



A Publication of the Council for Learning Disabilities

May 2010

## President's Message

### *Greetings!*

At last, spring is here! For many of us this season signals reflection. We contemplate accomplishments, evaluate progress, and look forward as we set the stage for new growth and goals. In this message, I would like to highlight selected accomplishments, acknowledgements, and ambitions. A final year-end President's Report for fiscal year 2009–2010 will be available in July on the CLD website.

I have been honored to serve as President of CLD these past 11 months. There is no other organization that I have been involved with as a professional that provides the level of collegiality, resources, advocacy, and authenticity that CLD does.

**Accomplishments.** This past October, CLD held its **31st international conference** in Dallas, Texas. The speakers, program, and attendees were outstanding. This tradition will continue in 2011 with the **32nd International Conference on Learning Disabilities** in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. The conference planners have organized an excellent program, with collegial interaction, research, and practical information. You will find information on the conference on the CLD website and in this issue of *LD Forum*. Please contact Conference Director Mary Provost ([mcprovost@bellsouth.net](mailto:mcprovost@bellsouth.net)) regarding any questions you may have.

CLD has remained an active member of the National Joint Commission on Learning Disabilities. Our quality Info Sheets are publicly available and

a new **Info Sheet on College Opportunities** has been published. CLD members can look forward to a **new membership brochure**, which will be available in electronic format, as well as a **more responsive membership renewal process**, thanks to the efforts of the Membership Committee.



**Acknowledgements.** I would like to acknowledge the dedicated and long-term commitment of BOT members who will be completing a term of service on June 30th. Heartfelt appreciation is extended to **Diane and Bryan Bryant**, Research Committee chairs; **Martha Larkin**, Leadership Development Committee chair; **David Majsterek**, Technology Committee chair and website editor; **Jennifer Williams**, Membership Committee chair; and **Dan Boudah**, past president. I'd also like to welcome our newly elected vice-president, **Caro-**

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**Editor's Note:** This column provides readers with immediate access to evidence-based strategies on current topics that can easily be transferred from the pages of *LD Forum* into effective teaching practice in CLD members' classrooms. Authors who would like to submit a column are encouraged to contact the editor in advance to discuss ideas. Author guidelines are available on CLD's website and from the editor, Cathy Newman Thomas (thomascat@missouri.edu).

## 5 Ways To ...

### Teach Daily-Life Problem Solving

**Debra L. Cote**

*University of California, Fullerton*

**Kyle Higgins, Tom Pierce**

*University of Nevada Las Vegas*

Problem-solving competencies, or higher-order processing skills, can and should be developed by students with disabilities (Kolb & Stuart, 2005). Problem-solving competency helps better prepare students for the real world, as well as for inclusive settings while they are in school (Glago, Mastropieri, & Scruggs, 2008). Students with learning disabilities (LD) often fail to exhibit the outward signs of an ability to problem-solve, which can result in social and/or behavioral difficulties (Toro, Weissberg, Guare, & Liebenstein, 1990). Teachers therefore must help students with LD learn the problem-solving skills needed to solve daily-life problems. Explicit training in problem-solving skills helps to increase the participation of students across school settings (e.g., general education, special education) and to facilitate meeting Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals (Glago, 2005; Glago et al., 2008). The following are five methods to teach daily-life problem-solving that can be incorporated into the curriculum for students with LD.

**1 Teach Active Problem-Solving.** The **Active Problem-Solving (APS) Model** teaches students to identify problems, generate solutions, evaluate choices, set goals, and evaluate outcomes (Kolb & Stuart, 2005). Teachers become the facilitator of the process and ask guiding questions to aide in student identification of problems. With the teacher's support, small groups of students contemplate several possible solutions to problems and the consequences to solving or not solving the problem. Students learn to eliminate questionable solutions and to choose best solutions.

They are taught to set goals with teacher support. The final step involves student self-reflection on their skill performance in solving the identified problem.

**2 Utilize Bibliotherapy.** Bibliotherapy makes use of age-appropriate and relevant books and stories to teach daily-life problem-solving in a safe and non-personalized manner (Forgan, 2002). Reading material, rather than real-life situations, are used to explore the negative effects of an inappropriate problem solution (e.g., losing one's temper) or the positive impact of an appropriate problem solution (e.g., helping a friend). A bibliotherapy problem-solving lesson can be structured through introducing students to a problem in a story using a pre-reading activity (KWL chart). Next, the teacher reads the story and includes a post-reading discussion (e.g., a series of questions designed to elicit more than yes/no responses). The lesson should involve a problem-solving activity in which students reflect on their identification of the problems encountered in the book, the identified solutions (and obstacles to implementing those solutions), and an evaluation of the possible outcomes of those solution(s) (Forgan, 2002). All responses should be recorded for student reflection during other bibliotherapy problem-solving activities. The last step of instruction entails the teacher creating practice simulations that allow students to link the readings, discussions, and activities to themselves. It is through

explicit teacher guidance and scaffolding that students learn how to evaluate the outcomes of their solutions (Forgan, 2002).

