



# ...IN THE NEWS

WINTER 2010

Editor: Barbara Cicilia, Ed.S

## CLINICAL BEHAVIORAL SERVICES

...SETTING GOALS FOR THE NEW DECADE

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The Department of Clinical Behavioral Services, (CBS) is off to a busy start with all the initiatives in place for the 2009-2010 school year. We began this year by assisting our 34 high schools in the dropout prevention initiative with their annual action plans, developing professional development for our 21 Positive Behavior Support (PBS) schools, revising our website and preparing for our National Dropout Prevention Conference.

The E/BD manual was revised and published on our website in September 2009. The revised manual is being used by curriculum support specialists in trainings at many of our E/BD program sites. The manual incorporates evidence-based practices for the continuum of program service delivery. The new level system is aligned with the implementation of Response to Intervention for Behavior (RtI-B), with emphasis placed on the use of replacement behaviors and progress monitoring. The goal is to conduct trainings at all E/BD sites by the end on the school year, so that the revised program service delivery model can be fully implemented next school year.

## PBS SCHOOLS:

### TRAINING FOR A NEW YEAR... USING NEW IDEAS

Curriculum Support Specialists have provided professional development on Positive Behavior Support (PBS) Classroom Management and Behavioral Interventions to new and experienced teachers of students with emotional behavioral disabilities. The new teachers have participated in visiting classrooms to observe best practices in order to use these strategies at their schools.

An introduction to Champs: a *Proactive and Positive Approach to Classroom Management*, and Harry Wong the *First Days of School* was developed by the E/BD Curriculum Support Specialists. This Professional Development was developed to train trainers at PBS Schools. The training focuses on identifying the characteristics of an effective teacher, knowing the difference between discipline and rules, procedures and routines, and developing an effective classroom management.

## PBS MODEL SCHOOLS

2008-2009

SILVER

ROBERT RENICK  
EDUCATIONALCENTER

&

HOMESTEAD MIDDLE

GOLD

YMAACD @

MAC ARTHUR SOUTH



## BARBARA GOLEMAN SENIOR HIGH:

Recipient of the 2009 Crystal Star Award of Excellence

**Congratulations!!**

The Residential Electrical Wiring Program for students with emotional/behavioral disabilities (E/BD) was created in 2002 at Barbara Goleman Senior High. This program is the result of a contractual agreement between Miami Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) and Florida International University (FIU). FIU provides an instructor to deliver the curriculum while students participate in over 360 hours of quality, individualized instructional time utilizing a curriculum infused with hands-on pedagogy. The program's primary goal is to address the needs of targeted students with severe emotional problems while preparing students with the tools needed to achieve the requirements for graduation and employability skills in a specialized field. The Program objectives are: to improve student attendance; improve student self esteem; improve student graduation rate; and reduce the dropout rate for students with E/BD.



Dr. Alex Azan,

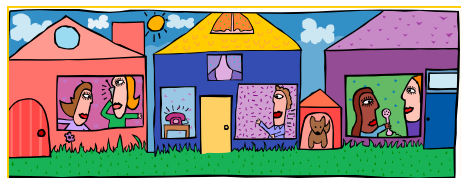
Psychologist, E/BD Clinician

Residential Electrical Wiring Program

## Residential Electrical Wiring Program

## HOMESTEAD SENIOR HIGH:

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY!!!



Homestead Senior High School has been approved to have the wiring program students attend the **Habitat for Humanity Home Building Program**. These students will be participating in building and framing homes in the community of Leisure City this February. This is a great opportunity for these students to work and provide community services right in their own back yard. **You nailed it Homestead!**





