



The
Movement and Learning
Centre

Bo'ness Business Centre, 12 – 16 Corbiehall, BO'NESS, EH51 0AP
Tel/Fax: 01506 825400 Email: admin@mlcscotland.com
www.mlcscotland.com

NEWSLETTER - March 2012.

Co-Directors Andy Dalziell and Ian McGowan

We welcome you to the first Movement and Learning Centre newsletter, where we will try, like the BBC, to inform, educate and entertain.

For those of you who may not know much about us we have our home in the picturesque town of Bo'ness on the River Forth. Our office in the Bo'ness Business Centre allows us to see clients from throughout Scotland and the North of England. However, you may not know that we also travel to Aberdeen and Durham to provide our services to families from in and around these areas. An exciting development last year was the extension of our work to families in Dubai! Andy has been clocking up the air miles travelling to Dubai every 6 weeks to see clients in Dubai. Families from throughout Dubai and the Middle East come to see Andy at the Dubai English Speaking School (DESS).

Conference 2012

Planning for our inaugural conference on the 8th September 2012 continues apace with speakers now in place. The theme of *Enhancing Learning and Releasing Potential* will strike a chord with professionals working with children and adolescents as well as parents.

The conference is being held at the Stirling Management Centre which is easily accessible by car and public transport. An early bird conference fee is available up to 31st May 2012. For more information visit our website (www.mlcscotland.com) for more details and to book a place.

Presentations

Our growing reputation in the field of movement, learning and behaviour sees the Movement and Learning Centre regularly invited to present to a range of organisations.

In 2012 we will be speaking at a meeting of the Grampian Learning Difficulties Association in May, presenting at the North East England Dyslexia Conference in June and contributing to the University of Edinburgh Summer School for Teachers in July.

In the past we have made presentations to local and national organisations supporting dyslexia, developmental coordination disorder and other specific learning difficulties. If you know of any organisations or if your organisation would like us to present please get in touch.

Bilateral Integration

A very important aspect of our work is the programme known as Bilateral Integration Exercise. This was originally devised by Sheila Dobie OBE and is a unique movement programme that develops motor coordination, balance and posture.

In addition to using this programme in our centre we provide training in this method to teachers, sports coaches and practitioners from a range of related fields, domestically and abroad.

Notably in Scotland physical education and support for learning staff at The Glasgow Academy have implemented a movement programme based on the principles of Bilateral Integration Exercise. Further afield Andy has been delivering training and support for teachers and other practitioners in Germany since 2007, last year in Australia and this year he will be

providing training in Poland and Switzerland, cementing a growing international reputation.

Our next training course in Scotland is on the 25th and 26th May 2012. To book places please check our website (www.mlcscotland.com).

Research

© Better Movers and Thinkers (BMT) is a programme for the development of physical education, physical activity and sport. It is currently the subject of a research study being undertaken by Andy to investigate the links between movement, executive functions and academic attainment. Preliminary findings will be available by the end of May.

In general motor development and cognitive development have been studied separately and considered as independent functions. However, there is a growing body of evidence to suggest that motor development and cognitive development are much more interrelated than has been previously thought (Diamond, 2000), which is good news for those working in the field of movement.

Executive functions, also called cognitive control, are critical for success in school and life. Although executive function skills are rarely taught, they can be (Diamond et al, 2007). Core executive functions are (i) inhibitory control (resisting habits, temptations or distractions), (ii) working memory (mentally holding and using information), and (iii) cognitive flexibility (adjusting to change). These cognitive skills are fundamental in enhancing learning and contribute to the Curriculum for Excellence in our schools as a key building block in the development of mature and efficient motor control.

The fundamental ability to start, stop, plan, sequence and execute our movement with precision and efficiency leads to automaticity supporting thinking and doing (Ratey, 2004).

Diamond, A (2000) *Close Interrelation of Motor Development and Cognitive Development and of the Cerebellum and Prefrontal Cortex*. Child Development, 71; 1; 44-56.

Diamond, A, Barnett, W.S., Thomas, J and Munro, S (2007) *Preschool Program Improves Cognitive Control*. Science, volume 318, 1387-1388.

Ratey, J (2004) *A User's Guide to the Brain*. Abacus Books

Authors@Google: Dr John Ratey.

Children say the funniest things!

A while back I was seeing a young boy of 8 on his review appointment which was on a Friday. As it happened his birthday was on the Sunday of that weekend. As usual I excitedly asked him if he was having a party which he said he was. I quickly followed up by asking him what time did he want me to come at, to which he replied without hesitation '3 o'clock!'. This was great until I asked him when everyone else was arriving to which he replied, again without hesitation '1 o'clock!'.