

# THE FOURTH MISSILE

Hi !

February 2005

**My goodness! This is now going out to 800 soldiers! Three hundred were added to the army since January.**

## WWW.HANDLE.ORG

Web surfing brought me to Judith Bluestone 5 or so years ago and we recognised that we had arrived at a similar approach in dealing with LD even though we lived on different continents. One of Judith's trainers, the fantastic Mary Robson, recently taught the basic HANDLE course in Sydney at Learning Creations (02) 9807 2999. Thanks to Jim Hoosen for organising that! I would heartily recommend Judith's book, *The Churkendoose Anthology, True Stories of Triumph over Neurological Dysfunction*, and any future HANDLE training courses.



Mary Robson



Barbara Pheloung

## WHAT DO YOU SMELL LIKE?

We learnt something new recently at a HANDLE seminar here. Previously we had known that the only information the brain could receive came through our senses- including the senses of smell, taste, muscles, joints, eyes, ears and vestibular (where we are in space).

For instance, the experience of seeing rotten food, smelling it, maybe tasting it and feeling it teaches us to avoid food poisoning.

But what if we see a piece of rotten fruit but we're not sure of any smell? Or a shiny ball which feels rough? Then that is confusing to the brain because the other day the fruit did smell a bit and that shiny thing felt smoother.

All children learn about the world through their experiences. Our brain learns confidently if fire always feels hot, looks hot, sounds hot and smells hot. However, sometimes fire feels hot and looks hot but when there's less smell the brain can get confused.

### The Uniqueness of the sense of smell

This sense has a very special function apart from telling us whether we have stepped in mud or fresh dog poo. The two look similar but smell different; the sense of smell distinguishes the good from the bad. When information received by the brain is mixed or varied we cannot confidently make the right decision, and therefore may eat rotten fruit.

Mary told us that the sense of smell feeds directly into the brain, like no other sense. Enhancing an underdeveloped sense of smell is the fastest way to start to stimulate that person's ability to think. The brain responds to smell by quickly seeking out information from the other senses to fine tune what it is learning.

### Symptoms of an inadequate sense of smell

Too sensitive to smells or too insensitive.

### Therapy

Do activities that bring to the attention of your child/student the different odours that are around him. Blindfold him and have him guess what he is smelling. Which smells does he like best?

### Result

The child will learn more easily (including academic learning), be less hyperactive and live more comfortably.

## LET'S HELP EACH OTHER

If any schools which do a movement program want to help the cause or spread the word are willing to be called by other schools, would you consider submitting your names and contact details so that other teachers/parents who are considering action could get in touch with you. We all need support and we can all give it as well. We often get enquiries for this.

## SUICIDE IS ONE SOLUTION FOR LD

A Chinese friend recently told me about an island off her old home of Hong Kong, called Cheung Chau (Long Island).

At the end of school terms, depressed LD students who have failed in exams go to the well known 'suicide apartments' with a bag of charcoal. They light a fire, close the windows and smoke themselves out their problems.

Unless we can teach people that there is a way to learn without stress we are definitely playing with fire.

## Continued... from the Third Missile, "Testimony of a teacher"

Barbara Pheloung arrived in Kalgoorlie at this time. An enthusiastic worker from District Office talked me into attending her PD session, and I felt like a day off anyway. The first thing I noticed when I entered the room, apart from a lot of talkative teachers, was a board at the front of the room with a long list of problem student labels. I mentally prepared myself for a tiring day wading through how to identify every problem and how we could fix each one. Barbara Pheloung was introduced and I knew that she would have lots of solutions because she was middle-aged and therefore must have some experience in teaching. The first thing that she did was wave her right arm at the problem list and tell us that they were just lots of labels for the same problem. At this point I decided that the day was going to be a waste of time- of course the problems weren't all the same. Half an hour later I had changed my mind and was really interested in what she was saying.

After morning tea we were ushered into another room and volunteers were asked to do some exercises on the floor. Eventually I stepped forward because I was one of the few teachers wearing slacks and felt sorry for the visiting speaker as no one else was moving. I knew that I would be able to do the exercises because I was educated, I had a university degree and I wasn't a kid with a learning problem.

Ten minutes later I knew that I was wrong again. There were some exercises I couldn't do and I ended up laughing at my embarrassment and frustration. (I still remember how I felt, so, when I run a movement program I always do the exercises at some stage, with the kids... down on the floor... still getting confused until I clear my mind and really focus on what I have to do. I strongly recommend this for anyone running a movement program. In fact I never ask a kid to do anything that I wouldn't do. I tell them this and occasionally they challenge me. With teenage boys' groups I always run a push-up competition for extra interest and they think it's great because I sag hopelessly in the middle.)

After the PD session Dianne Rodgers, from District Office, and Win Richards, a teacher assistant from South Kalgoorlie Pre Primary School, sat with me and we began planning how we would implement a movement program at Eastern Goldfields Senior High School.

Part 3 to be continued next Missile...

## MARCH IN-DEPTH MOVE TO LEARN SEMINAR

If you would like to attend this 5 day seminar, March 14 - 18, please let us know by March 1. Information is in the Third Missile and on the web site. [www.movetolearn.com.au](http://www.movetolearn.com.au)

## WHAT SOME OF THE 2004 MANLY SEMINAR ATTENDEES SAID (without a gun to their backs: )

At our school we teachers have been looking for answers for these children and I believe there are at least six who will be very happy to do the program properly. When they see the results it will spread quickly and maybe even into the high school.

I like the network that we have now because of this seminar and the friendships. Being able to see a session at a school and critique it, was great.

I hope that what I have learned I will be able to teach to all the preschools, schools and high schools in my area. It's given me the background to train and the confidence that I have something valuable to offer.

Thanks once again for reading this, till next time.

Barbara Pheloung

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