

# The SELPA Dispatch

Published for our beautiful Butte County SELPA community

Volume 4, October 2024

## From the Director ...

When I took this job in 2018, I was really excited to learn that the Community Advisory Committee Awards in Butte County SELPA were awards for our students. Don't get me wrong, we love our staff, too, and a lot of other SELPAs do staff awards. But this night is always very special.

We all know that school can be a place of learning and fun and achievement, but it can also be really hard. Hard to fit in, hard to meet people, to find your place in the world, to figure out who you are, what you believe in, what you stand for. And it sometimes feels like many of the people walking around the campus consider themselves to be in some sort of competition with each other, to be at the top of the class or to become the best artist or the best athlete so they can get into the best school so they can make the most money.

And all of that is great for some. But what many people forget is that struggle and hustle look different for different people. Each of us is unique, each of us has strengths and challenges. And the best of us don't always win, but they succeed at being human, at caring, and understanding that they are part of a community that only succeeds when every person is given value and attention. Thank you to all the students recently honored, and those out there yet to be recognized for your amazing work, as well as the families and staff who support them each day!



*Aaron P. Bentr*

SELPA Director



Stay in touch with SELPA and community events by liking and following us at "[Butte County SELPA Community Connection](#)."



Visit our website at: [www.buttecountyselpa.org](http://www.buttecountyselpa.org) for information, contacts, resources, trainings, and more!



# Butte County Focuses on Anxiety Reduction with Coping Cat Founder

**By: Patience Hervey, N.A., PPS, NCSP, LMFT  
ERMHS Coordinator**



Over the past 5 years, Anxiety has been increasing for California students. A survey conducted in 2021 by the American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California was sent to middle and high school students from San Diego to Shasta County. Results indicated 63% of students said they had an emotional meltdown in the past year, 43% reported a panic or anxiety attack, 22% indicated they missed three or more days of school due to mental health and 19% reported suicidal thoughts. Furthermore, results of the 2022 Teen National Health Interview Survey were recently released which indicated that 21.2% of youth, age 12 to 17, nationwide are experiencing anxiety. These are a significant increase from 2019 in which only 9.4% of youth nationwide had anxiety. These numbers are alarming and have been considered a mental health emergency in California.

According to the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP), Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) is one of the most effective treatments for all anxiety related disorders in children and adolescents. CBT treatment goals focus on changing the child's perception about his or her fear by teaching relaxation skills, positive self-talk and focusing on increasing exposure to activities or objects the child is fearful of. This can include fears related to school which lead to chronic absenteeism and school refusal. Ongoing implementation of school-based interventions and progress monitoring is necessary to monitor effectiveness of treatment and progress on goals.

For the treatment of anxious youth, both AACAP and the California Association of School Psychologists (CASP) recommend utilizing the Coping Cat workbook for youth ages 7 -12, and they further recommend using The C.A.T. Project Workbook for the cognitive behavioral treatment of anxious adolescents ages 13 - 17. These programs are the only empirically supported evidence based programs for the treatment of anxiety in youth. Furthermore, AACAP studies have shown that 60% of children respond positively to CBT and 35% of those children have minimal to no anxiety symptoms at the end of 12 weeks of treatment. Additionally, when a child is under the care of a psychiatrist and medication management, research has shown that 80% of children respond positively to CBT and 65% of those children have minimal to no anxiety symptoms after 12 weeks of treatment.

Considering the data from recent studies and the recommendation for CBT treatment, Butte County SELPA will be training school psychologists in the assessment of anxiety as part of their psychoeducational evaluations. Likewise, all school based mental health providers are being offered the opportunity to receive training from **Dr. Phil Kendall, the creator of Coping Cat and The C.A.T. Project.** This training will be offered for free on November 8, 2024 and will provide school based providers with the resources they need to support improved outcomes for students with anxiety who are struggling to make educational progress and who may also be experiencing school refusal. We are looking forward to gaining valuable information, skills and resources to support our students' mental health and improve education performance.



# Alternate Dispute Resolution Preserves District–Family Relations



**By: Amanda Ramirez–O’Grady, M.A.  
Program Specialist**

Improving results and achieving better outcomes for children with disabilities is an important goal for all us. Many of us have found ourselves in situations where we may not always agree on important matters when determining how to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to students with disabilities. Alternative Dispute Resolution, also known as ADR, Alternative Dispute Resolution, is an informal method of settling disagreements about a child’s special education that happens outside of and before formal procedures. ADR facilitators apply specific techniques to promote understanding, open communication, and arrive at satisfying solutions to disagreements.

ADR can help build communication between families and schools and address disputes about special education eligibility, assessments, goals, services, and placement. Parents or the LEA/district may initiate contact with the Butte County SELPA when support is needed to resolve any component of the IEP. SELPA acts as a neutral party that upholds best practices in supporting the student’s best interests. ADR is a less adversarial process. ADR support options through Butte County SELPA include training, resolution sessions, pre-filing meetings, facilitated IEP meetings, and coaching.

