

FLUENCY FRIDAY PLUS: 2004

Diane C. Games, M.A.
Coordinator, Fluency Friday Plus

The **Fluency Friday Plus 2004** project was held at Springdale Church of the Nazarene, 11177 Springdale Pike, Cincinnati, Ohio 45246 on November 4th and 5th, 2004. The project addressed the following objectives:

- Intensive treatment, individual and group, for children with stuttering problems, K-12
- Supervision of graduate students in speech-language pathology in the treatment of fluency disorders
- Continuing education for clinicians/supervisors in the community
- Education and support for parents and extended family members concerning issues related to fluency treatment and the disorder of stuttering.
- Community education concerning the disorders of fluency.

Fluency Friday Plus (FFP) is an intensive treatment program for children with stuttering (CWS) disorders, K-12th grade. This project is a collaborative effort involving speech/language professionals across the greater Cincinnati area including university, private practice, hospital and educational work settings. Community speech-language pathologists from each of these settings provide supervision of graduate clinicians from Miami University and the University of Cincinnati who provide the direct treatment during the program. The graduate clinicians receive training from the organizational team of FFP in addition to completing a course on stuttering and/or fluency disorders at the graduate level. In addition, community professionals receive support and training in the treatment of children who stutter. A comprehensive parent program includes speakers, group discussions and teen/adult panels.

The 2004 Fluency Friday Plus event involved the following participants:

- 54 children/young people who stutter received treatment (K-12)
- 51 graduate students from Miami University & The University of Cincinnati provided supervised treatment
- 12 members of the Fluency Friday Plus organizational team coordinated various aspects of the event
- 17 community Speech-Language Pathologists provided direct supervision & two attended solely for the educational portion of the program
- 85 parents & extended family members participated in educational programs
- 5 volunteers assisted with organizational issues

During the day and one half event, the participating children/teens who stutter received **4 hours** of individual and **4 hours** of group treatment. Fluency Friday Plus Activities included:

- **Individual and Group Treatment** – CWS (children with stuttering) attended both individual and peer group sessions. In addition to practicing fluency targets, issues such as attitudes about speaking and the emotional of dealing with a stuttering disorder were addressed.
- **Role Playing/Skits** – Opportunities were designed for CWS to “act out” various situations concerning feelings, difficult speaking situations and dealing with comments or teasing. Skits were shared with parents at the end of each day in the Closing Ceremonies.
- **Open Microphone** - During the lunch hour of the first day, CWS were encouraged to speak to the participants in the auditorium setting using a microphone. In this supportive environment, a number of students felt free to tell jokes and stories.
- **Conversational Breakfast** – This breakfast was held Saturday morning to provide opportunities to practice social conversation. Ten Conversational Stations were set up by the graduate clinicians to encourage the CWS to practice telephoning; read out loud to a group; handle teasing; ask and answer questions; tell a story; do a one minute monologue; learn a card trick and teach it to someone; fake stuttering for one minute; persuade someone; and tell someone you stutter. In addition to the breakfast, the CWS worked to gain raffle tickets by interacting with other children/teens/graduate clinicians/supervisors and parents. A drawing for a basket filled with donations was held on Saturday morning. This event was sponsored by **SWOSLHA**, the local professional speech/language and hearing organization.
- **Parent Training**- An educational program for the parents and extended family members provided opportunities for parents to enter into discussions on topics of concern or interest. In addition, lectures by experts in the field of fluency disorder were scheduled. Donna Cooperman, Ed.D. spoke on “Parenting a Child with a Fluency Disorder”. Rodney Gabel, Ph.D. spoke on “The Latest in Treatment Approaches”. This year break out sessions addressed the following topics: School Services for CWS; Helping Your Child Handle Difficult Situations; Questions & Answers with a Fluency Expert; and Insurance & Resources for obtaining services. Members of the FFP team led these discussions. Scott Yaruss, Ph.D. provided a motivational talk during the Opening Ceremony on “Connecting with Our Strengths”. He also presented a talk on “Attitudes and Emotions: Impact on Treatment”. Drs. Cooperman & Yaruss combined to present “Fear Factor: Parents Only” addressing the many hopes and fears shared by parents of children who stutter.
- **Teen Panel** –A group of teens met with the parent group to answer questions and to share their experiences as young people who stutter. This

forum enabled the teens to speak freely to a large, “listener-friendly” audience who respected their courage and maturity and valued their unique insights.

