



Child-Care Chatter

News and Information for Child-Care Providers

When Tragedy Strikes

As teachers and childcare providers, we play an important role in helping children deal with tragic events like hurricane Katrina and so many others. So, we thought it would be appropriate to review some of the advice from experts in the field of helping children when tragedy strikes.

- Encourage discussion of the event. Don't bring it up yourself, but be open to the child's desire to talk about what happened. Answer their questions as honestly as you can, using age-appropriate words, and provide comfort and support.
- Provide predictability. Their life is out of control, so they look to you for routine and structure. Try to maintain consistent times for daily activities, and tell the child in ad-

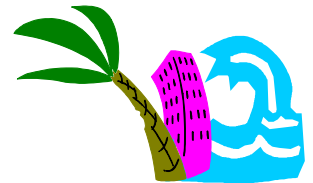
vance when that routine is going to change.

- Be sensitive to the behaviors of grief. These children are likely to express anger, experience sleep disorders, become aggressive, have difficulty concentrating, and display a variety of other behaviors associated with their attempts to explain and cope with what has happened to them.
- Protect the child. Avoid or stop any activity that seems to aggravate the trauma, including movies, games or exposure to media coverage.
- Give them choices and a sense of control. Traumatized children often feel that they have no control over their lives. Allow them to make decisions about activities and interactions with others.

- Provide group activities so children in your classroom can express their fears, uncertainties and insecurities about the event. This helps the traumatized child by saying, "You are not alone and not the only one who is afraid," and it helps the other children express their own concerns. Such activities might include:

- ◊ Storytelling: children tell what they were doing during the event.
- ◊ Creative writing: stories, poems, letters.
- ◊ Plays and skits: allows children to act out fantasies and fears associated with the event.

These are only a few ways in which you can help children cope with tragedies. If you would like more resources, see Jimmie's Journal on page 3.



Volume 2, Issue 2

The Lighter Side

A little girl had just finished her first week of school. "I'm just wasting my time," she told her mother. "I can't read. I can't write. And, they won't let me talk!"



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What's New from MB&A?

Our newest course, *AD/HD: What Is Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder?* is now available in pre-release.

Additionally, we plan to pre-release *Children in the Classroom Community* and *Teachers and Parents in the Classroom Community* before the end of the year.

New courses in the works include *Untangling Autism*, which explains some of the mysteries about autism. We

separate facts from myths and answer some of the most frequently asked questions about this baffling condition. You will learn how to identify signs and symptoms of this developmental disorder, as well as ways to deal with autistic children in the classroom. Look for *Untangling Autism* in early 2006.

In response to your requests for more adminis-

trative and management courses, we are completing work on four hours of instruction in *Effective Communication Skills*, which will be released as two two-hour courses early in 2006.

If you would like to receive pre-release copies of any of these courses or if you need additional copies of our course CDs, just call 1-877-655-7139.

In Praise of AD/HD

That's right! Some experts are telling us that we need to adjust the way we view AD/HD. Some of the upsides of this disorder that they cite include quick-wittedness, the speedy grasp of the "big picture," and an enthusiasm for almost everything.

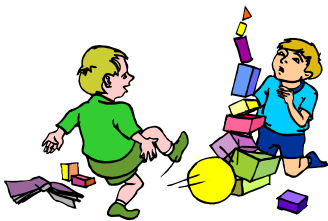
This is a welcome change in approach for those who struggle to cope with their AD/HD every day. Rather than seeing themselves as somehow "defective," they see themselves as having some advan-

tages over the rest of us. Take David Neeleman, CEO of JetBlue Airways, for example. Neeleman credits his ability to think out of the box and to focus on whatever has his attention at the moment on his AD/HD. He also admits that the rest of his life would be a disaster without the support of his wife and others who deal with everything else.

If you are working with a child who has been diagnosed with AD/HD, you may want to take MB&A's

course on the subject. Pre-release copies are available on request. In addition, there are a number of new books that you may want to read and/or refer to parents. They include *The Edison Gene: ADHD and the Gift of the Hunter Child* by Thom Hartmann, *Delivered From Distraction: Getting the Most Out of Life with Attention Deficit Disorder* by Drs. Edward Hallowell and John Ratey, and *The Gift of ADHD: How to Transform Your Child's Problems into Strengths* by Lara Honos-Webb.

Property Rights According to Kids



- ☺ If I want it, it's mine.
- ☺ If I have it, it's mine.
- ☺ If I can take it away from someone else, it's mine.

- ☺ If I've ever had it in the past, it's mine.
- ☺ If it's mine, it can never be yours.
- ☺ If I'm building something, all of the pieces are mine.
- ☺ If it looks even vaguely like mine, it's mine.
- ☺ If you were playing with it and put it down, it is automatically mine.
- ☺ If it's broken, it's yours.

?? Why don't cats
crave sweets ??



Because their gene for the sweet
taste receptor is defective. This
genetic defect is also found in the
DNA of lions and cheetahs.

Carole's Corner



A recent meeting with the parent of an autistic youngster reminded me

once again of how much richer my life is for having chosen special education as my career. I decided to use my "corner" this month to remind those of you who have the pleasure of caring for challenged children that these youngsters can be such a

unique joy.

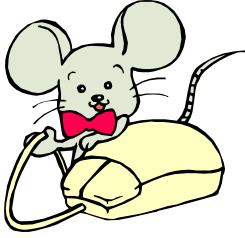
Helen Keller wrote, "The marvelous richness of human experience would lose something of rewarding joy if there were no limitations to overcome."

