

MASTARS

Spring 08

SAG 2008

PRESENTATION

Do you find yourself feeling frustrated with your at-risk students? At-risk students tend to have a distinctive temperament and learning style, one often at-odds with the approach favored by the teacher. Discover how to narrow this gap between you and your at-risk population by learning how to use their need to feel empowered and "in charge" and channel it in a positive direction--leading to responsibility and self-discipline. Learn how to develop character, resiliency, and emotional intelligence in students who "don't want to be told what to do." Learn how to handle disciplinary situations in ways which don't result in power struggles and an escalation of the problem. Recapture your joy and enthusiasm for teaching by learning strategies and techniques for handling problems which don't result in teacher stress and burnout!

ABOUT THE PRESENTER:

I (Vicki Phillips) have worked with at-risk adolescents for over thirty years as a teacher, counselor, assistant principal, and, for 22 years, as principal of an award-winning California continuation high school. My main interest has always been changing dysfunctional attitudes in at-risk adolescents. I am the author of *PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT*, a one-semester curriculum designed to develop respect, responsibility, and resiliency in at-risk students, purchased to-date by over 1450 school districts and organizations nationwide. I have also written two books, *TURNING THE MATRONS - ROUND: Developing Motivation, Responsibility, and Self-Discipline*

in At-Risk Youth and EMPOWERING DISCIPLINE: An Approach That Works With At-Risk Students. I gave one-day workshops in over sixty major cities nationwide for the Bureau of Education and Research from 1996 -1999 and for Staff Development Resources and CEEA from 1999 - 2002. I have also given one and two day workshops for numerous schools and organizations and have spoken at hundreds of State and National conferences.

MASTAR'S SAG will be held at
Club Regent Casino

Located at 1425 Regent Avenue West
On November 28th, 2008

Better Grades

Little Johnny wasn't getting good marks in school. One day he surprised the teacher with an announcement. He tapped her on the shoulder and said, "I don't want to scare you, but my daddy says if I don't start getting better grades...somebody is going to get a spanking!"

Where is your homework?

Teacher: Where is your homework?

Pupil: I lost it fighting this kid who said you weren't the best teacher in the school .

<http://www.basicjokes.com/djoke.php>

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A Note from the Vice-President

January 22, 2008

Your MASTARS executive leaves no rock unturned when looking for the most current information to support you in your mission to teach high school at-risk students. Last week I was sent on a mission to find this year's SAG presenter at the 2008 Effective Strategies Institute on Dropout Prevention Conference, sponsored by the Florida Department of Education.

The conference was jammed pack full of presenters who were willing to share the wonderful techniques and strategies that are being used across North America. Topics ranged from truancy prevention to after school programs to online tutoring.

The goal I had was to unveil a presenter that would support Manitoba teachers of at-risk students. John Green Jr. from Tallahassee Florida encouraged his audience with helpful strategies on regaining lost time caused by discipline challenges in the classroom.

Stephanie Martinez from Tampa Florida gave an overview of Positive Behaviour Supports. She gave hope to audience members looking to implement school-wide change. I could go on for pages about the great things I saw and heard at this conference.

I'll close by mentioning Vicki Phillips from Carmel Valley California. Vicki provided what I think is exactly what Mani-

toba teachers are looking for in their classrooms. We need practical, easy to implement strategies that will work with students and create a great relationship between teachers and their students.

I hope our membership will benefit greatly from my experience in Florida. I am looking forward to seeing you all in late November at the MASTARS SAG.

Dino Busceti
Vice-President
MASTARS

Calling all MASTARS' MEMBERS...

Are you a team player?
Do you like to get involved?
Are you interested in current topics relating to At Risk Students in Manitoba?
If you answered yes to the above questions, then we need you!
We're looking for enthusiastic, high energy, motivated people to come aboard and join the Mastars Executive Council.

If you're interested, please email Jean-Paul Rochon at:

jrochon@retsd.mb.ca

We look forward to hearing from you!



