



# Children's Therapy Connection

Washington Health System Children's Therapy Center

Fall 2023 \* Volume 27 Issue 4

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

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Ms. Cathy

## Portal Access to Therapy Notes

Effective 10/6/2023, the online patient portal of our therapy electronic medical record through Raintree (our documentation system) was turned on to increase access to your child's therapy notes.

This means that individuals will have access to their child's portal (age 0-12 all the time, 13-18 ONLY if the adolescent consents to give you access –required in the state of PA by law) and can read about the therapy received by the child.

Viewable in the child's portal will be the following:

- Initial evaluation
- Daily notes
- Progress notes
- Re-evaluations
- Discharges

In the past, we were postal mailing a copy of each child's initial evaluation along with any progress notes, re-evaluations, or discharge summaries. Effective 12/1/23, the front office will no longer mail out copies of these documents. They will instead be available in the child's portal. PCPs/Pediatricians will continue to receive these documents via a fax from our office.

Parent/guardian will have access to their child's portal if the child is age 0-12. In the state of Pennsylvania, by law, anyone age 13+ can give consent to allow someone other than themselves to access the online portal containing their medical information. We have instituted a consent process for all children aged 13-18 that receive therapy services at CTC.

We hope that the convenience of having access to this information through the portal will further facilitate your ability to become an active participant in your child's therapy, enhance your understanding of your child's therapy and will foster further carryover of therapy strategies into your home.



Please stop by our front office for any questions related to portal access.

## Physical Therapy

### When Should My Child Start Jumping?

Submitted by: Carley DPT

Jumping is an important gross motor skill that works on strength, balance, coordination and motor planning. Jumping starts earlier than some parents may think and progresses as your child grows. Below shows what jumping skill is appropriate at each age.

**18 months:** Vertical jump clearing the floor

**2 years old:** Jump forwards and down from a 7" small bench

**3 years old:** Jump over a small hurdle and jump forwards at least two feet

**4 years old:** Hop on one foot 5 times

### My child isn't able to jump?

There are lots of reasons jumping may be difficult for you child so it's important to talk to a physical therapist to find the underlying reason. In the mean time here are some different things you can try at home to encourage jumping.



- Stand in front of your child holding both of their hands and say "bend your knees and jump." Practice on a pillow, couch cushion or other soft surface before progressing to the floor. Demonstrate by bending your knees to jump with your child.
- Practice heel raises to strengthen your child's ankles and work on balance. This can be done by holding a motivating toy over your child's head so have to go up on their tip toes to reach it.
- Use visual markers on the floor to make jumping fun and to encourage jumping forwards, over a small obstacle or down from a step.



## New CTC Staff

### Physical Therapy Nathanael "Nate" DPT

Nate is a licensed physical therapist who received his doctorate degree from Slippery Rock University. He also earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Exercise Science at Grove City College while playing on the men's lacrosse team. Nate is working as a full-time PT and is excited to work with the children and families of the Children's Therapy Center! In his spare time, Nate enjoys exercising, reading, playing video games, checking the stock market, and spending time with friends and family. Nate and his wife Priya are proud parents of their two cats, Leo and Remi. Please join us in welcoming Nate to our CTC team!

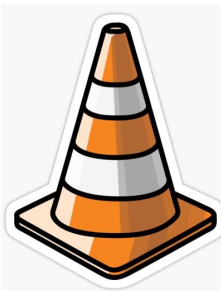




## Touch A Truck Event

Thank you to all the families and  
CTC staff that participated at our  
annual CTC Touch a Truck!

Fun was had by all!



# CTC Superstars!

## Physical Therapy Zoe Bratek



Zoe is our PT star! Zoe has been working so hard in PT and we are so proud of her! She is now jumping and running with better form, walking up and down the stairs on her own, and getting stronger in her right leg. Zoe enjoys working on the vibration plate, riding a tricycle, and listening to music while she gets her work done. Great job Zoe!

## Occupational Therapy Audrey Smith



Audrey Smith is an OT Star! She has been working hard in feeding therapy learning about and trying new foods. She has added several new foods to her diet including a variety of dried fruits. Crunchy foods are her favorite. Audrey is a hard worker and very creative. She enjoys trying new foods in therapy and at home. Audrey loves to play with squiz at the end of her session as a reward.

Miss Ellen is so proud of you!

## Speech Therapy Cassie Kelley

Cassie has made tremendous progress! She has worked on feeding and communication skills with Ms. Lisa C! She is developing in all areas to keep up with her brother and sister! She loves to socialize with staff and other patients at our Washington location. We are all so proud of you, Cassie girl!