- **Adults with Stuttering Speak** – This year a new group was added to the program. Four adults who stuttering presented an informal seminar to the parent group reflecting on their personal experiences growing up with stuttering, dealing with school and college and selecting a profession.
- **Web Page/ Graduate Clinicians/Supervisors Booklet** –The Fluency Friday Plus Web page (www.fluencyfriday.org), originally developed by Victor Pennecamp, was updated and expanded. The web site facilitated the distribution of applications and information to the participants and contained handouts for graduate clinicians and parents. In addition to the web page, a booklet containing all of the handouts from FFP was distributed to graduate clinicians and supervisors attending the event. Each child/teen who attended also utilized a special booklet to take home after the event. The booklet was designed to target treatment goals and included ideas for transfer following FFP.

Graduate clinicians were assigned to one or two CWS. Where possible, the graduate students were responsible for contacting professionals, the parents and the child prior to FFP. During FFP, the graduate students collected speaking samples using procedures developed specifically for FFP. These samples included word counts, a timed syllable count, disfluency analysis and severity rating scale. Attitudinal Scales, Speaking Hierarchies and Rating Scales were also utilized with the CWS. The graduate clinicians developed treatment materials in the domains of Speech Fluency Targets, Attitudes & Emotions and Environmental situations. Graduate clinicians received feedback from supervisors throughout the event, in both written and discussion form.

Supervisors were recruited from all practice settings. Prior to FFP, supervisors participated in a training session to review the procedures, activities and forms utilized at FFP.

The following professionals comprised the Fluency Friday Organizational team planning the 2004 event. Information, treatment ideas and data from the 2004 event will be shared in published articles, presentations and in training seminars throughout the coming year. The framework for the 2005 event will evolve from data collected from the participants.

Diane C. Games, M.A., CCC-SLP
Board Recognized Fluency Specialist
Tri-County Speech Associates, Inc.
Adj. Faculty – Miami University

Irving Wollman, M.A., CCC-SLP
Board Recognized Fluency Specialist
Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center
Adj. Faculty – University of Cincinnati

Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center

Katrina Zeit, MHA, M.A. CCC-SLP
Staci Maddox, M.A. CCC-SLP
Karen Padgett, M.A. CCC-SLP

Private Practice

Patricia K. Fisher, M.A. CCC-SLP

Tricia McConnell-Stephen, M.A. CCC-SLP

University of Cincinnati

Phyllis Breen, M.A., CCC-SLP

Susan Givler, M. Ed., CCC-SLP

Hamilton County Educational Service Center

Ann Slone, M.A., CCC-SLP

Sally Demmler, M.S. CCC-SLP

Carie Chapman, M.A. CCC-SLP

Cindy Speakman, M.A. CCC-SLP

On a final note: The Fluency Friday Plus project was developed in 2001 due to the need for children/teens with stuttering disorders to receive intensive treatment and to interact with other students experiencing similar communication issues. The core planning committee also felt that the program should provide support and training for families to deal with the difficult issues that occur for children/teens with fluency problems. Local universities were interested in the unique clinical training opportunities for graduate clinicians and readily supported the project. The University of Cincinnati generously donated their facilities for the program for the first three years. This past year, Springdale Church of the Nazarene opened their facility to host FFP. The project has continued to grow and develop with the monetary support of the Southwestern Ohio Speech, Language & Hearing Association, the Ohio Speech-Language-Hearing Association and the Procter & Gamble Grant program. On behalf of the committee and the many students, families and practicing speech-language pathologists who participated in the project, I want to thank these organizations for their continued support!

Submitted 1/14/05:

Diane C. Games, M.A. CCC-SLP, BR-SFD