Professional Development Opportunities

Manitoba Association of Resource Teacher(MART)
Presents a Workshop on troubled kids and attachment disorder

HARNESSING THE POWER OF ATTACHMENT: WORKING WITH STUCK KIDS

Presenter: Dr. Gordon Neufeld, Clinical Psychologist, Vancouver

May 13 and 14th

Location: 900 St. Mary's Road (Legacy Center) Winnipeg

Time: 9:00-3:30

Cost: MART member 125.00 Non-member 135.00

To register: MART Workshop, c/o Colleen Haigh 4-603 St. Anne's Road, Winnipeg Manitoba R2M 5K3

A Wise Schoolteacher

A wise schoolteacher sends this note to all parents on the first day of school:

"If you promise not to believe everything your child says happens at school, I'll promise not to believe everything s/he says happens at home."

<http://www.basicjokes.com/djoke.php>

A Note from a SAG Volunteer

As an education student I felt very lucky to have been a part of the MASTARS Sag conference. This was the very first SAG that I have ever attended.

As a volunteer I helped set up supplies such as getting the folders ready and also making sure that every table had all of the supplies. I really liked all of the presenters and guest speakers that MASTARS had.

It was a lot of fun when people had to walk around and introduce themselves and do the

activity. This activity of getting to know other people was effective because when I left the conference I met a lot of new people that I had things in common with from all over Manitoba.

It was nice that in the morning we had a guest speaker that enticed our minds on being a more effective teacher in the classroom.

Then in the afternoon we got to relax and just have a laugh with the comedians. I also

found the being a student volunteer for MASTARS was definitely an enjoyable experience and is something I would recommend to other Education students.

This experience will always be something that I will remember because it taught me a lot of things that I will not get in a University or College classroom.

Kristine Abrenica

MASTARS in Cuba???

When a Northerner imagines Cuba, images of soft, sandy beaches, clear turquoise water, and naturally... authentic cigars come to mind. However, one of the most appreciated experiences is a hidden treasure that few residents of the country have ever experienced: Cuban hospitality. From the moment you enter the country, the proverbial red carpet is unfurled at the feet of virtually every Canadian tourist. Each and every Cuban national who I encountered on this trip bent over backwards to be friendly, accommodating, and engaging.

This was my first trip to Cuba, and although it was largely a pleasure trip, I did have an ulterior motive in mind. After doing all my research on 'Trip Advisor' and 'Virtual Tourist', it became as clear as the Caribbean waters that Cuba is a land of contradiction. As wealthy as Cuba is in history,

spirit, and hospitality, it is so poor in the material commodities that most of us in Canada take for granted. My online research was immediately confirmed as we drove through the unlit neighborhoods at night from the airport. The absence of lighting and electricity was something I had never experienced before. I was reminded during the chilly nights we 'suffered through', that the absence of heat and hot water in a high-end hotel room was common experience for most Cubans.

Having this prior knowledge about the lack of goods in Cuba, I made sure my suitcase was stuffed like a pregnant piñata full of calculators, pens, pencils, markers, and other school sup-



plies. Upon arriving at my hotel, I asked two employees to assist me with my esoteric mission: to get these school supplies to the needy kids of Cuba. Two employees, Belkey and George – a former teacher, took up the task of finding me a suitable school for this donation.

Belkey suggested we go to her home in Metanzas, for lunch and then visit the school in the afternoon, where we could distribute the supplies. George, having taught in Metanzas, reinforced Belkey's belief that not only would these supplies be appreciated; they were sorely needed in this area. Unfortunately, when I arrived, the school in Metanzas was closed for the Cuban High Holy days (Epiphany was just around the corner) which fall right after New Year. Alex, another self-appointed tour-guide, offered to drive me to Havana and dine at his house along the way. Both Alex and Belkey reassured me many times, in excellent English,

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that they were not expecting any financial reimbursement for these offers, but in fact were delighted that we were offering to help the children of Cuba.

