

ReThinking Behavior Magazine

The Midwest Symposium for Leadership in Behavior Disorders (MSLBD) has always attempted to be open to new initiatives which support its goals. At a retreat in early 2017, the MSLBD Planning Committee approved two such new initiatives. One was the creation of a new fall conference on autism which became the Richard L. Simpson Conference on Autism. The other was the creation of a new magazine to be operated by MSLBD.

The Purpose of *ReThinking Behavior*

The magazine would publish articles of interest to a variety of readers who work with students with behavioral needs. Unlike professional journals whose audience is primarily other researchers, the magazine would be accessible to a broader audience of educators working in a variety of roles with students in school and treatment settings. It would be primarily for people already working with these children- not just entry level personnel and would cover a broad array of topics.

The proposal for the magazine was to provide a different kind of publication than was typical for professional organizations. It would attempt to:

- Affirm and strengthen collegiality among those who work with learners impacted by emotional, behavioral and/or mental health needs.
- Provide thoughtful discussion, analysis and commentary on issues across disciplinary boundaries.
- Identify new ways of thinking about behavior in our schools and other settings.
- Provide current information about practice, policy, and research.
- Intentionally seek diverse voices to better understand and respond to all students.
- Present personal stories and perspectives of children and youth, their families, educators, service providers, and other





Should Police be in Schools?

The shootings of George Floyd in Minneapolis, Minnesota and Jacob Blake in Kenosha, Wisconsin have led critics to reconsider the role of police in our communities. While racism has been a large part of the discussion, it has also raised the additional question of whether calling police is the best response in situations where there may be a mental health crisis or a need for a "wellness" check. Should police with their crime-oriented focus be called to deal with these situations? Or, are community-based mental health teams better suited to respond to these situations?

Perhaps it is time to raise similar questions regarding the role of police in schools. Is a school resource officer (SRO) an appropriate person to address student mental health or behavioral issues? Calling police in school is a response to school violence. Their role is to respond to school violence, not to address student mental health. School shootings have only been a small number of those who are present in schools. Do we often expect their primary focus to be on discipline, not on school-based mental health?

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RESPONSES From Our Readers
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- interested individuals; and
- Offer "edgy" & provocative information, as well as humor, parody, fiction, and some fun!

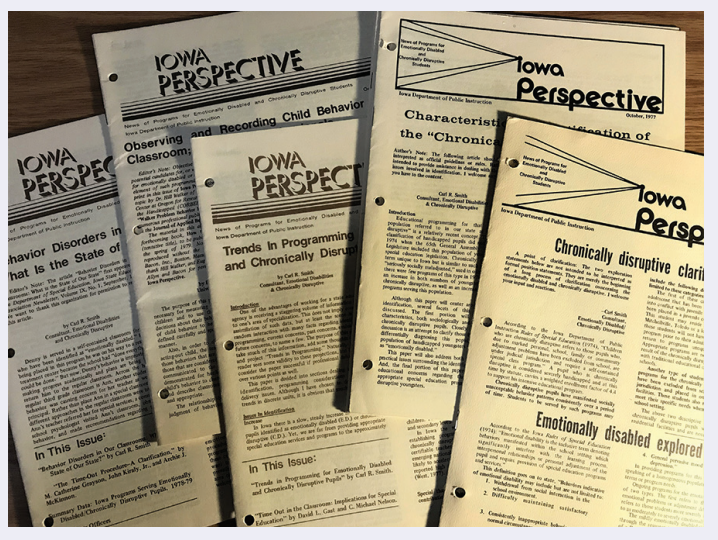
The magazine would accept articles which are personal stories, features on important issues in the field, descriptions of important policy issues and other trends and events. It could include editorials on current topics of interest, important research implications, and practical information and techniques for professional educators. It could also include student or teacher art, fiction or poetry as well as. The magazine would attempt to increase readability through minimal use of technical language, acronyms, and only including essential references. High quality graphics and photographs appropriate to the content would also make it reader friendly.

