



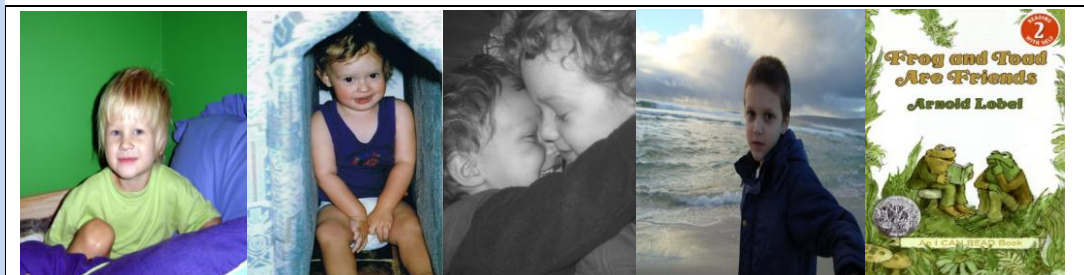
# L.T.T.C. NEWS

May 2010 Issue 4

Learning Tree Therapy Centre

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*We can't believe we are almost half way through 2010 already. There is much to report on since the last newsletter. Upcoming events for Term 2 there is the LTTTC Parent Evening on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> May and also the two Day parent Training on June 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>.*

*We finished last year on a high note with the **Look Into My Eyes** day for parents held in Fremantle last November. There were five local Perth parents presenting their experiences of parenting their exceptional children using a developmental play and relationship based approach. Each presentation was uniquely individual, honest, and very rich and meaningful as reflected in the feedback provided by those parents who attended. Sincere thanks go to the parents who presented – you were all amazing! We want to share some of the feedback.*

*" the day was very worthwhile, we really enjoyed the speakers and their experiences and approaches"*

*" Wonderful examples of family floortime, I left feeling enthused with some great ideas "*

*" ... this shows how some children can change / progress a huge amount when given the right support"*

*" a very moving demonstration of love and acceptance as well as floortime skills"*

*"It was a real tonic to sit and listen to these parents".*

*"I love the way that day was driven by stories and experience with lots of individual kids shown in their uniqueness and pleasure and pride".*

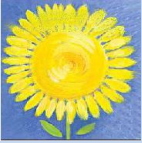
## **Staffing News:**

*At the start of this year, Amy Loxley, Speech and language pathologist, and Joanna Van Leeuwen, Occupational Therapist joined our LTTTC team. Amy has had the valuable experience of working in a variety of government-based positions with children with a range of speech, language and developmental difficulties. She is particularly passionate about working in the area of early intervention with young children who have speech and language delays, as well as working with children with complex communication challenges using a development and relationship based approach. Amy is participating in DIR/Floortime tutoring after completing an introductory training last year. Joanna is known to many of our SCOTS families as she has previously worked*

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for us as a support worker for two years. Jo has had considerable practical experience working with children in their homes and co facilitating our peer programs with us as well as in other settings. Jo also is participating in weekly individual and group tutoring with SCOTS and the LTTC Both Amy and Joanna are planning on working towards their DIR/ Floortime certificate and we are delightful to have them on board with us.

### **Kathy's News:**



Kathy  
Walmsley  
Occupational  
Therapist

After a relaxing time off over the school holidays I returned to work in early February with lots of renewed energy! Sharon, Yvonne and I are loving having Karen and Joanna on board as well as working more closely with Anne and Amy who are teaching us so much about communication and language. I just feel very excited about our team and the work we are doing with children and families – this is my priority! As well as this role I have continued with my side role of training and tutoring which continues to be very rewarding for me. At the moment I am linking in with colleagues in Ireland, the US, Singapore, and every state and territory in Australia. As a keen traveller I almost feel that I am visiting these places without even having to leave Perth! ( The wonders of Skype! ). Our practice benefits as we are provided with lots of opportunity for networking and sharing research, resources and ideas. Just before Easter I travelled to Ireland to co present training with my fantastic Irish speech and language colleague, Mari Caulfield. This was my second trip to Ireland and Mari and I extended ourselves this year to run four days of training including a day for parents and early educators. It was delightful to work with Mari as always and we look forward to her returning to to work more with us here.