Eventually, after discovering that renting a car was virtually impossible on the Cuban High Holy days, we settled upon a visit to St. Alvira church in Varadarro. After arriving, we zigzagged our way across the cobblestone street to the huge doors of the massive,

old church. Inside, I was welcomed by Father Brown, a former resident of Moncton, New Brunswick, who arrived in the 1950's from Canada and had stayed ever since. His face lit up when I opened the bag full of brightly colored school supplies and he hugged me as he explained how appreciated these would be.

In reflecting back on my Cuban experience - although this is a tropical destination, where I par-

took in the typical tourist vacation activities, the one thing that stays with me was how the people in amidst what we would call abject poverty, maintained a affluence of warmth that far surpassed the Cuban sunshine.

Wes Warren
President
MASTARS

Victor P. Thiessen Memorial Award

The Victor P. Thiessen Memorial Award for \$500.00 is for a graduating student from a Manitoba High School who has exhibited significant personal and academic improvement over the course of their Senior Years enrollment.

The award is granted in honour of Vic Thiessen, a founding member of M.A.S.T.A.R.S., who passed away while serving as its first Treasurer. Vic was a dedicated educator for over 30 years, in Saskatchewan, northern and south-western Manitoba. He willingly gave his time and energy to not only M.A.S.T.A.R.S., but also to a number of other organizations locally (Prairie Spirit School Division Executive), provincially (Manitoba Teacher's Society Leadership Team) and internationally in the Caribbean (Organization for Cooperation in Overseas Development - Board of Directors).

Eligibility?

- Resident of Manitoba.
- Proof of graduation (with transcript of marks) from a

Manitoba secondary school during the 2007-2008 academic year.

- In need of financial assistance to pursue your goals.

Application Requirements

- Completion of the Award Application Form.
- A 500 words (maximum) typed letter of nomination from a current M.A.S.T.A.R.S. member that outlines the student's improvement and growth.
- A 500 words (maximum) typed essay from the applicant explaining how the award will support their future goals and dreams.
- Copy of the applicant's latest official transcript that demonstrates potential graduation in the 2007-2008 academic year.

Selection Criteria

- Significant educational improvement that culminated with graduation.
- School and community involvement.
- Extra-curricular activities.

Deadline

Applications must be received no later than June 6, 2008.

Award Payment

The financial award will be paid directly to the recipient after the Manitoba Association of Secondary Teachers of At-Risk Students has received official confirmation of graduation.

For more information regarding the award contact:

Jean-Paul Rochon
Email: jrochon@retsd.mb.ca

MANITOBA ASSOCIATION OF SECONDARY
TEACHERS OF AT-RISK STUDENTS

http://ca.geocities.com/mastars_mtssag/



M.A.S.T.A.R.S. - Who We Are

M.A.S.T.A.R.S. has been affiliated with the Manitoba Teachers Society as a Special Area Group ('SAG') since 1999. This association evolved out of the former "Teachers of 04 Classes and Work Experience Programs" ('TOCWEP'). M.A.S.T.A.R.S. defines students at-risk as "Young people who have little hope for capturing their personal power, either due to lack of natural supports, failure in school, ridicule by peers, social deprivation, or lack of connection to society." (Else, 1997)

M.A.S.T.A.R.S. provides relevant professional development that focuses on current achievement and safety issues in Manitoba schools. We focus on topics that include: Justice and safety issues, vulnerable/fragile natural supports, significant and persistent performance difficulties in school and lack of access opportunities that lead to a meaningful livelihood. Joining MASTARS puts you in contact with other dedicated professionals working with this very demanding population.

Presently, there are almost 200 members in MASTARS. We have representation from all over the province of Manitoba. At last year's conference, we had more than 300 participants attend from all over Manitoba and Northwest Ontario.

We're on the Web

http://ca.geocities.com/mastars_mtssag/

2007-2008 M.A.S.T.A.R.S. Executive

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