is a computer program that can be useful to teachers in making schedules and choice making books. It contains a graphics database with computer symbols and templates, which can be made in any size and used to quickly build individualized boards. See examples below of pictures and schedule:



Featured BEAM program

Mt. Olivet Day Services Child Care Program

Mt. Olivet has been participating in the BEAM project since January of 2005. It is located in south Minneapolis and is licensed for approximately 51 infants, toddlers and preschoolers. Mt. Olivet is unique in that it also houses an adult day services program for adults who need extra support during the day. The program offers an Intergenerational Day program that provides activities for interaction between children and adults in their care. They meet daily in planned and unplanned activities. Three Mt. Olivet teachers have received BEAM coaching and have used activities that promote and support positive mental health in preschoolers. They have utilized a social skills curriculum that teaches children to have more positive social interactions.

Featured BEAM coach: Leah Hjelseth



Leah is a coach at Northeast Child Development and Mt. Olivet Child Care Center. She is currently completing her Ph.D. in School Psychology. At CEED she is a graduate research assistant working on the BEAM project. Her research interests center around early childhood and interventions for children who may be at risk for later reading difficulties. At CEED, she is a Graduate Research Assistant where she works on various projects related to Bridging Education and Mental Health.

BEAM Tips & Resources:

- * *Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum for Preschool/Kindergarten*. Third Edition. Committee for Children.
- * Boardmaker 5.0. Mayer-Johnson, LLC.
- * Tips sheets found at <http://education.umn.edu/ceed/publications/tipsheets>

Choice-making

Therapeutic Language



Upcoming BEAM events:

BEAM Training workshop on February 23rd and 24th.
We received a number of registrations and look forward to seeing you there!

BEAM Contacts:

Karen Anderson - Executive Administrative Specialist - 612-625-6617
Lisa Cariveau - Project Coordinator - 612-624-0397
Lilly Duran - BEAM coach - 612-625-8656
Shelley Neilsen Gatti - BEAM coach - 612-626-9528
Leah Hjelseth - BEAM coach - 612-625-8562
Christopher Watson - Project Director & Co-Principal Investigator - 612-625-2898

BEAM is a program at the Center for Early Education and Development (CEED) at the University of Minnesota. The mission of CEED is to improve developmental outcomes for children through applied research, training, and outreach. BEAM is funded by the FY04 federal Early Learning Opportunities Act (ELOA) Grant provided to the Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board. The pilots will run in 2005-2006, with evaluation results available in late 2006.