

# MATCEI

Michigan Association of Teachers of Children with  
Emotional Impairments

October 2011



**MATCEI**  
Board of Directors  
2011-2012

**Richard Spring**  
President

[rspring72@hotmail.com](mailto:rspring72@hotmail.com)

**Wendy Warren**  
Past President  
Membership Chair

[eiteach1017@yahoo.com](mailto:eiteach1017@yahoo.com)

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[murbanek@inghamisd.org](mailto:murbanek@inghamisd.org)

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[Chrispher\\_k86@yahoo.com](mailto:Chrispher_k86@yahoo.com)

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[moreland@sresd.org](mailto:moreland@sresd.org)

**Lori Jo Ott**

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[lorijott@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lorijott@sbcglobal.net)

**William Young**

Representative

[wyoung@inghamisd.org](mailto:wyoung@inghamisd.org)

## October 2011 Edition of the *MATCEI* Newsletter *Happy Haunting....*

In this spooktacular edition you will meet our two new Board Representatives, revisit Mindfulness, get great ideas, a book review, seclusion and restraint updates, save the date for Spring Conference, and more!

### What's new at MATCEI?

Your MATCEI Board has been hard at work the last few months! We are so excited for our Fall In-service with Bryan Dean on November 4th at Ingham ISD.

Check the website for details! At our monthly meetings we have been busy with SEAC and legislative updates, planning our Fall and Spring Conferences, and updating our Philanthropy objectives. Interested in helping?

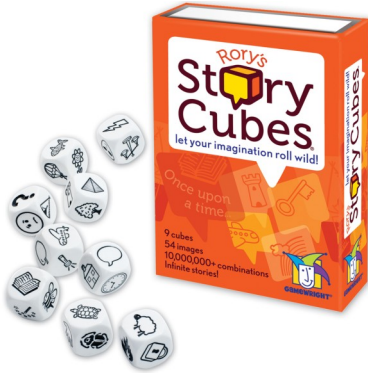
Please contact any of your board members listed on this page! Come see what we're all about! The next Board Meeting will be Thursday November 17th at the Brookshire Inn in Williamston at 6:30 pm.

*It is the mission of MATCEI to support and assist its members committed to providing quality educational experiences for all students struggling with emotional and behavioral challenges.*

## Now that's a great idea....

Here's a great instructional idea from one of our MATCEI members!

Rory's Story Cubes are a great way to generate imaginative play for all ages. The manufacturer suggests that there are an infinite number of ways to play. You can play solitaire or with others. Suggested uses include: Literacy development, written expression, speaking and listening skills, creative inspiration, problem solving and ice-breakers. You can visit their website at [www.storycubes.com](http://www.storycubes.com) for more inspiration. And yes, there's an app for that!



## Got a Great Idea?

Then share it! If you have a great idea, strategy, project, or program that you have found improves outcomes for students academically or behaviorally, then share it! Send your ideas to Karen West at [kwest@inghamisd.org](mailto:kwest@inghamisd.org).

### Schools Cannot Do It Alone

Building Public Support for  
AMERICA'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
JAMIE VOLLMER

### The Book Nook

#### October Pick: **Schools Cannot Do It Alone** by Jamie Vollmer

Find it at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com)

*Schools Cannot Do It Alone* tells of Jamie Vollmer's extraordinary journey through the land of public education. His experiences lead him to two critical discoveries. First, we have a systems problem, not a people problem. We must change the system to get the graduates we need. Second, we cannot touch the system without touching the culture of the surrounding town; everything that goes on inside a school is tied to local attitudes, values, traditions, and beliefs. Drawing on his work in hundreds of districts, Jamie offers teachers, administrators, board members, and their allies a practical program to secure the understanding, trust, permission, and support they need to change the system and increase student success.

## Meet our new MATCEI Board Members

### Meet our new Board Representative...



Lori Jo Ott

Lori Jo Ott is a Teacher for students with Emotional Impairments for Howell Public Schools at Hutchings Elementary. She lives in Howell with her husband Steve. Lori has 3 sons; Kevin, Adam and Nathan. Kevin lives in Louisville, Adam and Nathan live in Charlotte N.C. Lori's hobbies include steam engines, gardening, golf, scrapbooking and reading.



**Thank-you Lori and Bill for joining our MATCEI Board!**

### New Board Representative...

William Young

Bill Young has worked for Ingham ISD for 27 years. For the past 20 years Bill has been the Behavior Management Consultant at the Secondary Learning Center. Bill received his masters in Family Life Education at Western Michigan University. Bill has been married for 25 years to his wife Jean. They have 3 daughters, one son, seven grand children, and are raising a granddaughter. In 2010 Bill received the MATCEI Professional Service Award. His hobbies include singing and being an avid Jazz Collector! He is co-founder of Young & Spring Educational Consultants.



## Save the Date

- April 18-20, 2012—MATCEI 54th Annual Spring Conference  
Mt. Pleasant Comfort Inn Hotel and Suites

### Re-Setting the Target: Right tools, Right time!

Sessions to include Family Friendly IEP's, Bullying awareness and prevention, Techniques to support Universal Design for Learning, Tier 1 Behavioral Intervention, Co-Teaching, and more!