WOW! That's a little deep, and yet so true. Take a close look at the limitations of your "special" children, and then take an even closer look at the strength, humor, and honesty these kids use to overcome and live with their limitations. Focus on their strengths,

rejoice in their bravery, and cheer these little people on their courageous journeys. As you help these special youngsters meet the challenges they face in your classrooms, don't forget to enrich the lives of the other children in your class by encouraging them to be compassionate and helpful. The lives of both the non-disabled and the disabled children will be so much richer as they learn to share their classroom communities successfully with each other.

Jimmie's Journal

In the course of researching our lead story on helping children who experience trauma or tragedy, we uncovered a wealth of resources available to you on the Internet. Some of the most helpful and informative include the following:



- www.trynova.org (The Nat'l Organization for Victim Assistance)
- www.ChildTrauma.org (The Child-Trauma Academy)
- www.aap.org (The American Academy of Pediatrics)
- www.naeyc.org/families/disaster.asp (National Association for the Education of Young Children)
- www.zerotothree.org/coping/

- www.aacap.org (American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry)
 - www.aap.org (American Psychological Association)
 - www.fema.gov/rrr/children.shtm (Federal Emergency Management Agency)
- A Google search on the words "children," "trauma," and "Katrina" will produce hundreds of other resources.

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

According to the 2000 U.S. census, more than 4.5 million children under the age of 18 live in grandparent-headed households, a 29.7% increase over 1990. This change may have an impact on the way you work with families.

One resource available to you and the parenting grandparents you meet in your school or center is AARP's newly designed Grandparent Information Center. WWW.aarp.org/grandparents provides information on topics like grand-

parenting special-needs children, laughing with your grandchildren, sharing time together, and taking care of yourself. They also have a free newsletter, message boards for exchanging information, and lists of helpful resources.

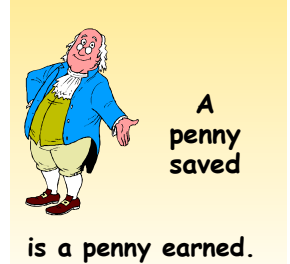
\$ and Sense

Money-saving tips:

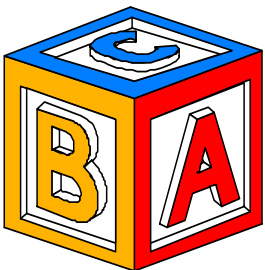
- Want more puppets for your classroom but find them too expensive? Try buying clean, stuffed animals at yard sales or thrift stores. Cut a slit where you want the hand to go and remove the stuffing.

- Make disposable painting smocks by cutting head and arm holes in large plastic bags.
- Don't waste money on expensive refrigerator/freezer deodorizers. Put three pieces of charcoal in an open container in your refrigerator and in your freezer.

Replace the charcoal once a month, and toss the used pieces in your grill.



Character-Building Vocabulary



Teach you children the value and meaning of the word **In-dependence** by helping them

master new skills that allow them to be more independent. Teach them to tie their own shoes, button their own sweaters, straighten their own cubbies, and even prepare their own

snacks on occasion. Praise them for each new task they master which develops independence. Not having to ask for assistance with everything they do will help them gain a sense of accomplishment. You may even want to have them think of ways they can become even more independent as they get older.

Teach your children the meaning of **Responsibility** by having them list

their own responsibilities. For instance, "wash my hands," "pick up my toys," and "do my homework" may be some responsibilities of the children in your care. Carry this lesson a step further by leading the children in a discussion of the responsibilities of the community helpers. Ask them questions like, "What would happen if the firemen forgot to do their responsibilities when a house was on fire?"



Computer-Based Child-Care Training

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MB&A's Child-Care Chatter

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NEWS ♦ CRAFTS ♦ GAMES ♦ TIPS ♦ ADVICE ♦ HUMOR ♦ RECIPES ♦ EVENTS ♦ ACTIVITIES

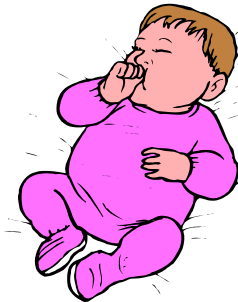
Preventing SIDS at Childcare

Even though the incidence of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) has dramatically declined over the past decade, SIDS is still the third leading cause of infant (less than one year) mortality in the U.S.

In October 2005, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) issued its most recent guidelines for preventing these tragic deaths. The guidelines that have direct impact on childcare facilities include the following:

- **BACK SLEEP ONLY:** Infants should be placed for sleep on their backs only. The AAP no longer supports side sleep, because infants can roll onto their stomachs.
- **USE FIRM SLEEP SURFACE:** The AAP recommends a firm crib mattress covered by a sheet.

- **NO SOFT OBJECTS OR LOOSE BEDDING:** Avoid pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, stuffed toys, and other soft objects in the crib.
- **NO EXPOSURE TO SECOND-HAND SMOKE.**
- **CONSIDER OFFERING A PACIFIER:** Don't force pacifier use. Offer when putting the infant down for sleep, and do not reinsert it after the child falls asleep.
- **AVOID OVERHEATING:** Infants should be lightly clothed for sleep, and the room temperature should be comfortable for a lightly clothed adult.



- **AVOID DEVICES MARKETED TO REDUCE SIDS:** None of these devices have been tested sufficiently to assure efficacy or safety.
- **DO NOT RELY ON MONITORS:** There is no evidence that monitors reduce the incidence of SIDS.
- **PREVENT POSITIONAL PLAGIOCEPHALY (Flat Back of Head):**
 - Encourage "tummy time" during awake hours.
 - Avoid excessive amounts of time in car seats and bouncers.
 - Place the infant to sleep with the head to one side for a week and then change to the other.

For more information, go to www.aap.org/ncepr/sids.

Sources: www.nytimes.com, www.aap.org.
