



## **AET Study Group Policies and Guidelines**

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## **What is the purpose of Study Groups?**

AET Study Groups provide the membership with a forum for sharing techniques, philosophies, and problems related to work with individuals with learning differences or challenges. Some Study Groups provide workshops to the public, therefore increasing awareness of current science and services available to students with special needs. Study Groups most directly express the needs of each local group and are the primary vehicle through which AET remains responsive to its members.

Some Study Groups promote interdisciplinary networking between AET and allied professionals by inviting guest speakers from fields such as psychology, speech/language therapy, occupational therapy, medicine, law, and other related fields. Other Study Groups prefer to foster collegiality through presentation of case studies, demonstrations of members' expertise in the areas of assessment tools and techniques; specific instructional strategies; or sharing conference, journal, and research information.

Study Groups are the foundation of AET, fulfilling our goals for increased professionalism, collegiality, and continuing education so we can provide the very best to our clients, their families, and our communities.

## **Who can lead a Study Group?**

- A Professional Member (ET/P) or a Board Certified (BCET) in good standing may be a Study Group Leader.
- Two leaders may co-facilitate a study group, providing that at least one leader is at the ET/P or BCET level of membership.
- An Associate Educational Therapist may be appointed as a Study Group Leader by the Study Group Director if there are no ET/P or BCET members in that area; the Study Group Director will arrange for an ET/P or BCET member to provide guidance to the Associate ET Study Group Leader.
- An Allied Professional may be approved as a Study Group Leader by the Study Group Director if there are no Associate ET, ET/P, or BCET members available to provide leadership; the Study Group Director will arrange for an ET/P or BCET member to provide guidance to the Allied Professional Study Group Leader.

**AET office: 7044 S. 13<sup>th</sup> St., Oak Creek, WI, 53154 (414) 908-4949, fax (414) 768-8001**

**Website: [www.aetonline.org](http://www.aetonline.org)**

**Email: [AET@aetonline.org](mailto:AET@aetonline.org)**

## Who can attend a Study Group?

- AET study groups are open to both members and nonmembers looking for a supportive professional network in their locale.
- Nonmembers may attend for up to one calendar year; participation may continue beyond the calendar year once the nonmember becomes an AET member at any level.
- AET study groups are free to participants.
- Associate ET, ET/P, and BCET members may receive continuing education credit for study group attendance.

## What are Study Group Leader responsibilities?

### 1. General Responsibilities:

- Meet with other Study Group Leaders once a year at the Annual Conference.
- Act as local liaison between the general public and AET by sharing upcoming events in the community as well as regarding AET programming.
- Monitor the AET journal, *The Educational Therapist* and the website, [aetonline.org](http://aetonline.org) for correct study group listing.
- Inform the Study Group Director of changes in leadership or status of the Study Group.
- Present any questions, concerns, or suggestions raised in the Study Group to the Study Group Director.
- Relay any issues under consideration and decisions made by the Board to the Study Group, as communicated by the Study Group Director.
- Post your Study Group Agenda on the AET website calendar. (See Instructions for posting this information in the addendum at the end of this document.)

### 2. Meetings:

- Plan the topics and dates for six to ten study group meetings per academic year; topics may include case studies, book reviews, guest speakers, sharing of materials, and group discussions.
- Post each meeting and topic on the AET website calendar.
- Communicate with members by email as to the scheduled upcoming events.
- Display AET literature at each meeting.
- Remind study group attendees of the need for strict confidentiality in all appropriate contexts, such as case study meetings, as well as formal and informal group discussions.
- Provide attendance sign-in sheets and continuing education verification forms at each study group meeting.

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### **3. Paperwork:**

- Receive email packet of Study Group policies and forms from the Study Group Director or AET office.
- Take minutes and attendance at each meeting.
- Send minutes and attendance sheet to the Study Group Director.
- Appoint individuals to assist with duties as needed, such as taking minutes and sending minutes to the Study Group Director.
- Maintain copies of Study Group minutes, attendance, correspondence, financial records, and forms in a notebook; pass notebook along to subsequent Study Group Leaders.
- Keep Study Group records for at least three 3 years.

### **4. Outreach:**

- Welcome new members.
- Invite potential members to join the study group.
- Encourage inclusion of allied professionals.
- Orient new members to the study group's agenda.
- Provide AET literature.

## **What is the Virtual Study Group?**

- The Virtual Study Group is similar to an actual study group but takes place online or by phone.
- The Virtual Study Group meets the second Saturday each month to discuss topics lead by one of the Virtual Study Group leaders. The meetings are scheduled at 8:00 AM Pacific, 10:00 AM Central and 11:00 AM Eastern time. These sessions are not recorded.
- A second Virtual Study Group, for members only, meets the first Monday morning each month and invites a presenter to speak on a specific topic related to ET. The meetings are scheduled at 8:00 AM Pacific, 10:00 AM Central, and 11:00 AM Eastern time. These sessions are recorded and available on the AET website.
- The meeting dates and topics are communicated in the monthly e-News and the website calendar.

## **What are the procedures for starting a new Study Group?**

One of the goals of the Association of Educational Therapist is to enable each of its members to participate in a study group. Because the association now has members across

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the globe, the addition of more and more study groups will make participation easier and will benefit not only individual members, but AET in general.

Most existing study groups evolved when several educational therapists informally got together to discuss a problematic case, borrow materials, or share private practice policies. The ETs then decided to come together again and eventually chose a specific day, time, and location to continue meeting. Any ET/P or BCET may start a new study group as the need arises in their locality. An Associate ET or Allied Professional member may begin a group by following the guidelines in the “Who can lead a Study Group?” section above.

