



February 2010



Dear VAPT Playmates,

I hope to see you in Virginia Beach on February 12 and 13 for the 7th VAPT Winter Workshop! If you are unable to join us there you may want to pick up a couple of hours of training with the VAPT Chapter in Roanoke on February 10th or on February 26th in Northern Virginia . Go the www.a4pt.org to get all the details for all sponsored training in the state.



You may go to

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/annestewart/collections/72157605231945659/> and click on the **February 2009 VAPT 6th Winter Workshop photo icon** to view over 100 pictures of *last year's* day of learning and fun with author and therapist David Crenshaw. This year we will make new memories with consummate trainer, Dee Preston Dillon, learning about the therapeutic value of sandtray work in therapy and supervision.

Remember to use our VAPT Facebook Group (74 members) and Facebook Page (20 Fans) for updates and news items. Let me know what you would like posted and also use the FB Page yourself to upload info and photos. Please continue to recruit members as we need to increase our membership to serve children and families with well-trained and playful practitioners and to be able to continue to apply for APT Gold Branch status. Remember, the person recruiting the most new members wins 3 days of interest on 10 million dollars.

Playfully,
Anne

1. Save the Dates! JUNE 14th - 18th, 2010



The National Institute for Trauma and Loss (TLC)

We will be joined by presenters from the National Institute for Trauma and Loss to conduct a 5 day training series. Learn more about TLC at <http://www.starrtraining.org/tlc>

2. Crafty Website to Use and Share with Teachers and Caregivers

You may incorporate creative arts activities in your play therapy or encourage healthy and creative interactions with children and caregivers by sharing ideas from this website

http://crafts.kaboose.com/holidays/chinese_new_year.html

Kaboose has information and instructions for simple crafts for Valentine's Day, Winter Crafts and Chinese New Year along with clip art and birthday party crafts.



Paper Heart Wreath



Candy Rings



Welcome Door Hanger

3. New VAPT Member Welcome Letter

I recently welcomed our new VAPT members with a letter and would like to share it with you as a reminder of our many opportunities to work and play together.



Dear Virginia Association for Play Therapy playmates,
Welcome to VAPT!

My name is Anne Stewart, president and founder of the vibrant Virginia branch of play therapy.

I want to welcome you on behalf of our organization's 200 members contributing to the *common wealth* of our children, families and colleagues.

Our branch was chartered in 1996. We are an award winning and active crew- VAPT has been awarded the prestigious GOLD BRANCH award (for excellent branch performance) 7 out of 8 years (One year we were one member short of the growth we needed for qualifying—so you all joining just made my day!! © Really.)

Our members serve at the chapter, branch and national levels in supporting networking and professional development around the state and on national committees and boards. We have had VAPT members participating in the APT Leadership Academy every year since its beginning in 2005. Learn about this opportunity at the APT site. VAPT will reimburse your registration fee for participating in the Leadership Academy.

Each year we offer state branch trainings in the fall (one day), winter (one or two days) and summer (typically two days—this year 5! JUNE 14 to 18, 2010 in Harrisonburg) in addition to chapter hosted trainings in some areas of the state. All trainings are listed on the APT site (www.a4pt.org go to Directories, the Find Play Therapy and Supervisor Training) and confer APT CE's to enable you to earn the Registered Play Therapist credential. All state level trainings award CE's in play therapy (APT), social work (NASW), counseling (NBCC), psychology (APA) and couple and family (AAMFT).

Our next state level training is the Winter Workshop 2010 and will be held February 12 and 13 in Virginia Beach. See the workshop website for information and registration.

Go to <http://vapt.cisat.jmu.edu/winterconference10/index.html>

I am attaching a copy of our state level monthly communication-the VAPT enote. This month we distributed 3 due to the heartbreak in Haiti.

Our VAPT strategic plan is to support the growth of play therapy chapters around the state. We currently have area representation in the following regions:

Winchester	Carmela Crawford	dccrawford1@verizon.net
Roanoke Southwest	Stephanie Pratola	pratola@pratola.com
Lynchburg	Norma White	norma.white@couplesandkids.com
Central Virginia	Amy Kale Fraitcs	play@mail.planetcomm.net
Northern Virginia	Joyce Meagher	kdknzlr@comcast.net
	Cathi Spooner Sheri Mitschelen	cathispooner@hotmail.com shmitsch@cox.net
Tidewater	Kathrin Hartmann	Hartmak@EVMS.EDU
Richmond	Barbara J. Smith	bsmith461@aol.com
Southwest	Suzanne Sanford	playtherapyworks@msn.com
Danville	Cindy Lovell	clovell@dpcs.org

Feel free to contact the chapter chair in your area. You can consult the VAPT site, MEMBERSHIP MAP,(<http://vapt.cisat.jmu.edu/members.htm>) to see the name and email address for other members in your area of the state. (I update the map, using the data submitted to APT, two or three times a year.)

