



# Meet. Share. Spark Innovation.

*Dear Colleagues,*

*Let your faculty meetings be a time when information and conversation spark innovation.*

The *ISACS Spark* is an initiative to provide our member schools with quick and engaging professional development opportunities to spark conversations in 15 minutes or less. These “sparks” can be used as food for thought or as opportunities to engage in larger conversations among peers. ISACS will be sending Sparks throughout the school year and we hope you will find them helpful in stimulating conversations around exciting research related to teaching and learning.

### **April’s Topic: The Gift of Failure**

The Bloomberg columnist, Megan McArdle, believes that schools should teach failure as failure is the key to success. Students, educators, and parents need to recognize that failure is ok. “Failure should not be an “if” proposition but a “when”, according to Jessica Lahey. Are we sheltering students too much away from failure and creating a “failure deprived” nation?”

### **Videos:**

- **Clip #1: [Jessica Lahey: Grades VS Goals – Make Your Home a Grade Free Zone!](#)** - Jessica Lahey offers tips on how to make your home a grade free zone and focusing more on goals and less on results. (1:30 minutes)
- **Clip #2: [Success, Failure and the Drive to Keep Creating](#)** - Elizabeth Gilbert was once an "unpublished diner waitress," devastated by rejection letters. And yet, in the wake of the success of 'Eat, Pray, Love,' she found herself identifying strongly with her former self. With beautiful insight, Gilbert reflects on why success can be as disorienting as failure and offers a simple – though hard – way to carry on, regardless of outcomes. (7:14 minutes)

## Additional Videos and Resources:

- **Clip #3: [Celebrities offering advice on failure](#)** - Prominent figures give advice on failure to graduating students. (2:50 minutes)
- **Clip #4: [Embracing Failure: Building a growth mindset through the arts](#)** - Teach your students the recipe for success: taking risks, making mistakes, and integrating critical feedback. (5:25 minutes)
- **[How Allowing Children to Fail Helps them Succeed](#)** - Jessica Lahey discusses 7 secrets to children's success
- **[Want to Get into College? Learn How to Fail](#)**
- **[College Admissions Shocker](#)**

(Length of time for 2 clips: approximately 9 minutes, Length of time for 2 additional resources clips: approximately 8 minutes)

We hope these ideas ignite thinking and conversations in your school.

Regards,

The ISACS Professional Services Committee & the ISACS Professional Development Team

**The ISACS Spark has been developed by the Professional Services Committee (PSC). The PSC is comprised of teacher leaders from around the region who are passionate about professional development. All sites and clips have been reviewed and deemed appropriate for sharing.**

## ***PAST SPARKS***

Please visit [www.isacs.org/ISACSSpark](http://www.isacs.org/ISACSSpark) to view all previous ISACS Sparks.

### **March 2017 ISACS Spark**

#### **March's Topic: Exceptional Learning Through Play**

The 2016 Annual Conference, *Doing, Designing, Connecting & Thinking 2*, hosted many outstanding speakers who presented on pertinent topics in education today. Whether you are looking for innovative ways to reach the students in your elementary classroom, or you are a teacher of adolescent girls navigating the teenage years, you'll find powerful messages from conference presenters, Dan St. Romain and Dr. Lisa Damour.

#### **Videos:**

- **Clip #1: [Dan St. Romain on Behavior & Discipline](#)** - Dan St. Romain shares his perspective on why teachers need to change the way they approach behavior problems and discipline in the classroom in order to reach today's students... it's no longer about punishment but rather about building relationships. (3:54 minutes)
- **Clip #2: [Dr. Lisa Damour on "Joining a New Tribe"](#)** - Dr. Lisa Damour, author of *Untangled: Guiding Teenage Girls Through the Seven Transitions Into Adulthood*, discusses teenage girls and friendships. (1:39 minutes)

#### **Article of Interest:**

- **[Positive Behavior Principles](#)** - Dan St. Romain, [www.danstromain.com](http://www.danstromain.com)

*(Length of time for 2 clips: approximately 6 minutes)*

## **February 2017 ISACS Spark**

### **February's Topic: Exceptional Learning Through Play**

Due to the compelling nature of the topic of play, we have included more links and resources than usual and you may find it is easier to watch the videos over several days. Each video brings a slightly different but equally important lens to the topic of play! Enjoy!

