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The FrostigCenter



~~~~~ Life Success Newsletter

Spring 2010
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**The Path to Success**, by Heather Chatem, Master Teacher, Frostig Center

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The path to success is like walking a tightrope. Propelled by strengths, it is a very fine line learning how to keep balance, accepting one's weaknesses without any reservations. Those individuals that are able to find this balance are more likely to keep walking the tightrope to success without falling. Based on the longitudinal quantitative study and qualitative analysis of former students' interviews, the Frostig Research Department identified six attributes or traits that they believe could facilitate walking the tightrope of success with more confidence. These six success attributes are: self-awareness, proactivity, perseverance, goals setting, presence and use of effective support systems, and emotional coping strategies.

At Frostig, we believe our students need and can learn these attributes, so we include methods that focus on teaching the success attributes. Some of the techniques are brief, while others are more comprehensive. To share our experiences and effective teaching activities, we collaboratively compiled [The 6 Success Factors for Children with Learning Disabilities: Ready to Use Activities to Help Kids with Learning Disabilities Succeed in School and in Life](#). However, prior familiarity with the concepts of success attributes and what they represent is required in order to engage students in the process of learning. Listed below are the success attributes along with some suggested ideas and activities to foster these skills in students.

Self-Awareness

- ❑ Multimodal teaching, to allow each student to decide on his/her best learning style
- ❑ Positive feedback and constructive guidance from the teacher
- ❑ Explicit instruction on how one's words and actions affect self and others
- ❑ Reinforce that disability is only a part, not the whole of a person

Proactivity

- ❑ Frequent use of the word "Proactive" to build students' understanding of taking an active part in their education
- ❑ Modeling and teaching how to problem-solve using teachable moments
- ❑ Building ownership of choices and outcomes

Perseverance

- ❑ Give options to promote interest
- ❑ Teach skills directly, broken into parts, that will lead to eventual independence

Goal Setting

- ❑ Don't just talk, show. Using a binder and planner to model goal setting with students, break the large goal into smaller, manageable goals with written reminders of due dates.
- ❑ Book Reports: have students break down how many pages they need to read each day to finish on time.
- ❑ Student participation in keeping track of IEP goal attainment
- ❑ As students work and progress through the year, gaining more knowledge, the increasing length of assignments should be explained to the students as a sign of accomplishment.
- ❑ Have students choose a goal they want to work on and have them keep track of it.

Presence & Use of Effective Support Systems

- ❑ Resource scavenger hunt at school
- ❑ Don't automatically give a student an answer; show them how to find the answer. Encourage students to use resources other than the teacher in order to try and solve academic questions.
- ❑ Encourage students to call peers or use other resources if they have questions about homework.

Emotional Coping Strategies

- ❑ Build awareness of stress triggers and problem-solve solutions before escalation.
- ❑ Build awareness of availability and use of support systems.
- ❑ Provide a safe environment where students feel free to take risks and challenge themselves.

Building opportunities for success is very important. Due to the difficulties our students experience, they may not be aware of success attributes and how these attributes may assist them in life. Our goal is to teach youths to become independent and successful. We try to help them learn how to balance and walk that tightrope to success, despite their learning disabilities.

Success Attributes in Summer Life, by Dr. Chris Schnieders, Director of Teacher Training, Frostig Center

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Integrating the Success Attributes vocabulary into everyday language might be helpful for students. The six attributes lend themselves to more than school, extending into summer life.

**Self Awareness.** Recognizing one's strengths, interests, and weaknesses can be a part of the discussion of organized and casual activities in the summer. A child may want to explore a new interest which may or may not be a strength for that individual.

**Proactivity.** Seeking out the people and services of a community might prove to be a great family adventure in the summer. For instance, if your community has a new (or new to you) facility, the family might want to visit to explore what might be useful now or in the future.

**Goal Setting.** After considering Self-Awareness and Proactivity the family members might want to set some realistic goals to meet by summer's end. Charting progress of one's goals can lead to meaningful discussions about the last three Success Attributes.

**Perseverance.** Seeing a task through to completion might be a life-changing event for some students. The summer is a great time to focus on one endeavor and see it through until it is finished.

**Emotional Coping Strategies.** No matter what age or circumstance getting through an exercise, task or activity can be stressful. Figuring out how to work through those stressors is important.

**Using Support Systems.** Getting through all of the above Success Attributes requires other's help and support. Learning to identify and then ask for help would be a great summer focus.

