



Children's Therapy Connection

Washington Health System Children's Therapy Center

Summer 2022 * Volume 26, Issue 3

The Power to Change Children's Lives

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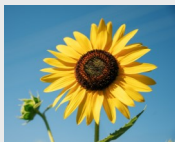
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<https://whs.org/care-treatment/childrens-care/childrens-therapy-center/>

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Planning for Fall!

With the return of school quickly approaching. It is important to complete a schedule change request form if your child's current schedule will conflict with their upcoming school and bus schedule.

- Schedule change request forms are available at the front office.
- This will help ensure continuous therapy services for your child during the transition back to school.

Please be aware that we have many schedule change requests that are submitted around this time of year. Due to the high volume, requests are honored on a first come first serve basis. Lack of available requested day/time will result in your child going on our waiting list for your desired day/time. The call in program is always available in the interim-availability is based upon cancellations we receive throughout the day/week.



CTC Superstars!

★ Physical Therapy Kyree Wells

Kyree is working on balance, and using his right leg more. Kyree can now step up and down on benches without help. Kyree has worked so hard to relearn things like walking, going up and down the stairs and using his right side of his body more. Kyree has a great sense of humor, loves riding bikes and swimming. Aquatic sessions are Kyree's favorite! Miss Jenn is so proud of you! Congratulations!!



Miss Karen's OT Activity Corner

Summer lends itself to so many different activities and lots of fun. Here are a few ideas, made w/ materials found around the house, to add to your family's summertime repertoire.

Activity 1:

Materials: sidewalk chalk, painter's tape or masking tape.



It's fun to take sidewalk chalk drawings to the next level by creating geometric patterns for a stained glass effect. Lay out a design on a sidewalk or patio with painter's tape, then color in between the tape pieces with chalk. Put those fine motor skills to use by peeling back the tape to reveal a wonderful piece of art! To vary the task, try applying the tape to a vertical surface - fence, etc. to increase wrist extension and for strengthening while coloring. Once you're ready to create a new design, take out the squirt guns and spray bottles to clean the surface and voilà - the blank canvas is ready!



Activity 2:

Materials: Lego pieces, Lego baseplate, and a marble.



For a rainy day activity, build a maze with Lego bricks, the more intricate the better! When complete, tilt the maze with both hands to advance the marble around the design.

This project incorporates fine motor skills when placing the pieces, as well as, visual motor skills to work the marble around the board.

Activity 3

Materials: Pool noodles & a ball.

Pool noodles are very versatile in or out of the pool. Grab a family member or a friend and 2 pool noodles. Each person holds a pool noodle end. Balance the ball between the pool noodles and try to roll the ball back and forth. Try "jumping" the ball and catching it with the pool noodles for an added challenge. This activity is a great way to work on bimanual coordination!



You can also play a game of Tic-Tac-Toe by slicing the pool noodles into circles to create game pieces. Align the remaining noodles in a grid then game on!!



We hope you enjoy these activities. Stay tuned for more seasonal activity ideas in future newsletters!!

Miss Karen

CTC Superstars!

Speech Therapy Wyatt Welling



Congratulations to Wyatt for being this newsletter's CTC speech star! Wyatt is a 5 years old boy who has been attending speech therapy for over 2 years at the CTC. He initially attended 3 times a week and now is attending 2 times a week due to his significant progress! Wyatt has improved his productions of the sounds -k, g, f, sh, ch, and th- at the conversational level!!!! Everyone understands him so much better now. He has consistently attended therapy and is always a hard worker. GREAT JOB WYATT!!! We are all so proud of you!!

Ms. Jodi

Occupational Therapy Georgia Poach



Georgia is such a Peach!!

Georgia started OT services in October 2021 with Miss Melissa at the age of 13 years. She has made significant progress in her feeding therapy. Currently she is being seen for monthly check ups to ensure that she is using the tools that she gained during therapy sessions. Georgia will be looking for discharge in one more month.

Georgia's father has been very involved in the entire process, as he attends all sessions and provides excellent carry over at home. Georgia has overcome her fear of trying new foods especially proteins such as meat. She recently went on a family vacation aboard a cruise ship and took snap shots of all of the foods that she is now able to eat.

To name a few new foods That Georgia tried include sushi, calamari, shrimp and lobster! But her favorites are now eating out for a good burger, fried chicken, Chinese, and always needs a sweet reward!