## M-DCPS: MAKING NEWS IN MARYLAND

Miami-Dade County Public School (M-DCPS) Dropout Leadership Team had much to say at the **"2009 Building Effective Practices in Dropout Prevention: A Summit for State and Local Education Agencies"**. This three-day conference was held in Baltimore, Maryland beginning November 17th, 2009. Robin Morrison, Instructional Supervisor for Clinical Behavioral Services, spearheaded this team effort. National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities (NDPC-SD) invited M-DCPS and selected representatives from two of our high schools presented effective strategies used to reduce the dropout rate for students with disabilities. Ms. Morrison discussed numerous ideas on *Advanced Stages of Implementation and Effective Leadership*, from the administrative perspective. South Miami Senior High's Lissette Arevalo, SPED Teacher, and Maria Moreno, E/BD Counselor, had an interesting point a view about why *Dropping Out is not what Cobras think about*. Nidia Ashby, Assistant Principal, and Yvonne Johnson, SPED Teacher, from North Miami Senior High

presented on their very delicate procedure *Operation Graduation*. Both high schools focused on student engagement from the high school perspective. Michael Lewis, Principal of North Miami Senior and Claudia Garcia, Assistant Principal of South Miami Senior delivered their ideas about *Effective Leadership at the High School Level* from both ends of the county. And from our District Department of Clinical Behavioral Services, Barbara Cicilia, Curriculum Support, gave a brief overview of *District Support Staff in Action*, focusing on coaching strategies implemented in the schools. And Charles Ochipa, Curriculum Support described how to make data work for districts by *Channeling Data to Drive Intervention*, an interesting topic on how to understand the power of data.

It was an incredible experience, and we want to thank NDPC-SD for inviting us to participate in this collaborative effort.



## DROPOUT PREVENTION LEADERSHIP TEAM



### Dropout Prevention Leadership Team Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

*2009 Building Effective Practices in Dropout  
Prevention: Summit for State and Local Agencies*



## SOUTH MIAMI SENIOR HIGH: THE COBRA'S

Submitted by Claudia M. Garcia, Assistant Principal

South Miami Senior High dropout team was honored to represent the Dade-County School District as presenters in the summit for dropout prevention held in Baltimore, Maryland. Decreasing drop-out rates and finding innovative ways to increase graduation rates has always been a challenge for High Schools across the nation. But, when we initially started working with drop-out prevention three years ago, it was alarming to look at our data. Consequently, we designed a customized dropout prevention plan that was not only effective but most importantly feasible to all stakeholders.

As a result, our graduation rate increased and we were invited to present and showcase our dropout prevention plan, and share our ideas with other state and local school

districts. The National Dropout Prevention Summit was an extremely rewarding experience for us because we had the opportunity to network with other local agencies and share our unique experiences. Our voices were heard and other local agencies got a feel of the culture and climate of our typical school setting.



Claudia M. Garcia, Assistant Principal  
Lisette G. Arevalo, SPED Teacher and  
Maria V. Moreno, E/BD Counselor  
South Miami Senior High

In turn, we learned from the depth of their knowledge and expertise, and became aware of other resources available to help our students succeed. We were also able to hear from other states and get more innovative ideas to enhance our program.

Amazingly, we even got to hear the actual voices of students at risk who beat all the odds and are now mentors to other students in challenging situations and struggling to graduate... truly inspiring!

This Dropout Summit was definitely a worthwhile experience for the Cobras. We were encouraged by the work being done around the nation and anxious to share new ideas with our colleagues.





## NORTH MIAMI SENIOR HIGH

### Pioneer Pride: Promoting a Positive Environment

Submitted by **Nidia A. Ashby, Assistant Principal**



Mr. Michael A. Lewis, Principal,  
Yvonne Johnson, SPED Teacher and  
Nidia A. Ashby, Assistant Principal  
North Miami Senior High

The National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities (NDPC-SD) has been working diligently in assisting several school districts across the nation decrease the alarming numbers of students dropping out of high school. When North Miami Senior High School became part of the drop-out prevention program three years ago, never in our wildest dreams did we expect to be selected to represent Miami-Dade County Public School District at the national level, much less be asked to be presenters at the summit held in Baltimore, Maryland. It truly was an honor and we were thrilled to have had the opportunity to showcase our action plan with other local agencies, state representatives, and school districts. The plan we implemented at our school was a simple one, keep the students best interest in mind, and find a way to maximize our in-house resources and ensure the involvement of all stakeholders. By focusing on these core drivers, we were able to share our "Pioneer Pride" by promoting all the positive activities our students, faculty, and staff are actively involved in at our school.

