

Visit With the Utays

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School Psychology and Education Specialists



Dr. Joe Utay, Director of Counseling and Evaluation Services for Total Learning Centers and former professor for Indiana University of Pennsylvania's Department of Counseling, is a graduate of University of Pittsburgh, a school psychologist, marriage and family therapist, author, national speaker, and father. Dr. Carol Utay is Executive Director of Total Learning Centers. She is also a graduate of University of Pittsburgh, an expert in learning and special education.

"Dr. Carol" has experience as a principal, Orton-Gillingham reading therapist, teacher, consultant, national speaker, professor, author, and mother. She is a national 2006 Athena Award winner for community service. They live and work in the North Hills with their daughter Andrea.

Why Invest In Your Child's Reading Success

"My wife, a teacher, insists that we take our child to tutoring. I'm not a teacher but I'm not convinced that it's worth the cost. I know it's useful. I'm just not sure it's needed yet. He's not that far behind in reading, and not behind at all in math." -A cautious father

You do not have to be an education expert to predict what happens when a reading problem is recognized but help postponed until actual failure. Intelligent well-meaning parents like yourself, and many caring school folks as well, often wait for very strong evidence of a reading problem before taking action. After all, you don't take your child to the doctor after a few sniffles. With reading however, the risk you take by waiting is huge. If you wait and your child matures and catches up, fine. If on the other hand, you wait and your child falls further behind, the result is potentially far-reaching, not just for the current school year but, believe it or not, future earning power. Investing in tutoring now, can literally "pay off" in the future.

Learning is Earning. According to an editorial in the Pittsburgh Post Gazette, way back on June 4, 2002, the link between education and income clearly showed that reading success and college achievement had the single most powerful relationship with earning power. That's even truer today. Put simply, if you want to earn good money by getting a good job, then you need to have a good education. High school dropouts earn much less and college graduates earn much more on average than high school graduates do. to take action to strengthen basic skills (even for young children such as yours).

Do not wait to get help for reading. The remediation that would have been less time intensive and less costly at an early stage later often requires very intensive interventions to bring students to adequate levels of reading accuracy. Also, reading fluency (the combination of reading fast and accurately) may be even more difficult to restore because of the large amount of reading practice that is lost by children each month and year that they remain poor readers. In spite of all the research that shows it is easier and more effective to help children while they are young, we can still make good progress with older students too. Extra help is available from school or a learning center such as Total Learning Centers.

As you consider whether to provide your child extra learning support, remember that we want our children to do more than just learn how to read and write; we want them to learn in such a way that they become lifelong readers and writers. If we take a wait-and-see attitude when suspecting learning problems, we risk much more than by moving them ahead with support.

For more information about this or any other topic related to your child's success, including professional assessment of strengths and needs, or a free TLC report: Winning the Homework Battle, contact Total Learning Centers at 724-940-1090 (Wexford, Fox Chapel, and Murrysville areas).

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