## **Seclusion and Restraint Revisited**

By Richard Spring LMSW  
MATCEI Board President

The Michigan State Board of Education established the current state standards for the emergency use of Seclusion and Restraint in December 2006. That 26 page document is available online at [http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Seclusion\\_and\\_Restraint\\_Standards\\_180715\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Seclusion_and_Restraint_Standards_180715_7.pdf) and should be regularly reviewed by anyone who could possibly be called on during an emergency situation at their school. Periodic review of this document is for your protection as well as for the protection of students with whom we work.

At the time, there was considerable pressure to ban seclusion outright. Some members of the board were passionate about their opposition to use of emergency seclusion. However, the most horrific examples provided were of two deaths brought about by restraints that went horribly wrong. An ad hoc group of the Special Education Advisory Committee was formed to develop recommendations to the board. That group included a wide spectrum of opinions on both sides of these issues. The ad hoc group came to agreement that recognized there are times when seclusion (as defined in the standards) can be preferable to restraint. It was agreed that at times restraints can exacerbate physically acting out behavior, and take longer for the child to re-establish control. Versus being given the opportunity to regain control on their own without further endangering themselves and others.

SEAC passed the group's recommendations. These were submitted to and considered by the state board of education (along with the recommendations of a large number of other stakeholders), and those recommendations became part of the final document approved by the board.

It has come to our attention that federal legislation is being drafted to address seclusion and restraint. The legislative language currently specifically prohibits use of seclusion under any circumstances. If passed, the federal law will override state policies. We would like to hear from other MATCEI members what your thoughts are on this issue, and how we might be able to get our voices heard. So, submit your thoughts to Richard Spring, MATCEI President, [rspring72@hotmail.com](mailto:rspring72@hotmail.com). We will keep you posted as necessary on this legislation.

## **Utilizing Mindful Movement; with Student;**

A review of our *Mindfulness* session at the MATCEI Spring Conference by Marie Moreland

The increased focus of utilizing mindfulness practices is clear especially in the field of pain reduction and stress relief. The benefits are also enormous for children who experience attention difficulties, anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem. Mindfulness is the new terminology for types of meditation. When most of us think of meditation, a vision comes to mind of sitting cross-legged with hands resting on our knees, eyes closed and complete silence. The newest versions of meditation include movement from mindful walking, eating, Nia and Yoga to a series of movements created by Thich Nhat Hahn.

*Meditation* is simply a practice of focusing one's attention that affects both mind and body. *Mindfulness* just "invites you to notice **WHERE** you are, **WHAT** is happening, and **HOW** you are responding in any given moment." Thich Nhat Hahn defines it as "our ability to be aware of what is going on both inside us and around us." It is the continuous awareness of our bodies, emotions, and thoughts.

Mindful Walking was one of the activities participants experienced during the Mindfulness session. This is an exercise that can be utilized to help with feelings of depression. Since the basic quality of depression is a feeling of being stuck or trapped, the simple act of walking and moving can help someone feel as if they are slowly but surely moving somewhere and doing something!! Doing this exercise barefoot enhances the experience as each step can be felt as a connection to earth and getting grounded.

Mindful eating slowed the process of experiencing food beginning with smelling it to recognizing the textures and allowing it to fill the cavity of the mouth before chewing and swallowing. Participants found it takes a long time for one Hershey kiss to melt and the chocolate from it coats everywhere in the mouth when given the opportunity.

As anxiety and stress come from the mind not being in the here and now---worrying about the future, second guessing the past---mindfulness helps to calm those fears and reduce shame and embarrassment for experiencing them. Impulse issues can also elicit such feelings. One activity, **CALM**, is found in *Child's Mind*, Willard (2010) (p. 106), and can help address these. The child stands or sits straight and brings attention to their breath. Then, starting at the **C for CHEST**, breath is focused in the area of heart and lungs, expanding and opening. Then, awareness goes in the same way to the **A for ARMS** and **L for LEGS** where a child can feel strong and grounded to the floor, paying attention to impulses to move, and challenge themselves to sit for a moment longer. Finally, attention is focused on the **M for the MIND**, and allowing more settling to occur. After that, the child is encouraged to check in with their feelings and see what options they have and if they can make a better choice.

Working with populations of students with emotional difficulties, mindfulness practices can offer a respite in the moment and life long tools to empower children to develop a sense of personal strength, calm, and success. And, the benefits to those of us teaching is an added bonus!!!!

### ***Suggested resources include:***

Child's Mind, Christopher Willard (2010), Parallax Press

Planting Seeds, Practicing Mindfulness with Children, Thich Nhat Hanh and the Plum Village Community (2011), Parallax Press

Mindful Movements, Ten Exercises for Well-Being, Thich Nhat Hanh (2008), Parallax Press

**www.nianow.com**

Simple Abundance, Sarah Ban Breathnad