### **Anne's News:**



Anne Nunn,  
Speech and  
Language  
Pathologist

Having Amy, our new Speech Pathologist, join us has been fantastic and she has settled in so easily. It's been great to have even more Speechie input to our team meetings and discussions. We hope to have another Speech Pathologist joining us very soon – so will keep you posted on that – busy, busy times! I was very fortunate to attend a 2 day workshop with Michelle Ricamato in November last year in Adelaide. Michelle is a Speech Pathologist from the US who is a member of the ICDL faculty and was invited to run some workshops in Adelaide. She is an incredibly dynamic therapist who provided a wealth of information about Floortime/DIR. I'm hoping to provide a few "gems" from the workshop over the next few newsletters. There were too many to try to put them all into this one!

### **Remembering Stanley Greenspan MD. By Kathy**



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Dr Stanley Greenspan is a child psychiatrist who developed, along with Serena Wieder, the DIR /Floortime approach. He died on April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2010 at the age of 68. He had been unwell for quite some time but even with this his loss comes as a shock. Words really are insufficient to express my sadness and enormous gratitude for his teachings which have immeasurably influenced me both professionally in my work, and personally as a parent. I count my blessings as I had the good fortune to be a student of Dr Greenspan when I lived in the US from 1999 to 2003. The last time I saw him in person, was in 2005 when Yvonne and I travelled to the US for the training institute together and he came to lecture. Yvonne and I sat together listening to him as he shared with the institute participants his concept of the " Learning Tree " to symbolise the DIR framework. I felt both inspired by him and challenged by him as he spoke - this was usually the case! When it came to finding a name



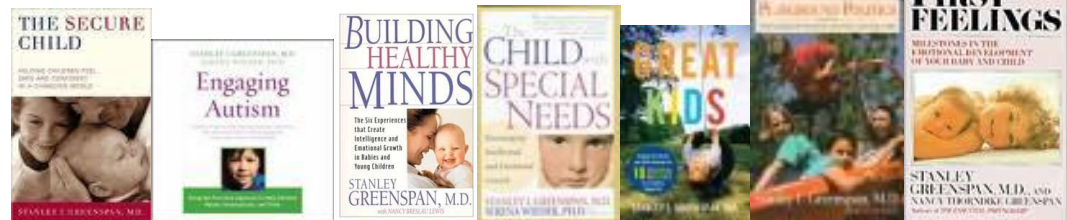
for our integrated practice it seemed very appropriate to draw on that memory. ( more on this idea of the " Learning tree " next newsletter). I think that Stanley Greenspan put the humanity into programs for children with autism. In reading through the tributes that are flowing since his death ( I would encourage you to visit the ICDL website on [www.icdl.com](http://www.icdl.com) and follow the links.) I came across this quote from one article about his life.

" He ( Dr Greenspan) helped give parents hope by giving them a road to follow to help their children develop empathy and social skills in a spontaneous rather than a scripted way. He said children can learn to think in a creative and logical way. He said children with autism can feel affection and develop emotionally and socially at a time when many researchers said this was impossible." Mike Frandsen



I have heard Stanley Greenspan being described as being somewhat of a "challenging child" himself. He has shared that he had learning differences as a child. In his working life he certainly challenged conventional thinking about the children he felt so passionate about. He was uncompromising in his fierce advocacy for children, in his caring for children, his respect for them as unique individuals, and in his drive to harness and challenge those around him to also do more , to do better for children.

He didn't define the exceptional children that we work and live with by their deficits, but through their strengths. He viewed children through the lens of possibility.



Fortunately for us all he packed a great deal into his relatively short life and there is so much of Stanley Greenspan to draw upon within the rich resources that he has left in terms of all of the books( I include some images of my favourite ones! ) articles, video's, web radio recordings and more. Most importantly he has left his passion in those within the DIR community across the world who have been left his powerful legacy to keep things " cooking".

## [Support for Educators](#) By Sharon



Sharon Campbell  
Occupational  
Therapist &  
Physiotherapist

I have recently been expanding upon my interest in supporting schools and educators in their work with children. This past 6 months I have conducted a number of training sessions for school groups. The training topics have all been based on supporting children to be regulated and engaged, as well as to communicate and think in the classroom, with an emphasis on the impact of sensory-motor processing differences. I have thoroughly enjoyed doing these training sessions and have a great admiration for the many educators out there that put so much of their heart and soul into their (often very challenging) work.

If you are interested in professional development seminars for your school group please feel free to contact me or Kathy for more information.

