



What's New???

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Therapy: It's Not Just For Kids

By Krystal Vermeire, OTR/L

Special Points of Interest:

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- Word Scramble
- Come One, Come All!
- November Parent Education Class
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At All For Kids, family is an important cornerstone in our philosophy as a company. Each family is encouraged at All For Kids to be as active in the treatment process as possible. It is my hope today to influence you to be as active as a participant possible in your child's therapy, as you are in every other aspect of their life.

People become parents at different times in their lives and for different reasons, so they handle it in different ways. I became a parent earlier than expected and without planning but have embraced it fully to become a part of who I am. As a parent, I know what it is like to both love my children whole-heartedly and be frustrated by their actions or choices. Becoming a parent is a rite of passage that, whether chosen directly or not, most are often poorly prepared for. There is little direct, clear guidance on how to transition to your role as a parent and how to best raise your child. When you have a child with unique challenges and special needs, this transition becomes even more vague and elusive. This is due in part to the diverse nature of the people of the world, which makes it hard to generalize. It is also due to a traditional medical model that instills a stigma on parents who challenge authority. Traditionally, parents were not revered as experts on their

children, but rather that responsibility belonged solely to the medical professionals. It is our belief at All For Kids that parents should be a part of every aspect of their child's care and treatment. You are the ones who know your child the best, and you are the ones that spend the most time with them.

Over the past few years, I have learned to put an increased focus on the importance of parents and families in my understanding of the children with whom I work. No child lives alone, and therefore it is critical to consider the influences in his/her life, espe-



cially the immediate family. For me to treat a child effectively, I must consider his/her entire family. Each family system is unique and influential in its own way. When you are a parent, you are the leader or co-leader of a family and whether you like it or not, you are a role model for better or worse.

In my studies to complete my doctorate, I have learned a lot about how significantly parenting influences child develop-

ment. The time spent with our children while they are young has a significant impact on who they will become as adults and how their relationships with us, as well as others they encounter will turn out. Being an active team member in the therapy process will be beneficial for both your child and yourself and will impact the results greatly. When you are part of the therapy process, you can more effectively learn and carryover strategies from your child's therapist(s). Therapy can only be as effective as the people involved are committed to it being. When a therapist works with a child a few times a week, he/she can make gains and see results, but when that same therapist involves the parents, the results can be phenomenal. This is why, as a clinic, our goal for September and beyond is to increase parent involvement at All For Kids. Parents are important and we want to recognize you for this. We want to encourage you to be as active as you can be in your child's treatment session, ask us for clarification and direction, attend a Parent Education Night, and share your knowledge of your child with us.

We look forward to continuing our efforts to utilize your expertise as we work together.



Leah Maenius, CCC-SLP
Supervisor of SLP Services

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



Sign Language by Leah Maenius, CCC-SLP

As a speech therapist, I am often asked the same question: *What are your thoughts about using sign language?* Some family members express concern about the use of sign language, specifically that it will prevent the child's acquisition of spoken words. However, signs are often used by typically developing children to communicate when they have not yet acquired the motor control necessary for speech and this is found to increase language development

We often think of these more as "gestures," which is true. By using a visual system to express themselves, children have a way of en-

gaging with others and asserting some control over their environment. They can request by reaching toward something, protest by shaking their heads, etc. Signs differ from typical gestures because more symbolic value is placed on a specific sign. The sign for "more" does not necessarily look like a request for continuation. It is a gesture whose meaning must be taught.

more



As many parents have discovered, children love this sign once they learn the meaning behind it! Instead of crying and screaming, they can use the sign to request more food. The option to sign "more" and continue a fun activity empowers a child in interactions and allows them to say "Hey, I like that!" Combining words with signs also facilitates learning communication through both sight and sound. When a child plays an active role in an interaction, decreased frustration is often noted.

If you are interested in learning or using sign language with your child, just ask your therapist! We would love to help you!

Ghoulishly Goopy Bars by Andi Weigel

Ingredients

1/4 C Butter
2 Snickers (2 oz ea) cut into pieces
1 Bag Marshmallows
2 C Rice Chex
2 C Corn Chex
2 C Wheat Chex

Directions

1. Butter a 9" Square pan,
2. In a large pan, melt butter over low heat.
2. Stir in 1 Snickers and all the marshmallows. Stir until smooth.
3. Gradually add cereals until all pieces are coated. Add in the remaining Snickers.
4. Press mixture into the buttered pan and cool.
5. Once cooled cut into squares and serve.

***For a Gluten Free version, omit the Wheat Chex. For Dairy free use, Soy or Vegan butter.*

Community News by Leah Maenius, CCC-SLP

- **ATLA** (Assistive Technology of Alaska) has moved! If you need assistance with purchasing AAC devices or other related assistive technology, you may now find them at 3330 Arctic Boulevard, Suite 101.
- October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Show your support by wearing **pink!**
- Hope Community Resources will celebrate their 16th annual Hope Auction on Saturday, October 8. Please see <http://www.hopealaska.org/> for more information
- Hope Community Resources will also host the International Snow Ball on Friday, December 2nd. This event is open to all Hope support recipients, employees, friends and family. For more information, please visit www.hopealaska.org.
- The Rainbow Connection Therapeutic Horseback Riding Center will hold its annual fundraiser November 5, 2011 at 6:00 pm at the Anchorage Downtown Marriott. The theme of the 10th annual Black Tie Cowboy Ball is "Mustangs and Moonlight". It includes dinner, live & silent auctions, and dancing to the Ken Peltier Band. Go to: www.rainbowconnection.org, to reserve tickets/tables online, or call (907) 566-TROT.



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Reduce - Reuse - Recycle:

Before you throw it away...

Child Friendly Magazines for Crafts, Books for ages 9-14, Big white paper, Any craft supplies, Honey Bear jars, empty clean Cetaphil jars.

The All For Kids BUZZ!

The days are getting shorter and there's termination dust on the mountains! Here is what keeps us BUZZING:

- If anyone has sewing skills and is interested, we have a few small projects that need attention. Please email Adrianaf@allforkidsalaska.com for more information.
- Tracie Cline, PT and her husband Tim welcomed their new baby girl, Charity Elizabeth, on 8/10 @ 7:34 pm; 7 lbs 2 oz and 20.5" long. Congratulations to the new parents!
- We would like to welcome Alyson Aggers, OT; Jamie Sue Nance, SLP; and Amy Beane, SLP to our staff! They are all very excited to be joining All For Kids!

- We are sad to say that Megan Brown will be leaving the clinic 9/21/11, but we wish her the best of luck in her new endeavors!
- As some of you may or may not know, All For Kids has purchased Unit C in our building and we are currently in the process of planning and gathering information for a possible expansion. More to come as



information becomes available.

- All For Kids is the proud recipient of the 2011 RESPECT "Soupy" award presented by Stone Soup Group. Please see our website for more information.
- AFK will host our October Parent Education Group, "From Heart to Hands: Using Signs to Communicate," at the clinic on October 7th from 5:30 pm -7:30 pm. Please contact AFK for more details.
- AFK will host our November Parent Education Group, "Toys and Strategies for the Holiday Season," at the clinic on November 4th from 5:30 pm -7:30 pm. Please contact AFK for more details.