



What's New???

Volume 3, Issue 1

April 2011

April Is Autism Awareness Month!!!



Special Points

of Interest:

- Autism Awareness
- Community News
- Message from the Owners
- AFK Buzz
- Healthy Kid Friendly Recipe
- Wish List
- Therapeutic Listening Changes
- The Therapy Puzzle
- Autism Trivia Scavenger Hunt

“When Autism Comes To Live At Your House” -By Peg Walsh Bernert

You spend your new life on your knees in prayer and despair. Your family becomes sad. Your kids are given daily lessons in tolerance and coping and you cry. You wonder how your heart and soul can afford this. You are weary and so alone. You realize it is forever and you change as a person. You meet strong, kind people. You meet people who have a rockier road and they seem to be okay. You realize that your child is a precious gem. You get off your knees, apologize to God for hating Him for this, and you too become okay.

And then you become better than okay. You learn that you are stronger, kinder, and smarter. You earn every bit of that, but there are angels helping you every step of the way. The angels are those who have walked this path before you, or they have devoted their life's work to helping children like yours, or they just love you. You learn a gratitude that you never would have known. These angels rejoice with you at every little tiny bit of progress. They are your last bit of light when it seems so dark. Yes, to be in the presence of such grace makes you better than

okay.

Then one day you become one of those angels too. You help someone, you find a new career that helps someone, you thrive and pass on a grace that you never dreamed you could, before autism came to live at your house.





Jackie Brown, OTR/L
Supervisor of OT/PT Svcs.

Our Mission:
Dedicated to
providing
children, families
and physicians
with the highest
quality services
available.



The Therapy Puzzle by Jackie Brown, OTR/L

The symbol for autism is a puzzle piece, which I found to be an interesting and fitting choice but never really considered its history or meaning. The autism symbol was created by the National Autistic Society in 1963. The design of the jigsaw puzzles represents the complexity and the mystery of autism. I would like to offer a new thought for the puzzle of autism, as well as the puzzle of therapy. What if, rather than the child's diagnosis being the puzzle, the puzzle symbol represented finding the right pieces to help the child be a success?

I consider my role as an occupational therapist to be just one part of the puzzle for every child that crosses my path. I am one part of the team bringing my pieces of the puzzle to parents, caregivers, physicians, teachers, and the rest of the team. Sometimes I don't have any of the pieces for that child, but I refer families to other disciplines or providers. Sometimes I help families pull all of the pieces together and look at the puzzle in a new way. Sometimes I just validate the puzzle exists. Sometimes I have many pieces of the

puzzle (sensory processing, Therapeutic Listening™, CranioSacral therapy techniques, gross motor, fine motor, cognition, visual perception, visual motor, social skills, daily living skills, and more).

Children with special needs are puzzles. Children without special needs are puzzles. Children are puzzles. Let's ALL keep working to fit together as many pieces of the puzzle as we can. Start today by asking yourself and the rest of the team what puzzle pieces each person holds.

Banana Breakfast Dog

Great for those picky eaters who want something fun!

Ingredients

Whole Grain Hot Dog Bun
Peanut Butter
1 Medium Banana
Your favorite Jelly or Jam
Sunflower seeds
3 Raisins

Directions

1. Spread peanut butter on one side of the bun and jelly on the other side.
2. Sprinkle sunflower seeds onto peanut butter if desired.
3. Place peeled banana in the bun and add raisins for eyes and mouth.

Another variation on the recipe is to use a tortilla shell for a banana breakfast burrito. Enjoy!

Community News

by Melody Martin, CCC-SLP & Adrianna Foster, CPC, CCT

- The 3rd Annual Alaska Walk for Autism is April 30th at Kincaid Park. There is an outdoor 5k walk or run or alternate route. For more information or to register, go to www.asagoldenheart.org.
- The 1st Alaska Art for Autism Exhibit is being held at the Anchorage Museum, Educational Exhibit Hallway, from April 1st-30th.
- Stone Soup Group will host their first parent and youth conference on April 26-28 at the Millennium Hotel in Anchorage. This conference will focus on the multiple challenges and transitions that children and families with special needs face. For more information or to register, go to www.ssgparentand youth.com or www.stonesoupgroup.org.
- UAA is offering an Alaska Autism Summer Institute, free of charge, from June 6th-10th. Two separate training tracks are being offered. For more information, go to www.alaskaarc.org and click on Regional Events and News.
- April is Occupational Awareness month! A special thanks to all those OT's making a difference!