## New CTC Staff

### Occupational Therapy Meghan OTR/L



Meghan Replogle is a board-certified Occupational therapist who acquired her master's degree from Saint Francis University. She is from Pennsylvania; however, just recently moved back to PA from Virginia Beach, where she was also working in pediatrics. She looks forward to working closely with the children and their families at CTC! In her spare time, she enjoys running, biking, painting, and spending time with her friends, family, and her two cats, Sheldon and Stella.

### Occupational Therapy Kelsey OTD/L



Kelsey is a licensed occupational therapist who received her doctorate degree from Gannon University in Tampa, FL . She also earned her Bachelor's of Science in Therapeutic Recreation with a Minor in Psychology at Slippery Rock University. She recently moved back to the Pittsburgh area and is excited to work with the children and families of the Children's Therapy Center. She will be working as a full-time OT here at the clinic. In her spare time, Kelsey enjoys being with her family and friends, exercising, concerts, restaurant exploring, and reading. Please join us in welcoming Kelsey to our CTC team!

Caroline Moore is a West Virginia native and graduate from WVU, go Mountaineers! She completed her undergraduate studies at Indiana Wesleyan University where she majored in Exercise Science. Caroline completed her Doctorate of Physical Therapy at WVU and has been a pediatric physical therapist for over 2 years working in the Pittsburgh area and became a Board-Certified Pediatric Clinical Specialist in June 2023. Her favorite thing about being a pediatric physical therapist is seeing the look of joy and pride on a child's face when they do something new, they never thought they could! In her free time, she enjoys hiking, biking, reading, playing board games, and traveling especially to the beach. She loves spending time with her family and is a new Aunt to the sweetest gal pal who she is so in love with! Welcome Caroline!

### Physical Therapy Caroline DPT



## Miss Sara's OT Activity Corner

### Fall season fun

Fall is a wonderful time of year. Cooler weather, changing leaves and the anticipation of holidays to come! Here are a few activities you can do with your kids to celebrate Fall but also promote their OT skills!

#### Activity 1: Leaf Cutting Bin

Gather up some leaves from the yard, put them in a bin and give your child a pair of safe scissors and let the cutting begin. This activity works mainly on scissor skills but you can also turn it into a color recognition activity or scavenger hunt for different colors or types of leaves.



#### Activity 2: Pumpkin Painting

This activity promotes proper grip on a writing tool, messy play for sensory input, creativity, and you can even work on color recognition.



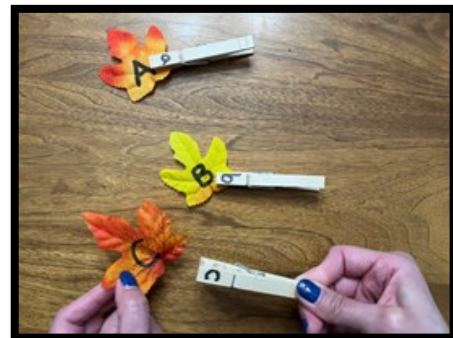
#### Activity 3: Fall Sensory "Soup"

This activity is super fun for kids with little prep or tools needed. This activity incorporates sensory input, scooping with a spoon and pouring with cups! Gather up fall leaves, pinecones, moss, and bark/sticks, put it in a large bin with soapy water and let the fun begin!



#### Activity 4: Fall Alphabet Match

For this activity, you will need leaves (real or fake), clothes pins, and markers. Gather up the leaves (real or fake) and write one letter from the uppercase alphabet on each leaf. Next, write the lowercase alphabet on wooden clothes pins. Now mix up the leaves and clothes pins and start your letter matching! This activity is great and works on letter identification, bimanual manipulation, finger strength and pincer grasp.



**Children should be supervised when completing these activities for safety purposes.**

# Occupational Therapy

## Visual Scanning

Submitted by: Maura OTS

### What is visual scanning?

Visual scanning is a person's ability to use both of their eyes together to search in an organized manner from top to bottom and left to right. These skills can be used to scan your environment such as observing obstacles in your path and environmental safety awareness. Visual scanning is important for school based activities which include reading, writing, spelling and math. These skills are also essential to complete daily activities such as getting clothes out of a dresser/closet to get dressed, playing with toys, leisure activities, etc.



### Children with poor visual scanning skills may appear to:

1. Move their entire head while reading rather than just their eyes.
2. Skip words or lines of text while reading or writing.
3. Have difficulty completing math presented vertically or horizontally.
4. Collide with obstacles in their environment rather than avoid them.