Encourage your student to try on a couple of Success Attributes and see how they fit. Start small. Remember what Steven Wright says, "You can't have everything. Where would you put it?"

## Success Attributes Training Institute



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Once again, the Frostig Center will be conducting a 3-day institute to train classroom teachers and other professionals in techniques to embed the Success Attributes into their classroom curriculum.

These six Success Attributes (Goal Setting, Self Awareness, Perseverance, Emotional Coping Strategies, Support Systems, and Proactivity) were identified in Frostig's 20-year longitudinal study of which life skills proved to be most important to children growing up with learning disabilities in terms of successful outcomes in their adult

lives.

The training provided in this Institute has proven to be beneficial to a wide variety of professionals who work with students. Past participants have included classroom teachers, school administrators, psychologists and tutors in public, private and parochial schools as well as staff at specialized institutions, such as art academies, residential treatment homes and after-school child care facilities.

The Success Attributes Institute this summer will be conducted in Pasadena, CA (which offers world-class cultural attractions, fine dining, and beautiful weather for those of you from out of town). Please join us for this very worthwhile program.

Dates: Monday - Wednesday June 28 - 30, 2010

Time: 8:30 AM - 3 PM each day

Location: Frostig Center, 971 N. Altadena Dr., Pasadena CA

Cost: \$100 materials/registration fee (remainder of cost is underwritten by a private foundation grant)

If you are interested in attending this program, please contact Jean Petersen by email jean@frostig.org or phone 626-791-1255, ext 217 for registration form.

Building Self-Esteem

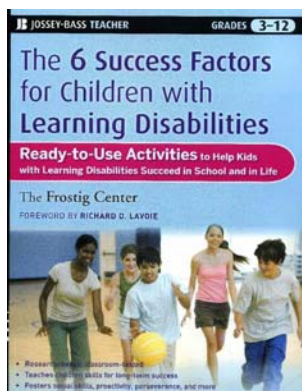
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On February 3, 2009, **Dr. Monte Davenport**, Diagnostic Services Coordinator at the Texas Scottish Rite Hospital presented a seminar, Fostering Strengths and Building Self-Esteem in Children with Dyslexia and Related Disorders, based on the Frostig Center's study titled "Predictors of success in individuals with learning disabilities" [link](#). The seminar was attended by over 50 GCISD parents and administrators. Dr. Davenport discussed the symptoms of low self-esteem and their long term impact on our kids. He also discussed what we as parents can do to break the low-self-esteem cycle in order to help our children succeed.

The success attributes discussed were self-awareness, self-acceptance, and proactivity. According to Dr. Davenport, the goal of self-awareness is to help our child understand that his difficulties are not who he is as a person. In terms of self-acceptance, the presentation discussed steps that parents and teachers can take to help students change their negative "self-talk". "Self-talk" is what children think of themselves when facing difficult situations. Finally, Dr. Davenport encouraged parents to be proactive by establishing a support network for their children. The support group includes teachers, counselors, tutors and other parents and children with similar experiences.

For more information, you can access Dr. Davenport's full presentation with this [link](#).

## Frostig's Teacher Guide



### **The 6 Success Factors for Children with Learning Disabilities**

is founded upon the acclaimed studies of the Frostig Center, and provides parents and teachers with an array of classroom-tested activities designed to help kids with LD to achieve long-term success at school and in life.

You can purchase **The 6 Success Factors for Children with Learning Disabilities: Ready-to-Use Activities to Help Kids with LD Succeed in School and in Life** :

FROM AMAZON.COM:

[http://www.amazon.com/Success-Factors-Children-Learning-Disabilities/dp/0470383771/ref=sr\\_11\\_1?](http://www.amazon.com/Success-Factors-Children-Learning-Disabilities/dp/0470383771/ref=sr_11_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1236630773&sr=11-1)

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FROM BARNES & NOBLE ONLINE:

<http://search.barnesandnoble.com/The-Six-Success-Factors-for-Children-with-Learning-Disabilities/Frostig-Center/e/9780470383773/?itm=6>

FROM THE PUBLISHER (JOSSEY-BASS):

<http://www.josseybass.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0470383771.html>

We'd love to get your feedback on the book, so if you purchase it, would you kindly take a minute to review it on Amazon.com? Your input would be greatly appreciated.

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