



# Center for Learning Newsletter

Center for Learning  
And  
Behavioral Solutions, Inc.

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## Striving for the Best: A New Reading Program for our Middle and High School Students



Dr. Gregory Koch

Many children experience reading difficulties in one form another. For some children, the problem may involve problems with reading and sounding out words correctly (reading decoding), while other children's reading is choppy and slow (problems with reading fluency). Perhaps the most common reading issue involves struggles with reading comprehension.

Figuring out which approach works best for a child's reading problem can be an overwhelming process. As part of our continuous effort to utilize the most effective and research based practices, we invite parents to make note of some helpful sign posts to lead them in the right direc-

tion. It's important to be aware of commercial products. There are many products and services out there and as with any other product, you cannot be swayed by pretty packaging. Instead, the goal should be to try an approach that has solid research behind it. At times, you will find a product that is both effective and well marketed.

An example of such an approach that targets reading problems is the Orton-Gillingham approach. This approach involves a systematic, multi-sensory set of strategies. It was developed decades ago by Dr. Samuel Orton, Anna Gillingham, and Bessie Stillman.

Here at C4L, we have been using multiple programs utilizing the Orton-Gillingham approach and we have recently added the Wilson Reading System. We have found an overwhelming body of research supporting its effectiveness. The **Orton-Gillingham approach-Wilson Reading System** is not as widely known in California, perhaps because the author of the program is based in Massachusetts.

We are excited about the

Wilson Reading System because it was originally written for adults with dyslexia, but has evolved into an approach that can be used with older elementary school students, not to mention middle and high school students.

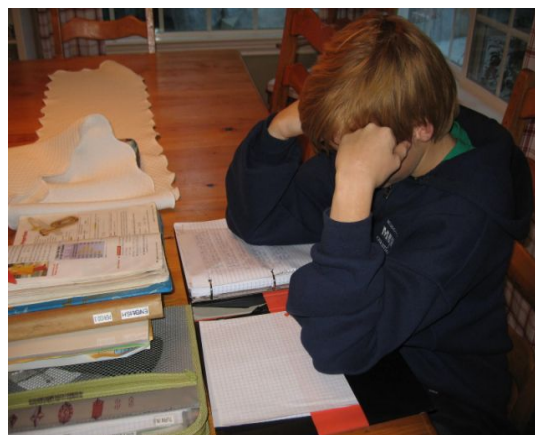
Many reading programs are intended for younger children. The problem with this is that the strategies employed in these programs are not developmentally appropriate for older children (imagine asking an older child to learn through watching Sesame Street).

We're excited about Wilson Reading System because it is designed to effectively target the potentially hard-to-reach older child and adolescent.

Our continued promise to you is to seek out the most up-to-date and cutting edge research-based programs for

your child and we are proud to now offer the Wilson Reading System for our older students who have not been helped by traditional educational system and deserve a chance to strive in their regular classroom setting.

We look forward to serving you and your family.



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## Reading Statistics All Parents Should Know

### Did you know that....

There is only a 1 in 8 chance that a child who is not reading at grade level by the end of the first grade will learn to read adequately without time intensive strategic educational therapy interventions. (Lyon, 1995)

2/3 of secondary students with learning disabilities are reading 3 or more grade levels behind. 20% are reading 5 or more grade levels behind. (The Achievements of Youth with Disabilities During Secondary School, National Longitudinal Transition Study-2, 2003)

20-30% of all children lack phonemic awareness and will not become proficient readers and spellers without specific interventions in this area. (Adams, 1990)



### FAMILY CIRCLE:

#### FACILITATE YOUR CHILD'S SUCCESS

How does a parent help a child at home with schoolwork and other tasks without getting unduly frustrated and utterly exhausted in the process? How does a parent preserve a good relationship with a child by supporting and providing a good work environment? What is a good work environment? These may be some of the questions you, as a parent, have asked yourself in attempting to assist your child with homework. This is the time of the year to set good habits in motion!



Dr. Roberta Knox

Yes, be available to your son or daughter to look over an assignment and answer questions before your child gets started on homework. This communicates the importance of your child's work to your child. Then, if the need arises to sit down with your child, be sure that you have set aside enough time and that you have enough energy to help.

Remember that homework is your child's responsibility and you are available to support independent work habits. Facilitate, don't manage or do the work. If asked, make suggestions; help your child problem-solve. Be focused on the task at hand and gently redirect your child, should it be necessary, to stay on task. Take frequent short breaks, especially if you are feeling frustrated or tired and encourage your child to do the same.

Keep in mind that frustration is a normal emotion which results when one feels blocked from reaching a personal goal. The source may be a lack of self-esteem or confidence, so be gentle with your child and promote his/her coping strategies by supporting his/her efforts as well as accomplishments and skills. Foster patience within your child and model it yourself.

Serving as a positive role model for handling frustration is essential. Look to yourself and see what you are showing your child. Remember, children are always watching and listening to see how you do it. How you manage your emotions will teach your child the same.

There is not a one-size-fits-all perfect set-up for your home. Discover what works best for your child in order to provide an optimum environment for your particular child in your home. However, a quiet, clutter-free work area with plenty of light and few distractions is a good place to start.

If this has been helpful and you would like to continue to learn strategies and infuse your home with fresh ideas, the Center for Learning offers parenting coaching sessions in a therapeutic setting.