The address for our organization website is <http://vapt.cisat.jmu.edu/>

Explore the APT site to learn more about the Leadership Academy and the Register Play Therapist or Registered Play Therapist – Supervisor credential. In addition, our membership map notes what members are RPT or Leadership Academy graduates. Send them an email with your questions!



APT is conducting a Member-Get-A-Member Drive currently. There are individual and branch awards. The member who recruits the most new members by June 30 will win three days interest on 10 Million dollars. Wow. Go to www.a4pt.org for details.

We are eager to learn how you would like to share your talents to promote the value of play and play therapy. Do not hesitate to contact me with brilliant ideas, certainly with any concerns and questions.

Again, welcome to our engaging learning community. We are glad you are here!

Playfully,
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4- Chinese New Year

The Year of the Tiger, Cultivating VAPT Leadership and Membership

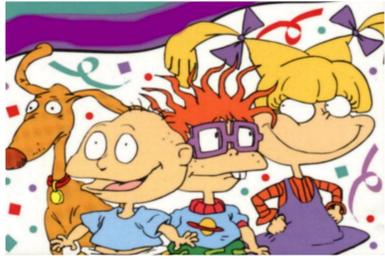


The Chinese Year of TIGER, 2010 will begin on February 14th. The Tiger years include 1926, 1938, 1950, 1962, 1974, 1986, 1998 and now 2010 followed by 2022 (according to the 12 year cycle). The website YEAR OF THE TIGER (<http://www.yearofthetiger.net/>) describes people born in the year of the Tiger in the following manner:

“People that are born in the Year of the Tiger are generally well liked because of their charismatic personalities. They are at their happiest when they endeavor to climb the ladder of success. They are quick learners, need to be challenged and often prefer to work alone. They are natural born leaders and perform at their best if working towards positions of power and influence...Anyone that is born in the Year of the Tiger is usually straightforward and outgoing by nature. They will never give up no matter how aggravated they may become. But, they are also full of suspicion and at times will take hasty action. Never lose sight of the fact that Tigers are smart and instinctive... People born in the Year of the Tiger always take pride in being different from others.”

So begin a conversation with a colleague of yours about their Chinese New Year sign... and whatever their sign, please invite them to join our organization!

Here is the scoop from APT Membership Coordinator, Stephanie Carter, about the membership VAPT has and the membership we need to **retain** and **build** to be eligible to apply for Gold Branch status:

Our Gang 	Current	Number Needed by March 31 
Professional members	174	169 (Lets go for 175) So it looks like we are in good shape, however, this number depends on ALL current VAPT members renewing in February and March! This represents 2.9% growth for VAPT. Considering most branches are in the negative we can feel good but PA, NC and OH are in the 8% to 15% growth range. So let's be sure to add some new playmates and win the branch and individual prizes!
Affiliate member	29	40 At 29, our VAPT affiliate membership is 16.6 % of our total. Let's try to go for a record and have the highest percentage of student membership of all APT branches...!
Total	203	215

Consider how you would like to exercise your creativity and enhance your work with more active engagement with your colleagues! We have VAPT chapters around our state. If the nearest one to you still seems a bit too far, please consider becoming a chapter chair yourself. The **chapter chairs** are area **leaders in VAPT** who have an interest in bringing together members and non-members in your locality to learn and play. VAPT can offer **CE's for these gatherings**, when there is a topical presentation or discussion. Some chapters have been meeting for a while, some are just revving up and some are re-revving! Let's get busy and grow more APT and VAPT leaders!

5. Gold Branch 101

Just FYI and thanks! Your commitment to our organization makes this award possible! VAPT is justifiably proud of our strong record in being awarded Gold Branch status. The purpose of the award is to promote and acknowledge excellence in branch performance. Branches must meet all the charter and Gold Branch award criteria and then submit an application with supporting evidence to be considered for the award.



The performance period is April 1 to March 31. VAPT has been eligible and received the award all but one year (See why we did not qualify in my letter to new members). The Gold Branch award criteria have changed over the years and currently include:

VAPT BRANCH CHARTER AGREEMENT CRITERIA

- Yes 1. Conclude the year with not fewer than 20 Professional members in good standing (Professional = 174)
- Yes 2. Sponsor or Co-Sponsor at least five (5) hours of APT-approved play therapy training for branch members (Training hours= 36 hours)
- Yes 3. Communicate at least four (4) times with branch members. All communications must include at least **two** topics. (Yes = 17)
- Yes 4. Sponsor at least one (1) public play therapy outreach promotion (Two. reported to date.)

