

# CHANGING LIVES

SINGAPORE  
**BRAIN**  
DEVELOPMENT CENTRE



>> All About Unleashing Your Child's True Learning Potential

May 2007

**Poor Grades  
= Unintelligent?**

Find out why that's NOT really true

**\$150** worth of  
Gift Vouchers  
inside!

Does my child really  
need medication for  
ADHD?

DISCOVER YOUR CHILD'S

**4 LEARNING  
NEEDS**



## From the Editor's Desk

With this inaugural issue, Singapore Brain Development Centre celebrates its fifth year anniversary and a few firsts –

- ▶ we have organized our first-ever public seminar for parents,
- ▶ we have made our presence felt in heartland malls by crossing the 200<sup>th</sup> student mark in our centers in Toa Payoh, Choa Chu Kang, Hougang and Tampines Mall, and
- ▶ we are the first, we believe of any training school, to incorporate scientific training programs with credible tuition programs under one roof. This means *maximum convenience* for you!

This inaugural issue focuses on a topic which is closest to our hearts since the center's inception – *how to help young kids learn better*. SBDC was started partly on a series of questions which had no easy answers to:

Is tuition the only way to better grades? Are better grades the only yardstick to a child's learning successes? Why are our children having more today but fail to enjoy greater joy in their childhood?

As this is our inaugural issue, we thought it needful to introduce the different sections that you will come across:

- 1) **Watch This Space!** - chronicles all the exciting happenings that affect will change your child's learning in SBDC. From our latest research to our newest upgrade in infrastructure (wireless internet access in the company's premises), it speaks of your experience with us. Now and the future.
- 2) **Newsbytes** – garnered from major research centers, educational institutions and from rich sources such as edutainment newsletters such as Contact (from MOE) and the internet blog space, this gives you in a nutshell the essential information you need to keep yourself in the know.
- 3) **Change** – shares success stories, testimonies and collaboration projects of SBDC's partners, it shows how people have benefited through the application of scientific, methodological know-how that SBDC has garnered. It features the best of SBDC for our customers - our students and parents.
- 4) **Cover Story** – gleaned from the world's best minds as well as educational professionals in Singapore - occipital therapists, psychologists, visual processing specialists - we gathered the latest scientific finding and put it at your fingertips.

As usual, we welcome your feedback and thoughts in ensuring that your children get the best that we can give them. They deserve nothing less.

7th June 2007  
Elite Wee  
Editor

## Newsbytes

**Character Education** is now getting increasing emphasis.

This is in-line with the MOE's vision of *holistic training* and the push towards instilling life-long values in our children. You see more character training companies now in the market gaining increasing acceptance.

### ▶ **More Financial goodies for needy families**

The setting up of '**Opportunity Fund**' gives schools an extra source of funds to tap into over and above what they are normally given in a financial year.

This funding, to the tune of \$118,000 to \$150,000, the deciding factor being whether it is a neighborhood, autonomous or independent school, levels up enrichment courses available for needy students. They may range from training of communication skills, problem-solving skills to subsidized trips to Asian countries for educational exchange.

### ▶ **Non-native Mother Tongue is REALLY now happening**

Now we have another set of 'Hanyu Pinyin' to learn. With all the challenges faced by parents and educators in helping our children gain competency in their mother tongues, it remains to be seen this is going to be implemented without overly taxing the students. Obviously, one criteria for admission would be a qualified mother tongue practitioner. Implementation starts this year in 2007.

### ▶ **Tuition business grows by the year, year after year**

You see them sprouting them up like mushrooms in marketplace, shopping malls and neighborhood centers. It is a multi-million dollar business in Singapore.

With all that is being spent to give our children that extra edge, the simple rule of thumb when choosing a private tutor is

- 1) Qualification
- 2) Verifiable experience, and
- 3) Your child's feedback,

the last one being of paramount importance. Horror stories abound of how tutors nanny their way through their monthly paychecks instead of supplementing academic knowledge.