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## Speech Corner



### Gems from Michelle Ricamato

#### Speech and Language Training by Anne

**When children are enveloped in relationships that are trusting and supportive, they are emotionally more equipped to venture out in the learning process and extend themselves and their cognitive processes**

*By using a relationship-based approach, you are providing your child with the opportunity to learn and extend their thinking! DIR/Floortime is not just about the early levels of engagement, but is a lifetime approach – it extends right up to levels of reasoning, abstract thinking, philosophising. One of the important early foundations is that of shared intentions. Humans are the only species that check in with each other on shared intentions. For other animals, the mother does something and the baby checks in. Because humans share the interaction, being attuned to your child means you give them lots of moments for language learning and communication.*

*What does this all mean? One thing you can think about is becoming as attuned to your child as possible. Take the opportunity when you can to slow down and wait to really see what your child is telling you and how they do this. Try not to assume you know because you are used to the way they normally do it – your child is always developing and some of this development may not be very obvious – look for subtle changes. One way to help you “read” your child better is to think: “Would a stranger watching my child understand his/her intent?” If not – get clarification – use your voice, gesture, movement, facial expression to show your child that you are still there with them but “need more information”*

**If you’re a communicator, you’re powerful!**

*Children with communication challenges can often look frustrated or even show very flat expression because so often they feel that people just don’t “get them”- people are not picking up on their attempts to communicate. Using your child’s face as a “guide” is a great strategy for parents, even at busy times. What does that frustration or “flatness” tell you? Are you tuning in to your child’s individual differences and managing the situation so that your child can cope better? Some things to think about:*

- ☺ *How much language are you or others using? – language can easily “derail” a child – the effort of both processing what we say and then being expected to respond can often be far greater than we realise. Try (even with the most verbal of children) some time where you are the less (or even non) verbal one who uses gesture and voice to communicate – this gives your child the opportunity to either be the verbal one or at least stay regulated and engaged . You know how it feels when you are trying to concentrate and there is noise and demands all around you – how a break from that rejuvenates and organises you – our children feel the same things we do!*
- ☺ *We primarily do things because we “feel” the need, not because we are told – later we may respond because we have learnt those rules of doing as we are told but they are not natural to us. When your partner says the bathroom needs cleaning, I bet you don’t do nearly as good a job as if you’d noticed it for yourself! So, if a child is not taking turns or engaging with us, **we** haven’t invoked a*

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need in them to interact with us – we have to think about how to woo them in.

- ☺ *Tuning in to the subtleties of your child’s way of communication is important. Every time you acknowledge what your child was trying to tell you, you let them be powerful. This doesn’t mean you need to use words, but just responding and staying engaged can be more than adequate.*
- ☺ *When you see that “flatness” in your child’s face, that shows he/she is not “sparking” – what is it that gets that spark going? See if you can use your strategies that get your child “firing” – this is likely **not** to include language at first – words need to happen only when you feel that real engagement happening with your child.*



Yvonne Buters  
Occupational  
Therapist



Joanna VanLeeuwen  
Occupational  
Therapist

## [Using The Beat Interactive Metronome Update](#)

Joanna and Yvonne recently attended an intensive Interactive Metronome™ (IM) training in Sydney. Interactive Metronome™ is an assessment and treatment tool used in therapy to improve the neurological processes of motor planning, sequencing and processing and has a large research base. It is used with a wide variety of people from sports and academic enhancement, adults with Parkinson’s disease to its wider population of children with individual differences in a wide variety of areas. We have used IM in Sensory Connections over the past six years as a programme on its own but it is now being incorporated into standard therapy sessions in quite innovative ways. During this training Yvonne and Joanna had a chance to update and learn about these innovative ways including using new visual feedback software in addition to the auditory feedback used previously. We have discovered lots of new ways to use it as part of both group and individual sessions with a wider range of children, and are excited by adding these new ideas to our therapy “tool box”. Please see website <http://www.interactivemetronome.com> for more information.



## [Floortimers Australia List serve For Networking, Support & Resource Information](#)

This is an egroups Listserve and discussion groups for parents & professionals. The goal is to provide an opportunity for sharing information and resources about DIR/Floortime in this region. The link to this group is <http://au.groups.yahoo.com/group/floortimersaus/> Please feel free to join.

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Don't  
Miss the  
Parent  
Meeting!



