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Indiana Institute on Disability and Community



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ACROSS THE COURTYARD



New Frontiers Fellowship Award

[Jim Ansaldo](#), Research Associate with the Institute's [Center on Education and Lifelong Learning](#), received funding through Indiana University's [2015 New Frontiers in the Arts and Humanities Experimentation Fellowship](#) competition at Indiana University to develop a research study that explores the impact of improv classes for teens on the autism spectrum.

Improvisational drama, popularly known in the U.S. as "improv," is a form of drama in which plot, character, and setting are created during the moment of performance. A growing number of arts organizations offer improv classes for teens on the autism spectrum. These organizations advertise a host of benefits for participating teens, including developing relationships, understanding of social cues, flexible thinking, and communication skills. Advocacy organizations across the U.S. affirm the notion that teens benefit from improv classes in terms of their communicative and social development. However, little research has been conducted in these settings.

This interpretive case study will utilize a grounded theory approach to examine the perspectives of individuals participating in improv classes for teens on the autism spectrum that take place in two distinct settings: a program offered by a small theatre in a southern U.S. state, and one offered by a large theatre in a Midwestern U.S. state. The study avoids a narrow research focus on students' acquisition of discrete skills by exploring both skill development and self-efficacy outcomes. Moreover, the study challenges deficit orientations toward teens with autism by focusing on the interplay of individual characteristics and the demands of the educational environment, including the perspectives of teachers, family members, and other supporters. For more information, contact Jim Ansaldo at (812) 855-6508 or e-mail jansaldo@indiana.edu.



Lifetime Communities Initiative

Last week, we told you about a [survey](#) opportunity to help design the country's first "Lifetime Community District" smack in the middle of Bloomington, Indiana as part of the Institute's Center on Aging and Community's [Lifetime Communities Initiative](#). [Phil Stafford](#), Director of the Center, has penned a "[Guest Column](#)" published in the Bloomington Herald Times newspaper, that addresses opportunities the B-Line walking trail presents in developing private-sector initiatives for age- and ability-friendly housing options and economic opportunities in the City of Bloomington. Check it out!



Resource Article - The Use of Video Self-Modeling

Students with autism spectrum disorders and other disabilities are increasingly included in the typical general education classroom. However, there are certain challenges to adapting to the general education setting. However, there are certain

challenges to adapting to the general education setting. Often times these challenges are not academic, but rather include struggling to keep homework organized, completing their agenda (e.g., assignment notebook) at the end of the day, or appropriately transitioning within the hallways of their school. These types of organizational and school-based skills are essential for the success of any student.

A surprisingly simple concept for teaching these types of skills include showing the student a model they can try and copy. Even more interesting, what if the model students watched was themselves? This is exactly the idea behind video self-modeling. Video modeling is a mode for teaching behaviors or skills that includes using a video recording as a model. Video self-modeling is when the student views a video recording of themselves performing the behavior or skill successfully. [Click](#) to access the rest of this [Indiana Resource Center for Autism](#) resource article and its companion [How To with Examples](#).

COMINGS AND GOINGS



Grossi Presents at Alabama Transition Conference

[Center on Community Living and Careers](#) Director [Teresa Grossi](#), was a featured speaker last week, at the [25th Alabama Transition Conference](#). In a two-hour workshop, she helped conference attendees understand the issues and gain new strategies for “Teaching Transition in the General Education Setting.” Grossi also shared information about Indiana’s School-to-Work Collaborative research project, which is investigating the effects of internships, teaching self-determination, and embedding a career coach in the high schools on employment outcomes. The project emphasizes the shared responsibilities of transition and seeks to better connect transitioning students and their parents with adult services and state and community resources before the student leaves school.



Merrill to Co-Present at Positive Behavior Supports Conference in Boston

Anna Merrill, Graduate Assistant with the Institute’s [Indiana Resource Center for Autism](#), will co-present a session at the 12th International [Conference on Positive Behavior Supports](#) on March 11-14, 2015 in Boston, MA.