With the approval of the MSLBD Planning Committee *ReThinking Behavior* was founded, and its first issue appeared in Fall of 2017. Since then, three issues have been published each year, Fall, Winter and Spring.

History – Related Early Publications

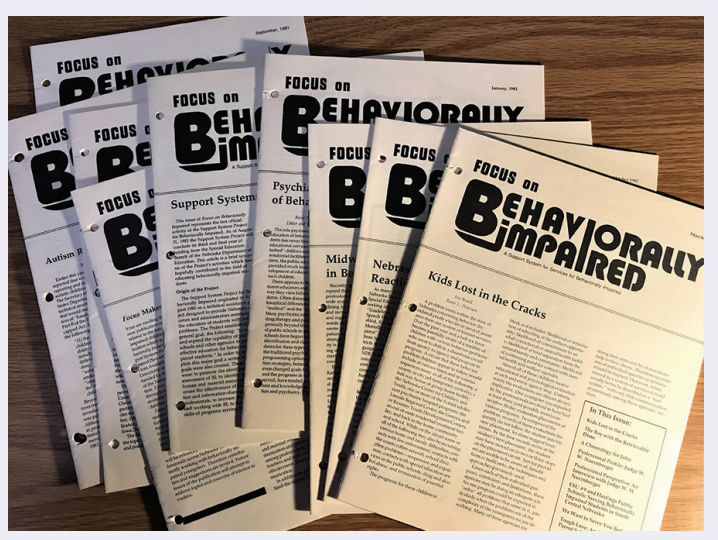
While this publication was new, it had its roots in several other publications.

Iowa Perspective (published by the Iowa Department

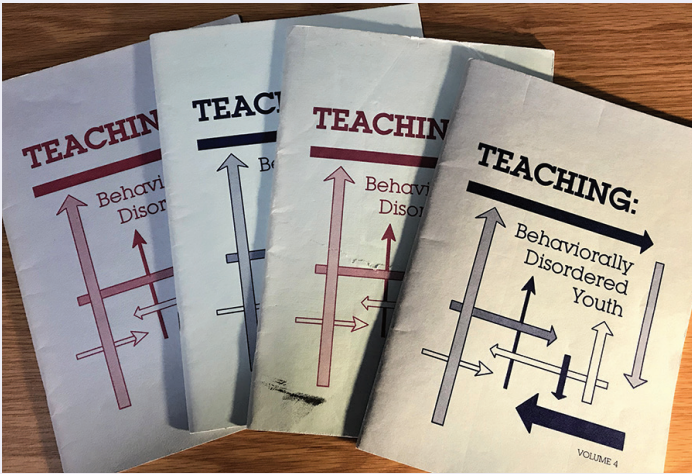


of Public Instruction (16 issues 1976-1981; Carl Smith editor).

Focus on Behaviorally Impaired published by the Support System for Services for Behaviorally Impaired Project at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln during the early 1980s (8 issues March 1981-Sept. 1983, Reece Peterson editor).



Teaching Behaviorally Disordered Youth. This was an initiative of the Council for Children with Behavior Disorders which attempted to share practical ideas and strategies for teaching behaviorally disordered students often written by educators in the field. One issue was



published annually for four years from October of 1985 to 1988.

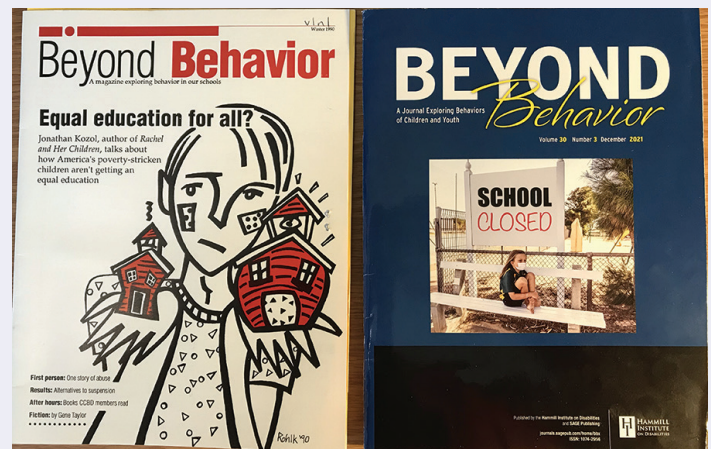
Behavior In Our Schools. These earlier efforts led to the creation of *Behavior In Our Schools*, which was sponsored financially in part by MSLBD and the Midwest Chapters of the Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders (7 issues February 1987-Spring, 1989). It was produced by students in the Communication Department at Buena Vista College, Storm Lake, IA. It was led collaboratively by Carl Smith, Reece Peterson, and Mary Kay Zabel.