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### **Upcoming Events:** [Floortime Parent Group Meeting](#)

Learning Tree Parent Group welcomes you to a Parent Evening on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> May. The aim of the evening is for parents to have the opportunity to meet others with similar stories about the "journey so far" with their children. This may include discussions about Floortime strategies, the logistics of being a "therapy parent", toileting and other day to day issues. There will be no set agenda but Speech Pathology and Occupational Therapy staff will be attending the evening so will be available for questions and discussion.

WHEN: Monday 10<sup>th</sup> May  
Doors open 7.30pm for 8pm start; 9.30pm finish

WHERE: Autism West – 41 Broadway, Nedlands

RSVP:

[linda\\_payne@iinet.net.au](mailto:linda_payne@iinet.net.au) or [kwalmsley@sensoryconnections.com.au](mailto:kwalmsley@sensoryconnections.com.au)

COST: Gold coin for refreshments

**Please note** – we have been offered use of the rooms at Autism West for a minimal cost (their aim is to provide support to families **and** service providers). **Please note this evening is not only for parents of children with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder- but for any parent who is interested in using relationship and play based approaches with their children who would just like the opportunity to meet with others.** We look forward to seeing you there.

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## **DIR® Floortime** **Mentoring and Tutoring Support for** **Professionals**

This is available with Kathy Walmsley DIR ® Certificate, ICDL International Faculty and / or Sharon Campbell Advanced Candidate DIR ® Candidate

You can contact us to discuss your needs at

**[kwalmsley@sensoryconnections.com.au](mailto:kwalmsley@sensoryconnections.com.au)**  
**[scampbell@sensoryconnections.com.au](mailto:scampbell@sensoryconnections.com.au)**





*Sensory Connections and The Learning Tree Therapy Centre Present*

## **"Life on the Floor "**

### **A Workshop for Parents**

**For those who are parenting children with neurodevelopmental challenges such as autism and other related conditions**

**In this interactive 2 day small group workshop parents will explore ways of helping their child**

- **calm and attend**
- **emotionally engage and relate**
- **build communication**
- **learn to problem solve and think**
- **learn to express ideas and feelings**
- **learn to connect ideas and reason**
- **build friendships with peers**

**Parents will also explore:**

- **The developmental levels from the DIR® /Floortime approach**
- **How sensory and motor differences impact on learning and development along with strategies to support.**
- **How to create the optimal communication experiences for their children**
- **Ways to deal with daily challenges that arise**
- **Ideas for building a home program tailored to their child individual needs using a developmental and relationship based approach that is evidence based.**
- **Strategies to support family functioning**

**Facilitators Include:**

**Kathy Walmsley, Occupational Therapist, DIR faculty,**

**Anne Nunn, Speech and Language Pathologist**

**Sharon Campbell, Physiotherapist and Occupational Therapist.**

**Small Group Size Only**

**Please register ASAP to secure a place**

**Dates :** Term 2 Week 8;

Friday 11<sup>th</sup> June 9.00 to 3.00pm and Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> June 9.30 to 4.30pm

**Venue:** Cambridge Scout Hall, Aldersbury Reserve, Floreat - Please see map.

**Costs:** \$375. Parents who are eligible for FaHSCIA funding will be able to use this funding.

**Sensory Connections and LTTC DIR Parent Training Program**  
**Registration Form/Tax Invoice ( Please keep copy for your records)**

Dates of Parent Training: Friday 10<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> June, 2010

Parent Name 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent Name 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name & DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Work/Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Therapist Name: \_\_\_\_\_ ( If child /family is accessing services with us ) Referred By: \_\_\_\_\_

Please note: Primary caregiver attendees maybe eligible for Respite Assistance while attending training. Enquire from your local Area Co-coordinator, Respite Centre. Tel. 1800 059 059

Cost: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$375 / person Full Payment is required to reserve your place and no refunds are available after the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2010.

I am paying by:  Cheque/M.O.  EFT  Credit Card  FaHSCIA

Amount: \_\_\_\_\_ Credit Card:  VISA  MasterCard

Acct #: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Name on Credit card: \_\_\_\_\_

Direct Funds Transfer (EFT) to: Sensory Connections

BSB: 016141 Account #:251852996

Please include your **Name** and **Training Location** as a Reference in your EFT transfer.

Please make cheque payable to: **Sensory Connections OTS Pty Ltd**

3 Pearson Place, Floreat, WA 6014. (ABN: 94 108 212 915) Fax to 08 9387 8538 or Mail to Above Address

