



## February-ish enote

### 1. Winter Workshop Highlights

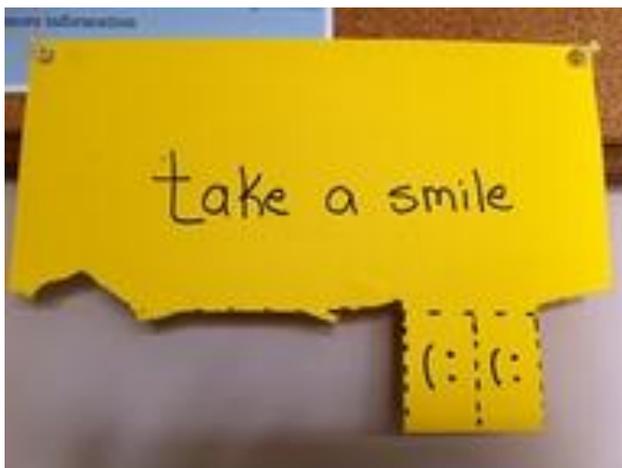
Practitioners and students gathered in Richmond, VA for the annual winter workshop focusing on trauma and the brain. Dr. Gaskill walked us through the effect of traumatic experiences on specific regions of the brain. He provided real-life examples of interventions to be used as well. It was a joy to glean such a wealth of knowledge from a master in the field. The VAPT Winter Workshop was co-sponsored with the Greater Richmond area Stop Child Abuse Now organization. Tremendous leadership and logistical support was offered by LISA WRIGHT! Thanks you, Lisa and all the VAPT members and students who helped make the day a success.

### 2. Give Kids a Smile Day

First Friday of February <http://www.ada.org/givekidsasmile.aspx>

This program initiated by the American Dental Association promotes oral health for underserved and underprivileged populations of children. The first Friday of each February, dentist around the nation provide free dental care for low-income families. While this day is recognized in February, programs of this nature can be conducted all throughout the year. Visit the site address above to find participating dental offices near you.

Here is a play therapist version that may be used year round! (You can also find this on our VAPT website home page, under March Fun at <http://vapt.cisat.jmu.edu/> Visit us now!



### 3. Leap Into the Day

It comes around every four years, so what can we do to make Leap Day special for kids? Why not try something out of the ordinary? Here are just a few ideas:

- Allow kids to plan a school day and/or therapy session
- Have kids pretend that they are different animals that leap (i.e. frog, kangaroo, etc.)
- Play Leap Frog outside

- Use the extra day to help kids serve the community
- Make a trail mix with 29 different ingredients

These ideas can be practiced every day of the year. Discover more great ideas at:

<http://www.hsclassroom.net/2012/02/29-activities-to-do-with-kids-on-leap-day-that-require-little-to-no-planning/>

#### 4. Love Our Children

February has long been the month of love and affection for significant other, but what about the children? As practitioners, we can encourage parents and ourselves to use various means to ensure children feel loved. This charge is not just for Valentine's Day, but throughout the year. Some suggestions to foster love are:

- Interacting - Spend time watching them and responding to their cues. They will feel loved and nurtured.
- Loving Touches - Cradle them, hold them. Hugs and nurturing are critical to a child's development. It keeps them calm and comforted, and gives them courage to move on.
- A Stable Relationship – They need someone special to be there when they call.
- Safe, Healthy Environment - Plug the outlets, block the stairs. Keep lead away! Make a safe, special place so for them to explore.
- Self-Esteem- They can, they can, and they can --- with your love and encouragement! Praise them often!
- Quality Child Care – Children must be cared for in your absence with people you can trust. Check references.
- Communication –Even babies need the stimulation of conversation.
- Play – Learn how to play together. Have fun. You'll teach your children a lot!
- Music – Music is fun and soothing and helps them through their developmental stages. Source: <http://www.loveourchildrenusa.org/tenthings.php>
- Reading – Teaches with pictures, with words and with love. You'll help your children become good readers by reading to them.

#### 5. Membership Thanks to you all!

Thank you for your membership in VAPT. We have members that have been with in APT since 1992-and VAPT since 1996-when we were founded, as well as brand new members. Do not hesitate to contact me (540) 908 8288 (my cell) with your ideas on how to make VAPT responsive to your interests and needs and to tell me how you wish to serve! Look at our membership map for the chapter chair in your area for local trainings and connections.

Visit us on VAPT FB! Go to:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Virginia-Association-for-Play-Therapy/234395618441>

We have over 150 fans and reached 170 people last week! Post your enthusiasm for play!

**Playfully and heartfelt,**

Anne and Marlana

Thanks to Marlana for composing this note!