[Merrill’s](#) session titled Video Self-modeling with Diverse Learners in the General Education Classroom will provide attendees with an overview of the results from a study investigating the effectiveness of video self-modeling as a tool for teaching non-academic classroom skills to students with educational diagnoses learning in a general education setting. Merrill will co-present with Joe Risch, Avon Community School Corporation in Avon, Indiana.

IN BLOOMINGTON



Disability and Accessibility Awareness Celebrated this Spring

The City of Bloomington [Council for Community Accessibility](#) (CCA) joins communities across Indiana to celebrate March as Disability Awareness Month. The goal of Disability Awareness Month is to increase awareness and promote independence, integration and inclusion of all people with disabilities.

A wealth of activities will be occurring in Bloomington and on the IU campus giving everyone, including individuals with disabilities, family members, service providers, faculty and other community members, the opportunity to participate in events, educational opportunities, advocacy and the arts. The events encourage everyone to consider ways in which our community is a welcoming one to people with disabilities.

Art galleries, film showings, trainings and webinars will be just some of the many activities available to the public in March. A full list of events, including attendance and contact information, is [available online](#) or contact CCA Staff Liaison Lucy Schaich at (812) 349-3433. The Council for Community Accessibility is a volunteer group that advocates for the interests of people with disabilities.

IN INDIANA

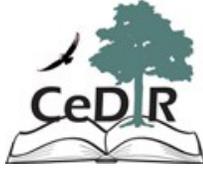


Negotiating Skills Advocacy Training Project

The League for the Blind and Disabled (League) is sponsoring an advocacy training project in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The purpose of the Negotiating Skills Advocacy Training Project is to teach people with disabilities, family members, advocates, and people in disability related occupations high level negotiating skills that can be used in their advocacy efforts. In order to accomplish this, the League will conduct a two-day negotiating training project lead by Irma Tyler-Wood, Principal at [Ki ThoughtBridge](#).

Individuals who would like to participate in the training must submit an application and be accepted. The Negotiating Skills Advocacy Training Project applications can be accessed through the [League's](#) web site under "Events." The training will be conducted on April 28, 2015 from 9:30-5:30 p.m. and April 29, 2015 from 8:00-4:00 p.m. at Hotel Fort Wayne, 305 East Washington Center Road, Fort Wayne, IN, 46825. Applications are due by March 13, 2015. The League will notify accepted applicants by March 27, 2015.

NEW LIBRARY COLLECTION ITEMS



Library Corner

Arkansas Can Do, Inc. (2012). Disability etiquette: It's common courtesy. [Little Rock, AR]: Arkansas Can Do, Inc.

"Explores myths and stereotypes associated with disabilities; provides basic communication tips; looks at the impact of language and labels; offers a quick look at the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); and ends with a short quiz."

Kurth, J. A., & Gross, M. (2015). The inclusion toolbox: Strategies and techniques for all teachers. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

"Featuring materials relevant to all stages of implementation, The Inclusion Toolbox is an all-in-one resource that combines research-based strategies and practical tools to help you design and implement a truly inclusive education program."

Rollins, P. R., McFarlin, M. N., Trautman, C. H., & Kerr, E. (2014). Facilitating early social communication skills: From theory to practice. Shawnee Mission, KS: AAPC Publishing.

"This text presents a developmental social-pragmatic approach to facilitating language and social communication. Consistent with SCERTS model (Social Communication Emotional Regulation and Transactional Supports), it makes a major contribution to the training and support of young children on the autism spectrum, ages 3-5."

These new materials may be borrowed from the [Center for Disability Information and Referral](#) (CeDIR) at the Institute. To check out materials, contact the library at 800-437-7924, send an e-mail to cedir@indiana.edu, or visit us at 1905 North Range Road in Bloomington.



Research, Education, and Service

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