



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 6, 2009

Contact: Terri Weast, tweast@emporia.edu, 1-877-378-5433, 620-341-5372

Training Aims to Help Students with Autism

Helping students who struggle with communication and social skills which hamper learning was the focus of a recent teacher training session at ESU.

More than 20 educators were taught a social/behavioral learning strategy to train students with autism spectrum disorders (ASD). The technique, called SODA for Stop-Observe-Deliberate-Act, is taught one-on-one to students for about 15 minutes daily. Research shows students with ASD learn to use SODA in 6-8 weeks. SODA is designed to be taught to students with ASD by special educators, general educators, parents or other family members, and paraeducators.

Marj Bock, the workshop's presenter, has worked with students with ASD, their teachers, and their family members for more than 30 years. Since developing SODA in her own classroom, she has conducted several studies to investigate SODA's effect on the abilities of students with ASD to navigate social situations. Her research has been identified nationally as one of the "promising" new interventions for students with ASD. Over the past 15 years Marj has taught over 500 educators and parents how to effectively implement SODA with students with ASD. In addition to her work with SODA, Marj has developed and directed the Global Rural Autism Asperger Information Network (GRAAIN) at the University of North Dakota.

For more information about this workshop, contact Toni Bowling at 620-341-5372 or 1-877-378-5433, mbowling@emporia.edu.

Educators in attendance at the workshop included:

Heartland Early Childhood Center,
Olathe –
Amanda Honaker
Virginia Williamson

USD 230, Spring Hill –
Kathy Batelka
Linda Franko

USD 233, Olathe –
Carin Bright
Susan Collins
Jennifer Marasco

USD 243, Lebo-Waverly –
Libby Self

USD 257, Iola –
Pamela Riebel

USD 261, Haysville –
Allison McClung

USD 282, West Elk –
Debra Zellner

USD 290, Ottawa –
Stacey Lynnes

USD 305 Central KS Cooperative,
Salina –
Lori Blake
Sheila Mortimer

USD 321, Kaw Valley –
Mary Eichman
Tracy Reisinger

USD 331, Kingman-Norwich –
Matthew Johnson

USD 336, Holton Special Education
Cooperative –
Tina Haefke
Nikki Heiman

USD 501, Topeka –
Diane Clark
Traci Haworth

###TEACH###