Why Choose ADR? Alternative Dispute Resolution is a process that can support families and districts in mediating an agreement and avoiding legal battles. Schools often use ADR to help families and schools resolve differences in special education before moving forward to due process. The Butte County SELPA is committed to helping families and schools solve problems and conflicts in the fastest and easiest way, reducing stress and legal costs for both parents and school districts.

If you are interested in receiving support from a SELPA Program Specialist with any of these services, please complete the following [Butte County SELPA ADR Services Request](#). Other options for independent advocacy can be accessed through the following organizations:

[Rowell Family Empowerment of Northern California, Inc.](#) advocates help field parent concerns when parents are reluctant to work with district staff for whatever reason. Acting as a liaison, they work collaboratively with the family and the district, and many times SELPA staff, to bring about meetings or resolutions without a need for other complaint processes. Rowell Family Empowerment services are funded through grant funds from the SELPA Alternate Dispute Resolution grant.

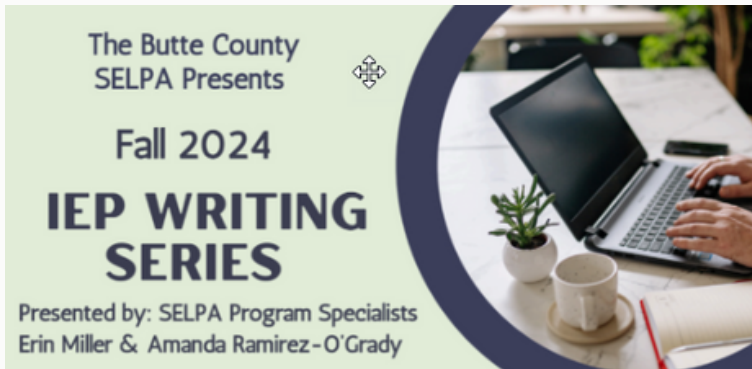
**Far Northern Regional Center (FNRC)** is another resource for some families. Individuals who receive services from Far Northern Regional Center may request assistance from a [FNRC Client Rights Advocate](#) retained by regional center from Disability Rights of California.

[Promotores of Northern Valley Catholic Social Service](#) has at the heart of its mission advocacy for the poor and vulnerable, and to contribute to freedom and independence. They provide Court–Appointed Special Advocates (or CASAs) for students coming through the foster system without stable advocates of their own.



# Professional Learning Made to Order

Check out our robust Professional Development Calendar filled with many free training opportunities for you and your staff! Go to: <https://buttecountyselpa.org/calendar> and click on the tab for current and upcoming months. Anything highlighted in blue has an active flyer for registration. Here are some of the notable sessions in the upcoming months:



The Butte County SELPA Presents

Fall 2024

## IEP WRITING SERIES

Presented by: SELPA Program Specialists  
Erin Miller & Amanda Ramirez-O'Grady

*This virtual writing series will be offered on the first 4 Tuesdays in October and will focus on a specific section of the IEP (Present Levels, Goals and Progress Reports, FAPE and Notes, and High School Transition Plans).*

*In November, Dr. Phillip Kendall will be here for a full-day, in-person training on November 8th at Chico State to teach Counselors and Psychologists how to assess and treat anxiety using his curriculum: **Coping Cat!***



**"COPING CAT"**  
ANXIETY PROGRAM

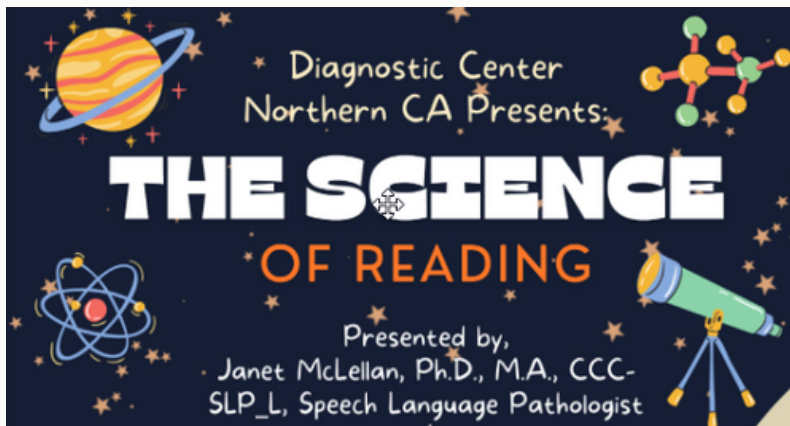
Coping Cat Workbooks and Manual plus Lunch are provided with your registration!

## Assessing and Treating Anxiety in Children and Adolescents

November 8, 2024  
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
CSU Chico ~ Colusa Room 100

**REGISTER HERE**

Come learn from Phillip C. Kendall, PhD himself, the creator of the Coping Cat system!