Each of these publications were more than just newsletters. They published articles by prominent figures in the field, updates on laws and policies, stories of kids and teachers in schools, as well as current news and information of value to educators working in settings where students with behavioral needs were served. Additionally, all the leaders of these publications, Sharon Maroney, Reece Peterson, Carl Smith and Mary Kay Zabel were involved with MSLBD. As financial support for all of these

publications waned, MSLBD moved to collaborate on a new publication with the Council for Children with Behavior Disorders which might provide similar material and serve similar needs. MSLBD provided financial support for the first issue, and CCBBD retained oversight of the publication.

Beyond Behavior. The first issue of *Beyond Behavior* was published in spring of 1991. Since then, three issues have appeared annually. Its founding editors were Sharon Maroney, Carl Smith, Mary Kay Zabel and Reece Peterson. Later Mitch Yell served as editor and was followed by several others. The *Beyond Behavior* subtitle was “A Magazine Exploring Behaviors of Children and Youth.”



The stated purpose was to provide analysis and commentary on issues and new ways of thinking about the behavior of children and adolescents in our schools and to broaden the impact of research on our practice by making research more accessible across disciplinary boundaries to a wide audience of practitioners.

Over the next 27 years, however, *Beyond Behavior* began to become more and more similar to an academic journal. Fewer and fewer articles were written by practitioners in the schools, and the associate editors became almost exclusively higher education faculty. In April of 2018 the subtitle of *Beyond Behavior* was changed to “A Journal Exploring Behavior of Children and Youth” reflecting the drift away from a magazine purpose and format.

Those changes created a perceived need for re-creating a magazine for educators serving students with behavioral and mental health needs with a broader array of articles. As a result, *ReThinking Behavior* was created with its first issue appearing in the fall of 2017.

ReThinking Behavior

Why the name *ReThinking Behavior*?

In order to get an ISSN number with the US Library of Congress, we needed to find a title which had not been used before. Several titles were explored by the publication committee, who chose *ReThinking Behavior*, a title that captured the intent to examine behavior, but through a new broader lenses.

Why electronic publication?

The primary reason for an electronic format was financial. The cost of creating a hard copy magazine was prohibitive given the costs of printing and postage. We did however want professional graphics to make the magazine more attractive and readable to an electronic media savvy audience, and the electronic format also allows more flexibility than a paper format would have. The presentation of material with facing pages, also make the publication more readable and feel like a magazine.

When is it published?

ReThinking Behavior is distributed three times during the school year, fall winter and spring.

How are issues delivered to subscribers?

Once the issue is ready a Constant Contact email with links to the new issue and its contents is sent to subscribers. It typically includes links to the overall issue as well as to many of the individual articles in the issue.

How many people receive the magazine?

About 5000 individuals are on the MSLBD email list and receive the magazine.

What is the length?

We have settled on a page length of about 50-60 pages which permits inclu-

sion of articles of several types and of varying lengths, yet keeping the overall length reasonable. We believe that a length much more than that might reduce the likelihood that a content would be read by those receiving the magazine.

Why are Subscriptions Free?