### Some activities that can be implemented at home include:

- I spy
- Word searches
- Spot the difference in 2 pictures
- Use guided reading techniques such as:
  - Highlighting sentence
  - Guided reading strips
  - Use a finger to guide eyes while reading
  - Use of a straightedge when reading multiple sentences to remove distractions
- Scavenger hunt for words or pictures on a page or within your environment.

### Resources for even more visual scanning activity ideas to do at home!

[www.theottoolbox.com/visual-scanning-activities/](http://www.theottoolbox.com/visual-scanning-activities/)  
<https://medium.com/intensive-therapy-for-kids/5-activities-to-improve-visual-scanning-d45fa19b6453>  
<https://www.yourtherapysource.com/blog/2019/05/07/visual-scanning-activities/>

If you have concerns that your child may be experiencing difficulty with visual scanning tasks, do not hesitate to discuss with your therapist! Occupational therapists can support functional participation within a child's daily life by addressing visual scanning through therapeutic activities, as well as provide parents with appropriate referrals as needed.

## New CTC Staff

Bre is a licensed Occupational Therapist who received her master's degree from West Virginia University. Prior to WVU, Bre attended Indiana University of Pennsylvania and majored in Exercise Science but ultimately transferred to WVU for their OT program. Bre is working as a full-time OT and is so excited to start working with children and their families! Bre has always wanted to work in pediatrics, so she is so excited for this opportunity. In Bre's spare time, she enjoys playing with her dog Tilly, traveling with her husband, spending time with friends, and going to sporting events especially for Pittsburgh teams (which are her favorite). Please join us in welcoming Bre to our CTC team!!

### Occupational Therapy Breanna "Bre" OTR





# Speech Therapy

## Let's Get Reading! Tips and Tricks to Incorporate Read Aloud in to Your Routine

Submitted by: Kristi M.A. CCC-SLP

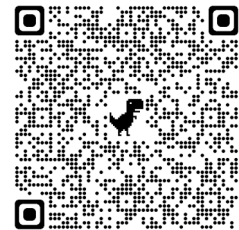
You won't have to look far to find an article stressing the importance of reading aloud to children. The benefits are life-long and go far beyond learning to read! Below are some tips and tricks to increase engagement and incorporate reading in to your already busy routine.

- Be predictable. Incorporate reading in to an already established routine. Nap or bed time are common choices, but meal or bath time can work well too!
- Choose the right book! Include your child in choosing the books that are most interesting to them. (Don't worry if it is the same book over and over, repetition is key to learning!)
- Start small and gradually increase the number of pages over time. Read for as long as your child can pay attention. Don't worry if you don't get through a whole book and, remember, it is ok to skip words (and even pages) as long as the story still makes sense!
- Take your time and "read" the pictures. Talk about the pictures and help your child make connections between what you're reading and the world around them.
- Engage the senses! Try choosing interactive books or offering a fidget if your child is having a hard time sitting still!
- Busy night? Ask an older sibling or babysitter to read to a younger one.
- Continue reading to older children, even after they are able to read to themselves. Choose books that you both will enjoy!

Another great way to enhance the parent/child bond while promoting language and literacy is to attend story time with your child. Story time is a great way to promote reading and foster a love for reading! Story time is also a great opportunity for peer interaction (this is especially important for younger children and those who are not already in a daycare/ preschool settings!) Use the QR codes below to see story times and programs available at a library near you!

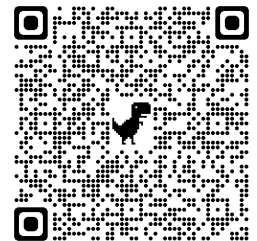
### Citizens Library

Washington, PA



### Chartiers Houston Community Library

Houston, PA



### Frank Sarris Public Library

Canonsburg, PA



### Peters Township Public Library

McMurray, PA





## CTC Information

### Social Media

Follow Washington Health System  
on Facebook!



### 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](https://www.freedom-transit.org/forms/MATP-Reimbursement-Form-5_26_16.pdf)



### Health Insurance

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.

**WHS is proud to partner with  
Washington United Way**



## Free Diapers, Pull-Ups & Wipes!



**Where:** The Diaper Pantry  
Peters Creek Baptist Church  
6300 Library Rd  
South Park, PA 15129

**When:** Every 3rd Saturday of the month  
**Time:** 9:00 AM– 12:00 PM

#### Other Donations Provided:

New and gently used baby/children's clothing, baby equipment, toys, etc.

#### Contact Information:

[DIAPERPANTRY@PCBC.CHURCH](mailto:DIAPERPANTRY@PCBC.CHURCH) and found  
on Facebook.