**3 Incorporate Computer Technology.** The computer program **KidTools** (Fitzgerald & Koury, 2003) is a research-based intervention strategy that promotes social-behavioral problem-solving (Miller, Fitzgerald, Koury, Mitchem, & Hollingsead, 2007). KidTools include templates (e.g., graphics, text with audio) that engage students and promote cognitive behavior supports. During an initial KidTools lesson, the teacher guides students as they learn to navigate the program. Thereafter, students can identify behaviors that they want to improve (e.g., time on task) and access the tools that they want to use (e.g., self-monitoring, contract, cost). The free software program includes strategies that teach students problem-solving skills that generalize to their daily-life problems.

**4 Utilize Explicit Instruction.** Teachers can promote the acquisition of daily-life problem-solving skills through the use of explicit problem-solving instruction. Problem-solving lessons should teach students to (a) identify problems, (b) generate possible solutions, (c) select *best* solutions, (d) implement solutions, and (e) assess the results of their choices (Glago, 2005; Glago et al., 2008). Problem-solving instructional materials include problem-solving practice worksheets, flash cards, and age-appropriate and reality-based vignettes. Students with LD benefit from teacher-guided practice and modeling, as well as from evaluation of skill development, generalization, and maintenance of problem-solving skills (Glago, 2005; Glago et al., 2008).

**5 Use Problem-solving Conversations.** Group problem-solving conversations that consider

age, culture, gender, and individual interests of the students can be a powerful instructional tool in promoting problem-solving skills (Dwairy, 2005). Because students are more responsive to teachers who educate the *whole* person (Noddings, 2006), in an open and understanding manner, these personalized and nonjudgmental conversations provide a construct for discussing daily-life problems (e.g., social and behavioral) of students with LD (Dwairy, 2005). The use of problem-solving conversations revolve around (a) an authentic and trusting relationship between student and teacher, (b) discussion of problem events as well as student actions, (c) consideration of alternate solutions and the creation of an action plan, and (d) discussion of student ownership of the problem and its solution. Through teacher modeling (Mather & Goldstein, 2001; Swanson & Deshler, 2003; Swanson, Hoskyn, & Lee, 1999) in these conversations, students learn a process for dealing with problems in a flexible manner. The ultimate goal is for the student to understand that there are a variety of solutions to daily-life problems.

## Conclusion

The solving of problems is a life skill central to a well-rounded and successful life, and to quality of life. The ability to engage in careful and reflective thought as one works toward a solution to a daily problem is a skill that can be taught through explicit problem-solving instruction to students with learning disabilities (Dwairy, 2005; Forgan, 2002; Kolb & Stuart, 2005). If students with learning disabilities are to be successful while in school and beyond the boundaries of school, they must be given the opportunity to learn and practice problem-solving skills inside and outside of the classroom (Glago, 2005; Glago et al., 2008). Students who are independent problem solvers are better prepared to solve daily problems in school, life, social settings, and at work. In the end, these students experience more self-satisfaction as a result of becoming effective problem solvers.

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## (President's Message, continued from page 1)

**line Kethley**, to the BOT and look forward to her participation and leadership. This is an excellent time to consider sharing your expertise and advocacy by getting involved in one of our Standing Committees. Contact **CLD Executive Director Linda Nease** ([Ineasecld@aol.com](mailto:Ineasecld@aol.com)) with your questions or interests.

**Ambitions.** As CLD looks future forward, the Board of Trustees will begin long-range organizational planning to steer CLD through the upcoming years. Please don't hesitate to share your ideas with our Executive Director or any BOT member. These opportunities allow CLD to fine-tune our advocacy

efforts and address member and organizational needs.

Finally, I hope you have been as pleased as I with the additions to and changing face of *LD Forum*. All of this is thanks to **Cathy Thomas**, *LD Forum* editor. She continues to ensure that CLD members remain informed through updates and articles, such as this issue's excellent feature on problem solving.

With warm regards,  
**Christina Curran**,  
*CLD President 2009–2010*

**Visit the CLD Web Site:**  
<http://www/cldinternational.org>

## Committee/Chapter Reports and News

### Communications Committee Posts New InfoSheet on College Opportunities

Drs. Joseph Madaus and Stan Shaw have completed an update of the original InfoSheet on *College Opportunities*. This new version is available on the CLD website. The InfoSheet may be downloaded at no cost for use in classes or to be shared with others interested in the information. Additional InfoSheets on a variety of topics—and Author Guidelines—may be found under the InfoSheet heading on CLD’s homepage. Please refer to the Author Guidelines if you are interested in preparing an InfoSheet. In addition, if there is a topic you would like to see covered, please contact Judy Voress, Communications Committee chair ([jvoress@hammill-institute.org](mailto:jvoress@hammill-institute.org)).

