

'The Mislabeled Child'

- **What:** Drs. Brock and Frenette Eide, authors of "The Mislabeled Child: How Understanding Your Child's Unique Learning Style Can Open the Door to Success"
- **When:** 7 p.m. Thursday
- **Where:** Heritage Park Library, 14361 Yale Ave., Irvine

Wednesday, September 20, 2006

Learning curve

Authors of a new book on children's learning styles will speak in Orange County.

By THERESA WALKER
The Orange County Register

Dr. Brock Eide is a general practitioner and his wife Dr. Frenette Eide is a neurologist. Together they run the Eide Neurolearning Clinic near Seattle.

Since opening their clinic four years ago, parents and educators have come from around the country, and some from outside the country, seeking help for children with learning problems that make school a struggle.

Now the Eides are getting their brain research-based message – and methods – out to an even wider audience through their new book, "The Mislabeled Child: How Understanding Your Child's Unique Learning Style Can Open the Door to Success" (Hyperion, \$24.95).

The Eides are on a book tour that will bring them to Heritage Park Library in Irvine on Thursday to discuss "The Mislabeled Child" and answer questions.

Parents of two young children, the Eides hope their book can serve as an empowering resource for other parents.

"It's really important if they seem to be having a problem with their educational environment not to wait for them to grow out of it, but to find out why those problems are occurring and ways to deal with it," Frenette Eide says.

Chapter by chapter, the husband-and-wife team discusses the most commonly learning challenges diagnosed in children today: ADHD, dyslexia, autism and autism-like disorders, sensory processing disorder.

The book is a guide to getting beyond labels in order to understand how the dynamics of the brain affect learning and the practical steps parents and educators can take to maximize a child's individual learning style.

"We try to help people understand the limitations of those labels. The child is always more than the label," Brock Eide says. "We don't throw labels out entirely because some are useful. But

we want parents to understand that just getting a diagnosis or a label is not the end of the story."

The book includes chapters on visual, auditory and language problems, memory strengths and weaknesses, and issues that affect a child's ability to do math or produce clear and accurate handwriting.

Neither do the Eides overlook issues faced by gifted children.

They offer information on evaluation – where to go, what kind of professional to seek out – and strategies that can be applied at home, in the school setting or within specific therapy.

The chief message the Eides hope to get across is that there are many different ways that children learn. The brain, they say, is remarkably capable of developing skills to get around a problem.

Even when faced with difficulties, children possess the resources for learning. But they likely won't stumble upon those resources on their own.

"They have to be led to them," Brock Eide says.

Often, behavioral issues that can result from learning difficulties can overshadow the underlying cause. The Eides encourage intervention.

They recognize that the push toward standardization and teaching to the test doesn't seem to leave much room for individual differences. Yet they believe that in most cases schools that are presented with good information based on sound science are willing to make accommodations.

"We see too many parents who think, if I make waves, they're going to make it hard on my kids," Brock Eide says.

Parents need to at least try, he adds.

"Our big message is really just one of hope. When kids are understood, when their challenges are appreciated and when they are given a structured educational environment that recognizes those challenges and respects their way of learning, things really do turn out well."

The Eides have established an online forum for parents to discuss learning issues and share resources at www.mislabeledchild.com.

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