Miss Melissa is very proud of you Georgia!!

Physical Therapy

Foot and Ankle Orthotics

Submitted by: Elena Copenheaver SPT

What are orthotics?

Orthotics are external devices used to promote good biomechanical function and assist with better walking form and alignment.

What type of conditions can orthotics assist with?

- Low muscle tone (loose and floppy)
- High muscle tone (rigid and harder to move)
- Ankle Instability
- Toe walking
- Flat feet

What types of orthotics are there?

Shoe Inserts

Shoe inserts can be beneficial for kids with flat feet. These can also help kids who are sensory seeking as it can apply sensory input to their feet.



SMO's (Supra-Malleolar Orthotic)

These are braces that go over the ankles.

They can assist with a variety of conditions including mild toe-walking, flat feet, loose or floppy feet, developmental delays, and ankle instability in standing.



Toe-Walking SMO's

These braces are higher up in the back to help prevent toe walking. These are good for toe walkers who walk on their toes a majority of the time. These braces are also good for those with low tone and flat feet who may need more support than just a shoe insert.



AFO's (Ankle-Foot Orthotics)

These braces are larger and come up higher on children's legs. They can be indicated in children with low or high tone. They also provide a high level of ankle stability and can be used for children with very flat feet. These can assist children to have a more normal walking pattern and help with proper development of gross motor skills.



If you have any questions regarding orthotics please reach out to a physical therapist or orthotist! Information from Surestep.com and anduofm.health.org

Speech Therapy

Time to Fly

Submitted by: Kara Landay, MA, CCC/SLP

You arrive at a place you have never been before. All of your clothes, your Spiderman pajamas and your Chase Paw Patrol stuffed animal are thrown onto a conveyor belt never to be seen again. You stand for hours in a long line of people. Waiting and waiting. You want a snack and you want to sit down. Then people who look like policemen quickly tell you to walk through this machine. Ah! There is beeping and they took away your water and your shoes! Next, you get on a fast moving bus. Now, more waiting. There are people everywhere and they are so loud. It's time to get on the airplane. You don't know these people and you don't know this place. You don't know these rules. Mom and dad say you are going up in the sky. You are scared and you are stuck here for a long time.

Flying can be stressful enough as an adult - from packing, to security, to delayed flights and missing luggage. For a child, especially one with Autism and/or sensory needs, flying is quite a challenge. The Pittsburgh International Airport recently created a sensory friendly space called Presley's Place. Within Presley's Place there are individual rooms with soft furniture that serve as a calming, sound proof space. The sensory-friendly restroom has an adult changing station and adjustable sink. There is a realistic replica of a jet way and the interior of an airplane. This is a great way for a child to practice and become comfortable with being inside an airplane before getting on the actual flight. The replica can also be accessed through a separate door so that the airport can use the space to hold classes and provide experiences in advance.

For more information on how to access Presley's Place email: info@flypittsburgh.com.

Another proactive way to reduce travel stress is to utilize a social story. A social story is a very simple story, often with pictures, that explains step by step what will occur during an event. Feelings are also discussed. Included in this newsletter is a social story for traveling by airplane. More social stories about other topics in the format of a PowerPoint that can be downloaded and customized, can be found on the Autism Speaks website: <https://www.autismspeaks.org/templates-personalized-teaching-stories>.



Photographs provided by the Pittsburgh International Airport

Speech Therapy Social Story

Flying on an Airplane



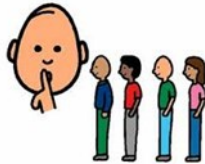
My family will help me put my clothes, toothbrush and some toys in a big bag called a suitcase.



We will drive to the airport.



When we get inside, we will give my suitcase to someone who will put it on the airplane. They will give me my clothes, toothbrush and toys back when we get to _____.



Next, we will wait in a line. When we get to the front, we will take off our shoes and let the people look at our bags. The people will look like policemen and are really nice. We will walk through a big machine, and it might be loud. I might be a little scared but it's ok. The people will give us back our shoes and our bags.



Then we will wait for the airplane. We can have snacks, go shopping, go to the bathroom and play with our toys. When it is time to get on the airplane, we will walk down a long hallway. We will find our seat and put on our seat belt just like in the car. We need to be quiet on the airplane because there are so many people. Some people are sleeping and reading. I can have snacks on the airplane. I might hear some beeping noises and the airplane might be a little bumpy. I can wear my headphones and close my eyes.