## Watch For This Space!

- ▶ **Singapore Brain Development Center** has been actively engaging occupational therapist, visual processing specialists, clinical psychologists in our research to continue to upgrade our 'software'. We hope to bring you the latest updates.
- ▶ **Our children learn best through good old-fashioned fun.** Remember the times that we had our first story books? Big bold words with brightly-colored pictures of fairy tale characters in story books greeted us, evoking us to read, imagine and perhaps engage in a little role-playing ourselves as the fabled prince or princess. In other words, we had fun learning!

Why should we stop when we have grown a little bit older? We have added more toys and paraphernalia in our creative corner in our flagship store in Upper Serangoon. You will be entertained with puzzles, books, board games of all kinds. Learning will never be the same again!

- ▶ **Parents need not fret no more.** We have added wireless internet access in our premises so that you can do your work while waiting for your children. Surf the net, e-shop, answer emails, it is now possible! PCs not included.

# CHANGE

## Symptom: *Poor Academic Achievement*

**Academic achievement is *not* always a reliable predictor of intelligence.** There are many *very bright* children who are not able to achieve academic success.

When the student is trying their best to learn yet cannot seem to make any progress the lack of academic performance is often the symptom of an *underlying issue* that needs to be resolved.

Most learning problems can be linked to *inefficient brain processes* and *sensory integration*.

Studies have shown that many children who do not perform academically also have *poor motor skill development*. The brain processes that are responsible for allowing a person to have good motor skill are the same processes that must function efficiently in order to learn.

Motor skill ability and learning are both dependant on *efficient sensory integration*. If a person is not able to integrate the senses well, then there is a good chance that they will not be able to perform well academically. This lack of sensory integration ability is often the undiagnosed reason that many people struggle academically.

## Symptom: *Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD / ADHD)*

**A child with attention deficit disorder has a slow reaction time**, which can be indicative of slow brain processing. Balametrics uses balance therapies to improve brain processing speed and efficiency without Ritalin or other medications.

A fundamental reality is that the higher the level of balance, the faster the brain must react. It has been determined that there is a mathematical relationship between the number of brain neurons in the network and the reaction time of the network.

By increasing the balance difficulty of an activity, the brain is forced to constantly recalibrate itself and involve more neurons in order to perform faster. This addresses the slow reaction time symptomatic of ADD/ADHD by actually changing the physiology of the brain.

Much has been made of the fact that ADD/ADHD is a *physiological problem* and *not* a mental/emotional problem. This is very likely true.

Studies indicate that over 50% of children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder suffer from *sensory integration dysfunction* as well.

It is important to understand that because the behavioral problems exhibited by those with ADD/ADHD are not the result of a mental problem but a physiological problem, and that the therapy involved must affect the brain on a physiological level.

## **Symptom: *Dyslexia***

**Dyslexics often confuse** left and right, write letters or numbers backward, and transpose letters and numbers. These are symptoms of an underlying problem with spatial awareness. Problems in sequencing (e.g. difficulty following 2 or 3 step instructions or difficulty putting things in order) are also common symptoms of dyslexia.

Balometrics has developed products and therapies that use balance as the central component to addressing brain-processing and sensory integration disorders. In order to understand the link between balance and dyslexia, it is necessary to understand the role that the sense of balance (vestibular system) has on all brain processes. Because we address the underlying brain disorganization that produces these symptoms, our therapies can be helpful in dyslexia treatment.

# Cover Story- Your Child's 4 Learning Needs

Grades do matter. However, with the bulk of scientific research and methodologies proponents ranging from learning techniques, memorization strategies, thinking methods and studying methodologies that promise to enhance various prowesses, how do we make the choice?

Granted, a myriad of choices is not a situation unique to the education landscape in this hyper-speed, highly-competitive world that we live in.

As a comparison, just barely 10 years ago, we have 2 predominant players in the supermarket arena; now, we have more than 10, with specialty stores like Liberty supermarket selling organic food, and hypermarts like Carrefour which sells everything and anything...

