

Katerina Titova

**From the work experience with people with learning,
emotional and physical disabilities in New Jersey Camp
Jaycee**

NEW JERSEY CAMP JAYCEE is located on 185 beautiful acres of forests, fields and streams in the lovely Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania. It is a short 30 minutes from the New Jersey border, south of Stroudsburg, PA.

New Jersey Camp Jaycee has a beautiful two – acre lake, nature & hiking trails, great outdoor recreation areas, indoor recreation areas, tennis courts, baseball diamonds, 25 cabins with modern baths, fabulous horseback trails, sport facilities, beautiful dining hall, fully staffed infirmary and plenty more!

New Jersey Camp Jaycee was founded by a group of dedicated volunteers in December of 1974. It was formally dedicated, with its first camp season, in June of 1975. Since that time, Camp Jaycee has been operated under a unique partnership of the association for Retarded Citizens/New Jersey and the New Jersey Jaycees.

New Jersey Camp Jaycee has a volunteer Board of Directors. This Board is comprised of caring, dedicated men and women totally committed to furthering the interests of campers with mental retardation.

New Jersey Camp Jaycee started official operations in June of 1975 with a small but dedicated staff and a part-time Camp Director. It has continuously grown since that time to the point of serving nearly 500 individual campers a year by the 1990's.

The association for Retarded Citizens, NJ and the New Jersey Jaycees have created the finest residential camping programs on the East Coast. The Camp offered cookouts, swimming, horseback riding, nature study, boating, music, drama, dancing, arts & crafts, group games, sports, great evening programs, and much more. Each program was to fit the individual needs of each camper. All these activities combined to make a fantastic summer.

We think that this program was made possible by highly – trained people who care. Our staff included Registration Nurses, experienced Head Staff, qualified

Director, Certified Water Safety Staff, Swimming Instructors, Chefs, and competent, caring Cabin counselors.

We noticed that campers had difficulty saying phonologically complex words (e.g. they might say ainal, prolaby, or speficic; or get confused with saying such as Peter Piper Picked a Peck of Pickled Peppers). It became obvious that the majority of children have immature phonemic awareness in common. Whereas nothing is wrong with these campers' actual ability to hear, they found it cognitively and perceptually difficult to break down the words they hear into their individual sounds-with all the sounds in the right order, no less.

Because phonemic awareness is such an important component of reading progress, we must catch these weaknesses as early as possible and offer appropriate intervention.

By the time children enter kindergarten they typically are proficient at rhyming. They also can tap out the number of words in a sentence, recognize whether dictated words are short or long (e.g., snake/short butterfly/long; train/short bicycle/long), sing songs that segment words into individual sounds (e.g., "Bingo Was His Name", "Old Mac Donald Had a Farm"), and clap to the syllables in two-and three-syllable words. Here is an example of this song.

Old MacDonald had a farm, (Both groups sing.)

Eee yi, eee yi, oh!

And on this farm he had some cows,

Eee yi, eee yi, oh!

With a "moo, moo" here, (Only "here" group sings.)

and a "moo, moo" there. (Only "there" group sings.)

Here a "moo." ("Here" group.)

There a "moo." ("There" group.)

Everywhere a "moo, moo." (Both groups.)

Old MacDonald had a farm, Eee yi, eee yi, oh!

Repeat with:

dogs (*bow wow*) chickens (*quack, quack*) pigs (*oink, oink*) cats (*meow, meow*)
turkeys (*gobble, gobble*) sheep (*baa, baa*) horses (*ney, ney*) donkeys (*haw, haw*).

The work at New Jersey Camp Jaycee opened new opportunities and interests for us. We are sure that everyone can find something that will create new hopes and help in a further education.