When we land back on the ground, we can take off our seatbelt and stand up. But we must wait for all the people in front of us to get their bags and leave the airplane first. We will get off the airplane and get our bags. We might have to wait again for our bags to come. Waiting is hard. Now it is time for vacation!



Insurance Updates

PA Department of Human Services (DHS) is ending its contracts with Aetna Better Health and United Healthcare Community for the Southwest Region of PA effective August 31, 2022.

The nearly 7500 individuals who are enrolled in either of these two plans locally will be required to select coverage with one of the approved MCOs (please see below list) or be auto-assigned to a health plan so that their coverage will continue for September. DHS is coordinating this process directly with the member.

Note: Aetna Better Health will continue as a CHIP product going forward.

MCO choices to replace Aetna Better Health and United Healthcare Community Medicaid plans:

- AmeriHealth Caritas
- Geisinger Health Plan
- Health Partners Plan
- Highmark Wholecare (formerly known as Gateway Health Plan)
- UPMC for You

Please note: WHS/CTC (we) only accept the following of those choices:

- AmeriHealth Caritas
- Highmark Wholecare (formerly known as Gateway Health Plan)
- UPMC for You

WHS is proud to partner with
Washington United Way



We only learn of your child's insurance changes by you informing us.



Please inform the front office of any changes ASAP to avoid financial issues.

Freedom Transit

Families of CTC may be eligible for reimbursement of travel to the Children's Therapy Center. If your child receives Medical Assistance call 1-800-331-5058 to inquire whether you qualify for this service.

To view the reimbursement form:
https://www.freedom-transit.org/forms/MATP-Reimbursement-Form-5_26_16.pdf



Social Media

Follow Washington Health System
on Facebook!



Welcome to CTC!

Ann Therese Lambo Speech/Language Pathologist

Hello! My name is Ann Therese Lambo, and I am one of the new part-time speech therapists here at the Children's Therapy Center! If I haven't had the opportunity to meet you already, I'm really looking forward to getting to know you and your children and helping them to communicate!



I have been a full-time speech-language pathologist for almost four years, graduating from Duquesne University with my master's degree in August 2019. Prior to earning my degree in 2019, I was a graduate student clinician here at the center for the summer and had the pleasure of getting to know some of you. It's been great to see you again and how you've grown!

I also work full-time at the Western Pennsylvania School for Blind Children as a speech therapist. I am a passionate advocate in the field of special education and rehabilitation, and I specialize in Alternative & Augmentative (AAC) communication systems, feeding disorders, behavior management, and pre-literacy and literacy instruction. I love to learn about all things communication and I'm grateful for all that you teach me!

In my spare time, I enjoy working out at the gym, cheering for the Pittsburgh Penguins, painting and crafting, and catching up on all my favorite TV shows! I love to celebrate all holidays, and my favorite is Halloween! I'm excited to be back at the center and to meet you!

Jessica Bonfli Occupational Therapist



Jessica Bonfli is a board-certified occupational therapist who acquired her doctorate degree from Slippery Rock University, as well as her Bachelor of Science degree in Public Health. Jessica is working as a per diem OT and is so excited to work with the children and families of the Children's Therapy Center! Jessica also works as a school-based OT in Beaver County. In her spare time, she enjoys reading, watching movies, spending time with family, friends, and her dog Coco too!

Staff Milestones!

The following CTC staff have reached a milestone in their years of service with the Washington Health System!

20 years

**Joy Williamson, MS, CCC/SLP
Speech Department**



Touch-A-Truck

Sensory Friendly Event



No lights, sirens, or moving parts on these vehicles! Small crowds will allow all of the children to enjoy this special event!

Where:

WHS Children's Therapy Center

1000 Waterdam Plaza Dr. McMurray, PA 15317

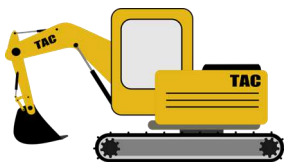
When:

Saturday September 17th

10 am-1:00 pm

Please call or sign up in the front office to reserve your time before
September 15th

724-942-6100



WASHINGTON HEALTH SYSTEM