

The First Symposium

The first Midwest Symposium was held at the Radisson Muehlebach Hotel in downtown Kansas City, MO on February 24-26, 1983. The intended audience was persons in roles of leadership in public schools, residential treatment, teacher education programs, state departments of education and others interested in children and youth with behavior disorders. Registration was \$30 and approximately 200 people attended. Financial support for the conference was provided by several universities and State Departments of Education in Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska as well as other agencies.

The program was designed to *bring some life, zest and fun back into the field of behavior disorders, as well as provide a stimulus for an examination of controversial issues*. It included an old-fashioned, collegiate Oxford-style debate, complete with academic gowns, timers, and debate judges, on whether or not the education of youth with BD is best provided from a non-categorical framework.

Four central topics were presented by four keynote presenters:

- Identification and Assessment by Bruce Balow, University of Minnesota
- Human Resources by William Rhodes, University of Michigan and author of the Study of Child Variance



Project materials

- Curriculum by Stan Fagen, co-author of *Teaching Children Self-Control* (1975)
- Reintegration by Robert Bloom, Bellefaire Child Care Center in Cleveland



Other leaders in the field of EBD

participated as presenters and/or panelists including: Lyndal Bullock, North Texas State University and President of the Council for Exceptional Children; Frank Wood and Maynard Reynolds, University of Minnesota; Judith Grosenick, University of Missouri-Columbia; C. Michael Nelson, University of Kentucky; and Pat Gallagher and Richard Whelan, University of Kansas.

In addition to the debate and keynote presentations, 44 sessions were presented by 70 other presenters. Topics included: reintegration practices and roadblocks; smoothing transitions to regular classrooms and from institutions; self-control curriculum; career and vocational programming; teaching reading; autism and strategies and procedures for autistic children; rural programming; preservice and inservice training; interagency cooperation and collaboration; and a review of the video "The Anger Within" by Nicolas Long and Fritz Redl.

While so much in our world has changed in the past 40 years, we've continued to wrestle with many of the same issues presented at the First Symposium.