However, as opposed to getting a negative experience with the facial cream you bought, education involves more than the buyer.

First, there is a unique tripartite relationship between service-provider, customer (child) and parent (buyer). Hence, any decision to engage any provider immediately involves more than 2 parties.

The second consideration is that a decision involves huge opportunity cost. A take-up with a provider means a lost business for another, whom could be better or equally competent to meet your child's needs but at a lower price.

The final consideration and no less important is how it affects your child's development; be it linguistically (Speech & Drama), musically (guitar/piano), spatially (aerobics), logically (memory techniques), kinesthetically (swimming).

From our experience of a typical learner's needs, generally, learning needs fall into the following categories:

## 1. Motivation

As the name implies, this has to do with a conducive home learning environment, how children are respected in learning in their own pace and whether they are involved in the decision-making process especially, when concerning their *own* learning.

## 2. Learning strategies

This covers visualization to enhance memory, thinking methodically to analyze complex problems and employing new pedagogies. For example, in lower Math algebra, we can use pie charts, trial and error and diagrammatic form to solve the same set of problem.

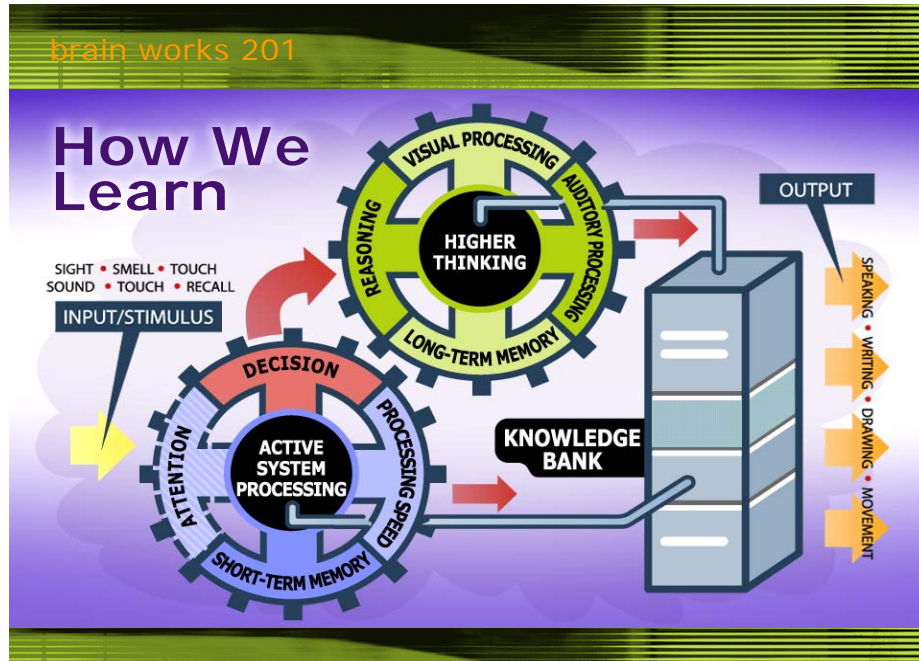
## 3. Cognitive Skills

These are underlying skills of learning. For example, attention skills, phonemic awareness, visual, auditory and tactile perception.

## 4. Academic knowledge

The traditional repository as a requisite for academic excellence. Like a body that derives its support from its skeleton structure, with the supporting sinews, ligaments and muscles that enable the amazing athletic movements that the body is capable of, academic knowledge forms the foundation upon which we build our decision making prowess.

The diagram below serves to illustrate this point.



Given an **Input/Stimulus**:

**Active System Processing** like Short-term memory/Attention skills/Processing speed and,

**Higher Thinking Skills** like Visual Processing/Reasoning/Auditory Processing will work hand-in-hand to tap into our

**Knowledge bank** to produce an output.

## Gift Voucher!



Redeemable upon registration and full payment of SBDC Powermind Programs.  
Valid till 31st December 2007



Redeemable upon registration and full payment of Parent Coaching Program.  
Valid till 11th August 2007