GOLD BRANCH AWARD CRITERIA

- Yes 1. Must meet the branch charter agreement criteria
- Yes 2. Increase number of professionals members by 5% or more (Last year 161, need 169, we have 174)
- Yes 3. Sponsor or Co-Sponsor at least 12 hours of APT-approved play therapy trainings for branch members (VAPT training hours to date = 36 hours)
- Yes 4. Communicate at least five (5) times with branch members. All communications must include at least **two** topics. (Need 5, have 17 to date)
- Yes 5. Registered Play Therapists (RPT) and Supervisors (RPT-S) comprise at least 10% of branch Professional members (Yes, 27.6%)
- Yes 6. Sponsor at least two (2) public play therapy outreach promotion (Two. to date.)
- Yes 7. Branch president or other officer must attend the annual branch business meeting during the APT Conference (Yup, I attended)
- Not yet but we will 8. Board minutes must report that the board of directors conducted an annual review of the Administrative Audit Criteria

6. PLAYING TO LEARN

Op Ed NY Times February 2, 2010

A great argument for translating what we know about child development into our schools!
Of course, play is present!

By SUSAN ENGEL New Marlborough, Mass.

THE Obama administration is planning some big changes to how we measure the success or failure of schools and how we apportion federal money based on those assessments. It's great that the administration is trying to undertake reforms, but if we want to make sure all children learn, we will need to overhaul the curriculum itself. Our current educational approach — and the testing that is driving it — is completely at odds with what scientists understand about how children develop during the elementary school years and has led to a curriculum that is strangling children and teachers alike.

In order to design a curriculum that teaches what truly matters, educators should remember a basic precept of modern developmental science: developmental precursors don't always resemble the skill to which they are leading. For example, saying the alphabet does not particularly help children learn to read. But having extended and complex conversations during toddlerhood does. Simply put, what children need to do in elementary school is not to cram for high school or college, but to develop ways of thinking and behaving that will lead to valuable knowledge and skills later on.

So what should children be able to do by age 12, or the time they leave elementary school? They should be able to read a chapter book, write a story and a compelling essay; know how to add, subtract, divide and multiply numbers; detect patterns in complex phenomena; use evidence to support an opinion; be part of a group of people who are

not their family; and engage in an exchange of ideas in conversation. If all elementary school students mastered these abilities, they would be prepared to learn almost anything in high school and college.

Imagine, for instance, a third-grade classroom that was free of the laundry list of goals currently harnessing our teachers and students, and that was devoted instead to just a few narrowly defined and deeply focused goals.

In this classroom, children would spend two hours each day hearing stories read aloud, reading aloud themselves, telling stories to one another and reading on their own. After all, the first step to literacy is simply being immersed, through conversation and storytelling, in a reading environment; the second is to read a lot and often. A school day where every child is given ample opportunities to read and discuss books would give teachers more time to help those students who need more instruction in order to become good readers.

Children would also spend an hour a day writing things that have actual meaning to them — stories, newspaper articles, captions for cartoons, letters to one another. People write best when they use writing to think and to communicate, rather than to get a good grade.

In our theoretical classroom, children would also spend a short period of time each day practicing computation — adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing. Once children are proficient in those basics they would be free to turn to other activities that are equally essential for math and science: devising original experiments, observing the natural world and counting things, whether they be words, events or people. These are all activities children naturally love, if given a chance to do them in a genuine way.

What they shouldn't do is spend tedious hours learning isolated mathematical formulas or memorizing sheets of science facts that are unlikely to matter much in the long run. Scientists know that children learn best by putting experiences together in new ways. They construct knowledge; they don't swallow it.

Along the way, teachers should spend time each day having sustained conversations with small groups of children. Such conversations give children a chance to support their views with evidence, change their minds and use questions as a way to learn more.

During the school day, there should be extended time for play. Research has shown unequivocally that children learn best when they are interested in the material or activity they are learning. Play — from building contraptions to enacting stories to inventing games — can allow children to satisfy their curiosity about the things that interest them in their own way. It can also help them acquire higher-order thinking skills, like generating testable hypotheses, imagining situations from someone else's perspective and thinking of alternate solutions.

A classroom like this would provide lots of time for children to learn to collaborate with one another, a skill easily as important as math or reading. It takes time and guidance to learn how to get along, to listen to one another and to cooperate. These skills cannot be picked up casually at the corners of the day.

The reforms suggested by the administration on Monday have the potential to help liberate our schools. But they can only do so much. Our success depends on embracing a curriculum focused on essential skills like reading, writing, computation, pattern detection, conversation and collaboration — a curriculum designed to raise children, rather than test scores.

Susan Engel is a senior lecturer in psychology and the director of the teaching program at Williams College.

Playfully,
anne

P.S. Just for fun, visit this site and play on-line
<http://www.members.shaw.ca/gf3/circle-the-cat.html>

 COME PLAY WITH US!! 