As is always the case, inevitably the summit had to come to an end, and we were filled with different emotions. We were proud of the work we had done at our school, we were encouraged by the work taking place across the nation, and of course we were eager and motivated to implement new strategies and ideas once we got back to our school.

This experience was one that we will surely never forget, and we are eternally grateful for the opportunity to have been a part of such an inspirational event.

Being part of the National Dropout Prevention Summit provided us with a wonderful opportunity to collaborate, network, and assist other schools across the nation with similar challenges. Through great interactive brainstorming sessions, we were able to come up with new, creative, and innovative ways to reach our students by motivating them to stay in school, and hopefully avoid having them become part of the negative statistics associated with being a dropout. It was exciting to see that although the summit participants were a very diverse group, we all shared a common goal as educators. We all wanted to find a remedy to cure the dropout epidemic that is taking place nationwide. We also heard many inspiring success stories that were shared from various schools, parents, and students. These successes really solidify the fact that through the support and collaboration of the NDPC-SD, state representatives and local agencies, schools have been empowered to make positive changes. There is no doubt that these changes will lead to a decrease in the dropout rates, an increase in graduation rates, and most importantly a difference in all of our students' lives.



**NICE!**

## ART THERAPY...MAKING EVERY PROJECT A WORK OF ART

I & B Peskoe Elementary sent their E/BD students on a field trip to the Frost Museum to see "The Missing Peace-Artists Consider Dalai Lama."

Following the exhibit, students created their own art work during art therapy to symbolize peace.

Martha Murray, Program Specialist for Exception Student Education for the State of Florida paid a visit to I & B Peskoe Elementary and was very complimentary about the E/BD Program.



Miami Group Sierra Club provided grant money to beautify I & B Peskoe Elementary. Ms. Melinda Fedorko coordinated the school-wide effort of creating gardens and artwork for sixteen courtyards. The students and teachers were hard working and enthusiastically involved. Ms. Fedorko also received a similar grant for the E/BD students at South Miami Heights Elementary. Students have been gardening there since 2003.

We congratulate Ms. Fedorko in coordinating these efforts between her schools. What a great way to start the year!!

## FROST ART MUSEUM ART THERAPY EXHIBIT

By Leah Guzman and Randi Becker

The Miami Dade County Public School Art Therapy Department has once again teamed up with the Frost Art Museum at Florida International University to exhibit student art work in a show entitled *ArtWorks: The Inner Journey*. Students were asked to create 2-dimensional or 3-dimensional mandalas as a personal reflection/self symbolizing life. Students were asked to uncover who they are and what defines them through the creative process and therapeutic relationship. The art therapists provided art experiences, a safe space and positive relationship to help improve the students' self-concept and emotional well being. This, in turn, positively effects their academic success and behavior.

By exhibiting our student's art therapy work we provide a positive platform for students to express themselves while connecting to their community in an alternative way. Exhibitions help strengthen self-esteem while promoting community involvement and personal ownership through their creations. It is a celebration of accomplishments and diversity, a platform of advocacy for change and understanding while expanding the present consciousness. Through this collaborative exhibition, we hope to educate the community about the diverse culture of Special Education, Art Therapy, student rights, and current trends in education while highlighting the importance and presence of the Miami-Dade Public School Art Therapy Department.

During the exhibition there will be an interactive workshop where viewers will be asked to create their own personal mandala and join the labyrinth. Art therapists will also have their personal mandalas in the art exhibit acting as guiding support to the student work. Rounding out a great night and a lot of hard work, members of the Clinical Art Therapy Department will give short presentations to the audience on the night of the opening event, Wednesday, February 10, 2010 at 7pm.