Upcoming Changes to Therapeutic Listening

by Stacey Lord, OTR/L

Many of our clients currently participate in a therapeutic listening program monitored by their occupational therapist. We are excited to announce some upcoming changes to our service delivery for this program. The parent company, Vital Links, now offers music on "chips" that are played in portable music players, specifically the SansaDisk player. The benefits of these portable players are less bulkiness, as the player attaches directly to the headphones with a Velcro strap so

there is no worry about cord entanglement; the players come preset for therapeutic listening from Vital Links so there is no need to adjust volume or other settings; and the music is provided on a small chip that eliminates the possibility of scratches, etc. which cause CDs to skip.

We are in the process of switching our system over to the new method. We will continue to offer CD rental to current clients who are using CD players. However, we encour-

age anyone new to therapeutic listening to utilize the portable music players and music chips. If your child is currently participating in a listening program and you wish to switch, please notify your child's therapist. To find out whether your child would benefit from a therapeutic listening program, please contact your child's therapist and/or visit the Vital Links website at www.vitallinks.net.

"There are no seven wonders of the world in the eyes of a child. There are seven million!"

-Walt Streightiff

"Thank You"

- A message from the owners, Erin Cowell, OTR/L & Tracey Keaton, CCC-SLP

We just wanted to take some time to thank all of you, the families we are privileged to work with, for helping us make All For Kids Pediatric Therapy be all it can be. It is our mission to provide children with exceptional services which allow them to achieve their maximum potential; provide educational opportunities for family members and professionals who impact these children's lives; and contribute in meaningful ways to our community. One way we try to achieve this is through the emphasis we place on continuing education for all of our staff. Not only do we provide significant monies towards this, we also give extra time off and funds to attend local educa-

tion classes, and we enjoy bringing in quality professionals to teach our staff on-site. A second way we work towards our mission is wrapped up in our desire to treat families, not just children. We provide parent education classes to support parents in any way possible as you, the parents work towards the best life for your child and your family. We are excited to participate in community activities such as Anchorage Kids Day (April 16th at the Dena'ina Center) and the Alaska Walk for Autism Awareness (April 30th at Kincaid Park). However, one of the most important ways we can achieve our mission is through communication. We love to hear from you. We

have no way of knowing what we are doing well and what areas we can work on without your input. As you know, we send out bi-annual questionnaires hoping to get your input. These will go out again in June. In our desire to make it as easy for you as possible to give us your thoughts, ideas, and concerns, we are putting a comment box in the waiting room. We believe that you have so much to contribute to All For Kids, and we look forward to hearing from you in the near future, either via the questionnaires or our comment box. You and your children are the greatest asset we have, and we hope you feel as valuable as you are! Happy Spring!

Autism Trivia Scavenger Hunt

Be the first person to answer the following questions correctly, and win a \$25 Gift Card!!!

According to the CDC website on Autism :

1. What 3 challenges do children with Autism

1. Spectrum Disorders (ASD) usually struggle with?
2. Name the 3 types of ASD.
3. What ASD study is the CDC currently working on that is the largest US study to date?
4. 1 in ____ children in the

US have ASD.

5. Boys are ____ times more likely to be diagnosed with ASD.

Please email your answers to Adriannaf@allforkidsalaska.com no later than April 29th!



GOOD LUCK!



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Clinic Wish List:

Disposable bibs, Diaper Genie II refills, Bubbles, Finger Paints, Balloons, Child Friendly Magazines for Crafts, Books for ages 9-14, Big white paper, Any craft supplies, Zipper bags that linens come in (comforters, sheets, curtains), Honey Bear jars, empty clean Cetaphil jars.

The All For Kids BUZZ!

It's getting lighter and the snow is melting! That can only mean one thing...SPRING is here!!! Here is what keeps us BUZZING:

- Our Lending Library is finally complete! The Lending Library is a selection of therapy items and books that may be helpful to parents and their children, and this allows you to "try" them out and/or borrow them to see how they work. If you are interested in the Lending Library, there is an inventory binder in the waiting room for you to review and please speak with your child's therapist as well.
- Unfortunately, we have 2 speech therapists that will be leaving All For Kids. Peggy Joseph will leave us on April 30th and Chris Wilkerson will

leave us on May 6th. We wish them both the best of luck in their new adventures!

- On a brighter note, Brittany O'Saben, CFY-SLP has accepted a position with us and will start on April 11th. She is very excited to work with us and the wonderful families we've told her about. Welcome Brittany!
- Nichole LaChance, CCC-SLP, and Carrie Downs, OTR/L will



be here as well to help out for summer vacations and during our time of transition.

- If anyone has sewing skills and is interested, we have a few small projects that need attention. Please email Adriannaf@allforkidsalaska.com for more information.
- Melody and her husband Travis welcomed their new baby girl, Hope Alannah on February 9th. Hope weighed 6 lbs 11 oz and was 19" long. Congratulations on your new baby!
- Don't forget to check out our website for clinic closures.

That's all for now!