Consider the following when starting a study group:

- Location of the meetings
- Day and time
- Possible topics or themes
- Ways to reach out to other educational therapists, allied professionals, and tutors to encourage group attendance
- Study group leader responsibilities

The location of the meetings is usually in members’ homes, either rotating or remaining at the same home throughout the year. Other possible locations are educational therapists’ offices, coffee shops, restaurants, or libraries.

Study Groups do not pay for meeting space. Any minor expenses, such as for refreshments, are covered by the group members. Guest speakers donate their time and expenses, including travel and handouts they bring to the meeting. Some initial start-up expenses may be covered by AET; contact the office and Study Group Director for further information.

The day and time of the meetings is usually a group decision, commonly once a month. Days and times vary depending on the needs of the group. Sometimes meals (pot luck) or snacks are served. Most meetings are two hours long.

The topics or themes of the meetings are often decided at the initial meeting. The group members suggest topics of interest. Topics may include:

- Discussion of information from a recent workshop
- Discussion of book or article on a topic related to educational therapy
- Discussion of successful teaching method, game, or activity
- Current research related to educational therapy
- Business practices
- Case studies
- Presentations by invited guest speakers on topics related to educational therapy.

Sources for reaching out to local educational therapists, allied professionals, and tutors to encourage attendance include the AET Directory, the AET website, eNews, email, and word-of-mouth.

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Please contact Jan Esterkin, Study Group Director, [jan.esterkin@gmail.com](mailto:jan.esterkin@gmail.com) with any questions or concerns regarding starting a group.

## **What are the benefits of Study Group attendance?**

Study groups are an integral part of AET. Joining a group will enhance your professional career by providing you with information, networking opportunities, and a chance to form friendships with other educational therapists. Some specific benefits are listed below:

Sharing techniques, philosophies, and problems related to our clients.

- Sharing of intervention strategies, materials, and games that have benefited clients
- A forum for presentations of case studies
- Networking among study group members and allied professionals
- Sharing of policy statements and other formal business documents
- Discussion of appropriate fees and payment policies
- Learning about local schools and their educational philosophies
- Referral source for group members
- Continuing education hours
- Format for discussion of sensitive issues in atmosphere of confidentiality
- Building friendships, both professional and non-professional, among group members



## Addendum

### Instructions for Posting Study Group Meetings on the AET Website Calendar

1. Go to [aetonline.org](http://aetonline.org), click on Events, then Calendar
2. A calendar will appear, the current month. Go to the bottom and click “login”.
3. You need a special calendar username and password. If you don't have this information, email Mary at [m.annen@aetonline.org](mailto:m.annen@aetonline.org).
4. After you log in, a calendar will appear with “+” in the top right corner of each numbered box. Click on the “+” of the date you would like to add your event.
5. Add Entry will appear.
6. Under Brief Description, type in your study group name and any other information. (ex. name of presenter)
7. At the bottom, click on the day, month, year.
8. Go to timed event. Add the time and duration of your meeting.
9. Click Save





## Study Group Minutes

Name of Study Group \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting Date \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_

Number Present:        Members \_\_\_\_\_        Non-Members \_\_\_\_\_

Copies to:                \_\_\_\_\_ Study Group Notebook  
                                 \_\_\_\_\_ Study Group Director

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

When completed, send to: Jan Esterkin, 478 17th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90402; e-mail: [jan.esterkin@gmail.com](mailto:jan.esterkin@gmail.com)



**Verification of Continuing Education Attendance**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Workshop/Seminar Title \_\_\_\_\_

Presenter (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

Hours of Attendance \_\_\_\_\_

*Deborah Doyle*

**Deborah Doyle, ET/P, FAET**  
Continuing Education Chair

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Presenter (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

Hours of Attendance \_\_\_\_\_

*Deborah Doyle*

**Deborah Doyle, ET/P, FAET**  
Continuing Education Chair



## **Suggested Case Study Format**

The following information is a guide for presenting a case study for discussion in your study group:

- Background information including age, grade, relevant family information, developmental/health history
- Referral question/issues
- Brief summary of relevant assessment/diagnostic/ecological information
- Brief summary of intervention history
- Present status
- Questions you would like the case study conference to discuss and/or issues you would like them to respond to

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## Suggested Topics for Study Group Meetings

### The Educational Therapist and the Practice:

- Assistive technology and IPAD applications
- Writing case studies
- Board certification
- Defining ourselves
- Attachment theory and its relationship to successful ET
- Terminating clients
- How the ET and allied professionals collaborate
- Making successful referrals to allied professionals when parents are resistant
- Difficult parents – difficult students

### Syndromes:

- Working with students who have been diagnosed with ADHD, Autism, NLD, Asperger's
- Emotional challenges
- Medication
- Social skills
- Home/school interventions
- Anxiety

### Books & Articles:

- *The Clinical Practice of Educational Therapy*- Maxine Ficksman & Jane Adelizzi
- *Reflections on the Mindful Brain*- Daniel Siegel
- *Beyond Learning Differences*- Chuck Ahern
- *Brain that Changes Itself*- Norman Doidge
- *When the Brain Can't Hear*- Teri Bellis

### Topics:

- Working memory
- Auditory and visual processing
- Dyscalculia
- Math Assessments
- Brain research in teaching reading and math

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- Bilingualism- sorting out language disorders from normal bilingual language development

**Strategies for teaching:**

- Executive functioning
- Reading

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