Thank you all for your participation, inspiration and continued dedication!

**Opening Reception: Wednesday, February 10th, 2010 from 6pm -9pm**

**10975 SW 17th Street, Miami, FL 33199 phone: 305-348-2890**

## FUNCTIONAL ASSESSMENT OF BEHAVIOR ...HERE'S THE BUZZzzzzz



### Prior to Initial Meeting

- Identify the behavior that needs to be changed (develop a prioritized list so that the most severe behavior can be addressed first).
- Obtain parental consent (use the Notice of Intent and Parental/Guardian Consent to Conduct an Evaluation (FM #4961).
- Schedule a meeting date for the Structured Interview and notify parent(s) and other team members (use the Notification of Meeting Form (FM # 4851).

### Initial Meeting

- Complete the Functional Assessment of Behavior Structured Interview with relevant participants (see Data Collection/Tools section).
- Discuss and summarize findings with possible antecedents and functions.
- Establish data gathering procedures, choose appropriate data collection instruments (see Data Collections/Tools section), and ensure that all team members are properly trained on the use of each instrument.
- Define team member responsibilities.
- Schedule a meeting date for the follow-up meeting and notify parent(s) and other team members (use the Notification of Meeting Form – (FM # 4851). Be sure to check "Interim Review of IEP", in addition to writing in "FAB/BIP" which will need to be completed at the next meeting,

### Follow-up Meeting

- Review assessment results with the team.
- Determine the function of the behavior – the reasons for the behavior (attention, avoidance, peer acceptance etc.)
- Develop a Behavior Intervention Plan – BIP (see Data Collection/Tools section) and complete an interim review of the student's Individualized Educational Plan.
- Establish monitoring procedures.
- Schedule follow-up meeting.

### Follow-Up Progress Meeting

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the BIP (did the interventions help the student replace the challenging behavior with a more productive behavior that serves the same function/purpose?)
- Reconvene team and discuss progress.
- Revise BIP as needed.
- Develop a teaching plan that will build in maintenance and generalization.

## Tips... for the BIPs...

- A behavioral goal should be identified as a Priority Educational Need (PEN) on the IEP.
- Educative interventions must be added/incorporated into the IEP as goals and benchmarks (insert B/C).
- Proactive and Functional interventions must be incorporated into the IEP as accommodations/modifications (insert D).
- The original BIP must be attached to the current IEP.
- Define member responsibilities for implementation of the BIP.
- Identify and secure needed resources, training, and supports.
- Distribute copies of BIP to all teachers and related personnel.
- Provide support to student and/or team members as needed.
- A BIP should be reviewed as often as and IEP is reviewed.



# HOWARD DOOLIN MIDDLE SCHOOL

## POSITIVE STEP TOWARDS DROPOUT PREVENTION

Howard A. Doolin Middle School is the proud recipient of the Project 10 Grant. Sponsored by University of South Florida (USF) to promote school based enterprise programs. They are focusing on Dropout Prevention through Career Exploration and other events that will promote the advantages of staying in school. Beginning in January 2010, Doolin has had several presentations for selected students that would benefit from different topics.

After FCAT, selected students will visit the Community Partnership for the Homeless, the Courthouse, and other locations. We are very excited for you and can't wait to see the outcome of your efforts!

Once again, the Centurions are taking strong action...in a positive way!!!



Way to go!!



## Disaster in Haiti:

### Helping Children Cope with Loss, Death, and Grief



1. Give the children an opportunity to tell their story.
2. Understand that children deal with grief in their own unique way.
3. Understand that grief is a process, not an event.
4. Be honest with children, but avoid discussing any disturbing details.
5. Encourage children to ask questions.
6. Remember that grief work is hard.
7. Be sensitive to diverse cultural and religious traditions regarding tragedy and loss.
8. Offer necessary reassurance and support.
9. Remember that the grieving child will need long-term support.
10. Be aware of your own need to grieve.

National Association of School Psychologists, 2003

#### MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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