## C4L Kicks Off Another Year

As September approached, and kids gathered their new school supplies to prepare for a new year, the Center for Learning was right beside them helping build their foundation as they started the year off right. The start of the year brought continued services in our Irvine office and also renewed our 4 – year partnership at St. Mary's and All Angels School. In addition, we began our first year at St. Margaret's Episcopal School. Success could not be achieved without a dedicated staff – 11 educational therapists, 2 professional consultants, and 3 clinical psychologists – working with a total average of 80 students.

Lead by Dr. Ansari and Dr. Koch, reading acquisition has been the main foundation behind educational therapy. As of this year, we are proud to say that math has now been added to the repertoire of resources guiding educational therapy, this lead by Dr. Val Henry.

In a continued effort to provide research based interventions for our clients, Dr. Ansari and Dr. Koch recently attended a training in Chicago for a promising approach to improving working memory. Cogmed, a computer-based working memory training program, was developed in Sweden. Unlike other commercial approaches, Cogmed has a solid scientific backing and an array of studies

demonstrating it's effectiveness. Studies have also shown the program to be potentially effective for reducing symptoms of ADHD. We are excited to have this new program available at the Center for Learning!

Be sure to let us know if you're interested in Cogmed and we'll arrange a time to talk with you in order to determine if your child's profile qualifies him or her to participate in this exciting new, drug-free treatment.

Along with all the exciting events at C4L, we maintain our endeavors to stay abreast with all the recent developments in this field. It is for this reason that Dr. Ansari and Dr. Koch will be attending the 54th annual AACAP (American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry) meeting in October. While in Chicago for the meeting, the doctors will attend seminars and workshops guided towards instruction in treatment, research methods, delivery and organization of services on topics such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Anxiety, Autism, and much more.

Upon their return from the AACAP meeting, Drs. Ansari and Koch will initiate their efforts to prepare for the 2008 National Association of Independent Schools Annual Conference in New York.

## Meet the Team: Elizabeth Stewart



Elizabeth Stewart  
Educational Therapist

Through the last few years, the Center for Learning has grown exponentially with the efforts of a devoted staff. Everyone plays a part in assisting our family to grow and Elizabeth Stewart is a shining example of this.

After receiving her bachelor's degree in Child and Adolescent Development from Cal State University Fullerton, Elizabeth worked as a Special Education Assistant in the Fullerton School District. It comes as no surprise that Elizabeth says that she truly enjoys watching children gain confidence and the skills necessary to take control of their education and strive. She's even coached an elementary aged boys soccer team!

Elizabeth has continued to impress us with her initiative and her creativity in finding new ways to help her students succeed. Her positive attitude and motivation are indeed contagious.

Aside from being a devoted and intuitive educational therapist, Elizabeth has also been mentored by Dr. Val Henry and has assisted in the development of C4L's mathematics department. We are very happy to announce that along with continuing in her role as a top educational therapist, Elizabeth has agreed to become the coordinator of one of our satellite sites, St. Mary's and All Angels.

Elizabeth isn't all work and no play... the few hours that she is not at C4L, Elizabeth enjoys spending time with her family, going camping and, most of all going to the river.

LOOKING FOR MORE HOMEWORK TIPS?

Go to our **BLOG**, <http://www.C4L.net>



## 8 out of 10 children show measurable improvement.

*Eighty percent of children who complete training show measurable improvement in attention and complex reasoning skills. Parents and teachers also report other benefits in daily life: improved social skills, taking initiative, remembering things and completing tasks like homework assignments more independently. When asked one year after training to report on their experience, 79% of parents whose children had benefited from training reported effects had remained or increased.*

# Introducing Cogmed Working Memory Training.

The first significant psychological intervention in a decade created for children with attention problems.

Cogmed Working Memory Training is a home-based program that helps children with attention problems by training and increasing their working memory capacity. Clinically proven results demonstrate that after training, children



improve their ability to concentrate, control impulsive behavior and better utilize complex reasoning skills.<sup>1</sup> In the end, better academic performance can be achieved especially in math and reading.

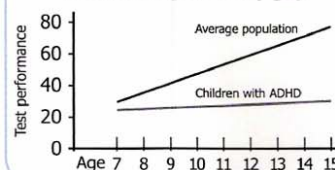
## what is working memory?

We use working memory every day. It is the ability to keep information in your mind for a short time, focus on a task and remember what to do next. With a working memory deficit, it is difficult to stay focused,

### Signs of a working memory deficit

- Problems focusing**
- Easily distracted**
- Difficulties starting and finishing tasks**
- Forgetting instructions**

### The working memory gap



ignore distractions, plan next steps, remember instructions, start and finish tasks. Studies show a deficit in working memory often leads to difficulties in school especially in reading comprehension and math.<sup>2</sup>

Research shows that working memory plateaus in children with ADHD, causing a working memory gap between them and their peers. This gap increases over time.

Westerberg et al. (2004)



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*We Ignite Potential!*

## C4L Introduces Cogmed Memory Training

**A major breakthrough for 5 million kids.**

New for attention deficits:  
**Cogmed Working Memory Training™**

- Improved attention
- Better complex reasoning skills
- Better academic performance
- Five week, home-based training

Call today for an evaluation:  
**Dr. Shirin Ansari**  
Center for Learning & Behavioral Solutions  
949-654-2424



Most children with an attention problem also have a working memory deficit. That means they don't have the same working memory capacity as their peers.

Our program, backed by clinical evidence, is proven to train and improve a child's working memory.

Post training evaluations show this helps kids perform better in school.

To put it simply, increasing working memory capacity improves attention and helps improve academic performance.

### **Signs of working memory deficits**

- Problems focusing
- Easily distracted
- Forgetting instructions
- Difficulties starting and finishing tasks

**Call C4L  
for details  
949-654-2424**