### Other Committee News

The **Diversity Committee** would like to invite new members to join this important committee. Diversity is a core value of CLD, and the Diversity Committee strives to build CLD’s inclusive community and to provide information

and support to prepare all of us to support diverse students with learning disabilities in our multicultural society. For further information, please contact Silvana Watson, Diversity chair ([swatson@odu.edu](mailto:swatson@odu.edu)).

The **Membership Committee** is soliciting quotes on the benefits of national membership in CLD. Please visit the “Members Only” page of the CLD website to contribute your quote and be eligible for a prize drawing.



### Virginia Chapter Cancels Symposium

Virginia CLD has cancelled its March symposium due to the budget constraints of local school systems. In the meantime, VCLD has set up a Facebook page and will be listing plans there, as well as on the chapter’s website ([www.vclld.org](http://www.vclld.org)). For further information, please contact VCLD President Carol Ann Cox ([cacox07@yahoo.com](mailto:cacox07@yahoo.com)).

## 2010 CLD OUTSTANDING RESEARCHER AWARD

*Sponsored by*



To promote and recognize research, CLD annually presents an award for an outstanding manuscript-length paper on learning disabilities based on a doctoral dissertation completed within the last five years.

The winner will receive a plaque to be presented at the Awards Ceremony on Saturday, October 9, 2010, during the 32nd International Conference on Learning Disabilities in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. In addition, the paper will be considered for publication in *Learning Disability Quarterly*.

Six copies of the APA-style paper (max. 25 pages in length) should be submitted to:  
Council for Learning Disabilities, 11184 Antioch Road, Box #405,  
Overland Park, Kansas 66210 • 913.491.1011

For additional information contact:  
Linda Nease, CLD Executive Director ([lnasecld@aol.com](mailto:lnasecld@aol.com))

*The winner will be notified by August 15th.*





## **Mark your calendars now for the 32nd International Conference on Learning Disabilities: October 8–9, 2010**



### **This conference is of special interest to:**

- Special educators and general educators
- Teacher educators
- Speech/language clinicians
- Researchers
- Paraeducators, students, and parents
- Administrators, consultants and state agency personnel

### **Sample of Professional Development Full-Day Institute Titles & Speakers**

*Implementing Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) in Reading for Grades 2-6: A Research-Validated Inclusive Practice:* Pam Stecker & Janie Hodge

*Promoting Positive Responsive Engagement for Culturally Different Students and Families:* Cathy Kea, Gloria Campbell-Whatley, & Diane Rodriguez

### **Sample of Half-Day Workshop Titles & Speakers**

*Universal Design for Learning: A Promising Practice for Engaging Struggling Youth:* Larry Kortering & Terry McClannon

*Effective Elementary-Level Writing Instruction: Translating Research:* Tanya Santangelo

*Creative Scheduling: A Key to Heightened Achievement for Special Youngsters:* Joel Brodsky

*“At Risk” to Graduate: Transforming Pathways for Youth with Learning Disabilities:* Loujenia Bost

*An Overview of the Writing Next Report: Essential Ingredients of Effective Writing Instruction:* Gary Troia

*Closing the Literacy Gap in Middle and High Schools: Embedding Learning Strategies to Improve Disciplinary Literacy:* Michael Faggella-Luby

*Evidence-based Early Numeracy Interventions for Students with Mathematics Difficulties:* Diane Pedrotty Bryant, Brian Bryant, & Kathleen Hughes

*Study Skills Assessment and Instruction for Students with Learning Disabilities:* Jim Patton

*Service Delivery in High School: Juggling the Myriad of Demands and Needs:* Naomi Zigmond

(invited session information continued on next page)

**Sample of Invited Sessions (continued)**

*Secondary Education Reform and Transition for Students with Learning Disabilities: Where Do We Go From Here?* Diane Bassett

*Positive Approaches for Decreasing Problem Behavior:* Stephen Walker

*Postsecondary Outcomes of Students with LD:* Karen Rabren

*Delving Deeper into Writing Next: Strategies for Linking Reading Comprehension and Written Expression Through Summarization:* Gary Troia

*Meeting the Challenges of Special Education Administration:* Joel Brodsky

*What Is Nonverbal Learning Disability and What Do We Do About It?* Sherry Sancibrian & Robin H. Lock

*Content Area Instruction for Students with Learning Disabilities:* Patricia Graner