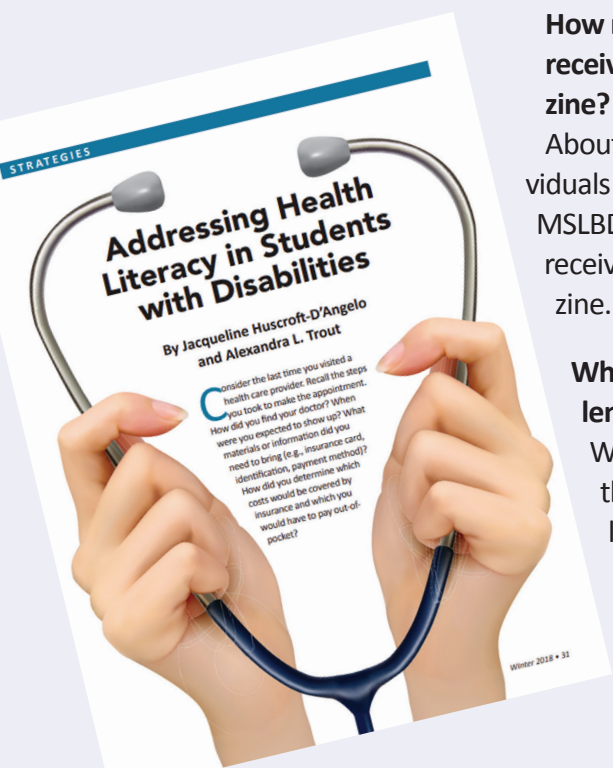
MSLBD wanted to maximize readership, and thus the tent. Free subscription allowed for a much larger audience than if offered for a cost. All production and activities are conducted by volunteers (except for graphic design), and since costs were minimized, free distribution is possible.

Where does the magazine obtain financial support?

The original plan did not want the magazine to become a commercial activity with a reliance on advertising and marketing of subscriptions as a source of financing. Originally the sole source of financial support was from the MSLBD budget. However, once the magazine was established with a track record, MSLBD as a non-profit organization has sought tax deductible contributions to assist in underwriting the costs of the magazine. These contributions (if over a specified amount) are acknowledged in a special page of the magazine.

Who are the people who work on the magazine and make decisions?

With their prior experience described earlier, Carl Smith, Sharon Maroney and Reece Peterson were able to assemble a team of about 10-15 members of the MSLBD Planning Committee (and some others volunteers) to serve on the magazine team. Team members donate



their time and talents to creating the magazine. They meet monthly via Zoom to divide responsibilities for various activities needed for production of the magazine. The names of current team members can be found on the “Contents” page of each issue.

Are articles Juried?

Yes, all articles submitted for publication are blind reviewed by at least three team members.

Graphic Design and Layout

Once the magazine content for a particular issue is finalized, the contents are given to a professional graphic designer who creates or finds graphics and determines the layout for the issue. When the issue is edited, it is inserted into software (PageTurnPro) which electronically simulates the pages of a magazine and archives the issue with links to each page of the magazine.

Delivery of the Issue to Subscribers

Once the issue is ready a Constant Contact email with links to the new issue and its contents is sent to about 5000 individuals on the MSLBD email list.



rethinking-behavior.html. Just complete the information request.

Submitting an Idea for a Magazine Article

The ReThinking Behavior Team is always looking for articles and authors. If you or someone you know would be interested in developing an article please contact the magazine at rethinkingbehavior@mslbd.org or contact any individual on the magazine team or Keri Frey (the MSLBD manager) at manager@mslbed.org.

The magazine team will work with potential authors to help develop their ideas into magazine articles. Potential contributors are urged to make a preliminary contact with a member of the magazine team to explore ideas, or receive feedback on outlines or drafts. An article does not need to be finished or even drafted before contacting an article idea is completed. Additional information for potential authors and information on submitting a manuscript for publication in *ReThinking Behavior* can be found at the bottom of the page at the link here: <https://mslbd.org/what-we-do/rethinking-behavior.html>.

Previous Magazine Issues

Previous issues of the magazine are archived and can be viewed on the MSLBD website at: <https://mslbd.org/what-we-do/rethinking-behavior.html>.

How to Subscribe

Obtain a free subscription, to the MSLB website at: <https://mslbd.org/what-we-do/>