Diagnostic Center Northern CA Presents:

# THE SCIENCE OF READING

Presented by,  
Janet McLellan, Ph.D., M.A., CCC-SLP\_L, Speech Language Pathologist

*In mid-December, the Diagnostic Center will present on the science of reading. This training is appropriate for all types of educators, and is especially timely given the addition of universal screenings in the 2025-26 school year. Please get the word out there!*

*Our SELPA also directly funds staff attendance at State SELPA-sponsored trainings on topics from data quality to stuttering to emotional disability and more!*



Were back!  
Presented by  
Alicia Sorenson

## THE DATA ADVANTAGE

A FREE, 3-part series designed for staff responsible for special education data submissions.

Virtual Sessions:  
**OCTOBER 15, 2024**  
**FEBRUARY 26, 2025**  
**MAY 7, 2025**  
9:00 - 1:00 AM

**REGISTER HERE**

OMS Registration Link:  
<https://buttecountyselpa.org/2722-28478>

QUESTIONS? Please email: [reg@buttecountyselpa.org](mailto:reg@buttecountyselpa.org)

Presented by  
**COREY STACY**  
Expert Consultant  
LCS-Training



SELPA and SCSSEA

## School-Age Stuttering: A Practical Approach

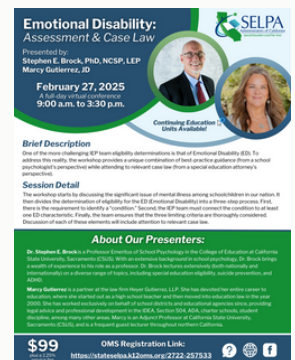
Thursday, October 24, 2024

Presented by  
**J. Scott Yarus, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, BCS-SCF, F. ASHA**

**Course Description**  
Stuttering affects an estimated 7-10% of the school-age population. This course provides a practical approach to assessment and intervention for school-age students with stuttering. Participants will learn about the current research on the neurobiological and psychological aspects of stuttering, as well as evidence-based assessment and intervention strategies. This course is designed for SLPs, teachers, and other professionals who work with school-age students with stuttering.

**Learning Outcomes**  
At the conclusion of the session, participants will be able to:  
1. Identify the current research on the neurobiological and psychological aspects of stuttering.  
2. Describe evidence-based assessment and intervention strategies for school-age students with stuttering.  
3. Apply these strategies to the assessment and intervention of school-age students with stuttering.

**Speaker Description**  
Dr. J. Scott Yarus is a Professor of Communication Disorders in the Department of Psychology at Chico State University. He has a Ph.D. in Psychology from the University of California, Santa Barbara. He is a past president of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) and the California Speech-Language-Hearing Association (CASHA). He has published numerous articles on stuttering and is the author of the book "Stuttering: A Practical Approach" (2018). He is also the co-author of the book "Stuttering: A Practical Approach" (2018).



SELPA

## Emotional Disability: Assessment & Case Law

Presented by  
**Stephen E. Brock, PhD, NCSLP, LEP**  
**Mary Gallera, JD**

**February 27, 2025**  
A Full Day Virtual Session  
9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

**Brief Description**  
One of the most challenging IEP team eligibility determinations is that of Emotional Disability (ED). To address this reality, this workshop provides a unique combination of best practice guidance from a school psychologist's perspective while addressing relevant case law from a special education attorney's perspective.

**Session Detail**  
This workshop begins by discussing the significant issue of mental illness among schoolchildren in our nation. It then delves into the definition of Emotional Disability (ED) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The workshop provides a unique combination of best practice guidance from a school psychologist's perspective while addressing relevant case law from a special education attorney's perspective.

**About Our Presenters:**  
Dr. Stephen E. Brock is a Professor of Psychology in the College of Education and Leadership Studies at Chico State University. He has a Ph.D. in Psychology from the University of California, Santa Barbara. He is a past president of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) and the California Speech-Language-Hearing Association (CASHA). He has published numerous articles on stuttering and is the author of the book "Stuttering: A Practical Approach" (2018). He is also the co-author of the book "Stuttering: A Practical Approach" (2018).

**\$99** OMS Registration Link:  
<https://buttecountyselpa.org/2722-25753>

# Dynamic Staff and Parent Engagement Aims to Improve Student Outcomes

We have opened the year with a set of very well-attended trainings on a variety of topics, but especially along the theme of enhanced social and emotional supports for students with disabilities, parents and providers, and our staff. Educators understand that safety and belonging must be established in order for learning to occur, and Butte County SELPA is making sure to focus on the larger picture.



*Therapeutic classroom staff came together at Chico State to learn from Amanda Ramirez-O'Grady, Jeff Lester, Josh Kuersten, and Daymi Trowbridge, about the foundations that support student growth and learning in these countywide program options.*

*We welcomed the creator of The Nurtured Heart Approach, Howard Glasser (pictured with SELPA Behavior Specialist Josh Kuersten) at Pleasant Valley HS with approximately 100 in attendance. Scott Lindstrom teamed up with Daymi Trowbridge to provide 80 staff and community members with a full-day overview of Glasser's curriculum and protocols.*