*Inclusion Strategies for Students with Learning Disabilities:* Kim Viel-Ruma

*Math Interventions: An Introduction:* Bradley S. Witzel

**Conference-at-a-Glance**

**Friday, October 8**

Complimentary Coffee/Tea in Early Morning

7:30 a.m.–10:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m. &  
3:30–6:30 p.m. Registration

9:00 a.m. to noon—Professional Development  
Institutes & Half-Day Workshops

12:00 p.m.–1:00 p.m. Lunch (on your own)

1:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m. Professional Development  
Institutes & Half-Day Workshops

4:00 p.m.–6:30 p.m. Grand opening of Exhibits

4:00 p.m.–6:30 p.m. Presidential Reception  
(complimentary appetizers/cash bar)

4:15 p.m.–6:30 p.m. Concurrent Poster Sessions in  
Exhibit Area

5:30 p.m.–6:30 p.m. Master Teacher Showcase in  
Exhibit Area

**Saturday, October 9**

Open CLD Committee Meetings

Exhibits & Complimentary Coffee/Tea in Early  
Morning

7:45 a.m.–8:45 a.m. Concurrent Sessions

9:00 a.m.–10:45 a.m. Distinguished Lecture and  
Keynote Session by Jean Schumaker &  
Recognition of Award Winners

11:00 a.m.–6:30 p.m. Concurrent Sessions  
(Outstanding Researcher; Meet the Editors; CLD  
Annual Business Meeting; & Special Sessions)

**Teachers may be eligible for Renewal Credit.**

*Early bird registration rate opens in April 2010 and  
ends on September 10, 2010*

*Register for the conference at:*

[www.cldinternational.org](http://www.cldinternational.org)

*Find out how to exhibit and/or sponsor an event:*

[www.cldinternational.org](http://www.cldinternational.org)

**32<sup>nd</sup>**

**International Conference on Learning  
Disabilities**

October 8–9, 2010

Sheraton Myrtle Beach Convention Center Hotel  
2101 North Oak Street  
Myrtle Beach, South Carolina 29577

For more information see:

[www.cldinternational.org](http://www.cldinternational.org)

or email

Dr. Mary C. Provost, CLD Conference Director  
[mcprovost@bellsouth.net](mailto:mcprovost@bellsouth.net) or [cld\\_conferences@att.net](mailto:cld_conferences@att.net)



## Contact & Website Information

Council for Learning Disabilities  
11184 Antioch Road, Box 405  
Overland Park, KS 66210  
phone: 913-491-1011 • fax: 913-491-1012  
**Executive Director: Linda Nease**

**[www.cldinternational.org](http://www.cldinternational.org)**

All the latest updates! CLD's Annual Report, position papers, conference news, committee information, Infosheets, and much more.

## Convenient E-Access: ISC and LDQ

- **Intervention in School and Clinic:** Complimentary, members-only subscription, log-in through the Members' Only portal (<https://www.cldinternational.org/Login/Login.asp>), click link provided.
- **Learning Disability Quarterly:** Free online access, register at <http://www.ingentaconnect.com>. After registration, select Personal Subscriptions, then *Learning Disability Quarterly* and enter your subscription number (your CLD membership number). You will be notified by e-mail once your online access has been activated.

## LD Forum Author Guidelines

*LD Forum* invites articles from the full range of professionals who serve individuals with LD, including classroom teachers, graduate students, researchers, teacher preparation faculty, consultants, and others. Manuscripts accepted on an ongoing basis.

### Research to Practice Column

- **Purpose:** translate evidence-based research findings on effective interventions and practices in the field of learning disabilities to a practitioner-oriented format that offers educators the guidelines needed to integrate research findings into classroom instruction.
- **Article submission:** electronically to the *LD Forum* editor for peer review. Appropriate articles should offer a brief summary of supporting research, classroom guidelines, and implications that will enable educators to easily implement effective practices. Evidence-based lessons, scripts, and activities will be featured, with a focus on information that easily translates into classroom prac-

ice. **Length:** no more than 4–6 double-spaced pages, including a cover page, references, and tables/figures; formatted per APA guidelines

### 5 Ways to ... Column

- **Purpose:** provide educators with quick access to 5 high-quality, easy to implement, evidence-based tips for teaching organized around a specific theme, such as 5 ways to manage challenging behavior or 5 ways to build reading fluency.
- **Article submission:** electronically to the *LD Forum* editor for peer review. Appropriate articles should provide a single paragraph introduction/statement of the problem, followed by a brief listing of 5 research-supported techniques related to a specific theme. **Length:** No more than 2 double-spaced pages, including a cover page, references, and graphics.

Send manuscripts to: **Cathy Newman Thomas, PhD,**  
**LD Forum Editor** ([thomascat@missouri.edu](mailto:thomascat@missouri.edu))

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