#### **Videos:**

- **Clip #1: [The decline of play | Peter Gray | TEDxNavesink](#)** - In his TEDx lecture, Peter Gray clearly argues the case that today's kids do not grow up playing and this has negatively impacted them in many ways. It's time we return the gift of play to this generation. To hear Peter Gray and to learn about this year's Global School Playday, visit <http://www.globalschoolplayday.com/>. (1:25 minutes)
- **Clip #2: Caine's Arcade:** A young boy who built his own arcade out of cardboard inspired a few adults and started a global movement. No screens. Simple supplies. All imagination. How can you inspire creativity and play in the lives of children around you?
  - **Clip #2A: [Caine's Arcade 2](#)** (8:22 minutes)
  - **Clip #2B: [Follow up video to the original Caine's Arcade viral hit](#)** (10:58 minutes)
  - **Clip #2C: [Outside the Box: Caine Monroy at TEDxTeen](#)** (3:49 minutes)
- **Clip #3: [The Best Kindergarten You Have Ever Seen](#)** - Visit a kindergarten in Tokyo that was built from the start with young children truly in mind. How can space be used to help our students, young and old, learn best. (9:47 minutes)
- **Clip #4: [Turning Trash into Toys for Learning](#)** - Arvind Gupta shares simple yet stunning plans for turning trash into seriously entertaining, well-designed toys that kids can build themselves — while learning basic principles of science, math and design.” Limited resources are not a limit to play, engineering, or creativity. (15:30 minutes)
- **Clip #5: [The Importance of Play \(even for adults!\)](#)** - Be bold! Life has a way of helping adults forgot how to play and being creative. The best way to avoid “work” being “work” is to find a way to bring a play mindset back into your life. Studies have shown that playfulness is not just about enjoying your work, you are even more creative and productive. How can you bring play into your adult world of work? Hear about play and creativity from John Cohn. (18:28 minutes)
- **Clip #6: [When Educators Make Space For Play and Passion, Students Develop Purpose, Tony Wagner](#)** - Article and link to Tony Wagner's work on how content should no longer rule what happens in school. He contends that there are seven essential skills that students need, and none of them are unique to any content area. He has found that teachers who allow for playful exploration often have the best results. (14:49 minutes with the video embedded in the article)

*(Length of time for all 8 clips: approximately 74 minutes)*

## **January 2017 ISACS Spark**

### **January's Topic – Making a Better World**

#### **Videos:**

- **Clip #1: [A Peace of My Mind, John Noltner](#)** - A Peace of My Mind is a documentary project by John Noltner, a freelance photographer based in Minneapolis. Since early 2009 he has been interviewing people from a wide range of backgrounds about what peace means to them. Many of us were fortunate enough to get to view this exhibit at the 2015 ISACS Annual Conference in St. Paul and again at the 2016 ISACS Annual Conference in Columbus. Additional information can also be found at the [A Peace of My Mind](#) website. (2:59

minutes)

- **Clip #2: [Claudia Horwitz interview](#)** - Claudia Horwitz was the founding director of Stone Circles at the Stone House, a 70-acre retreat center outside Mebane, North Carolina dedicated to the support of individuals and organizations working toward social change. Claudia's efforts grew out of an awareness that social justice work could exact a tremendous toll on individuals and her desire to make that work of building social movements more sustainable. (2:10 minutes)
- **Clip #3: [Donnie Phillips interview](#)** - Donnie Phillips lost his sight when he was 21 years old. He is a disability awareness trainer in Boston, Massachusetts, and also a poet who goes by the stage name of Uncle Third Eye. (1:49 minutes)
- **Clip #4: [John George interview](#)** - John George was living next to a crack house in Detroit. He and his wife were expecting a baby girl when he decided he better do something about it. Asked why he didn't just move away, John replied, "*We are out to change the world, and we're starting in Detroit.*" (2:10 minutes)

*(Length of time for the four clips: approximately 9 minutes)*

***This email has been sent to heads of school, division heads, assistant/associate heads, deans of faculty, deans of studies, directors of professional development and ISACS teacher representatives.***