



Hear Here

BULLYING AND CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Parents worry that their children will become a target of bullies. Parents of children with disabilities face an even more significant challenge than the average family – not only are those children more likely to be the target of bullying, they may also not be aware of what is happening and unable to express it to adults. Various studies have found that children with disabilities are three times more likely to experience harassment, and that harassment is more likely to be chronic.

While at the end of April Gov. Rick Snyder urged the state legislature to pass anti-bullying legislation (currently Michigan is one of only four states that does not have such laws), there are things you can do now to prevent and cope with bullying.

Help your child learn what bullying is and what it looks like. The difference between teasing and bullying is subtle and hard for some children to understand. Here are some identifiers: 1) Bullying is intentionally cruel, repetitive behavior towards your child over time. 2) There is no balance in the relationship; the bully is always the one in control; your child feels he has no power. 3) The activity is having a negative effect on your child. He becomes upset, shows sign of physical illness (like stomach aches and headaches) and dreads going to

school. 4) The bully accepts no responsibility for his or her behavior; it is somehow your child's fault.

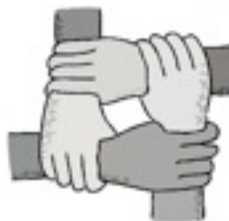
Help your child increase her ability to self-advocate. She needs to know that it is not only OK, but important, to tell other children mean words and behavior are not acceptable. She should learn how to say "stop that" or walk away.

Help your child practice social skills. Role play, sign him up for social groups, and set IEP goals around building social skills. This will help him not only identify and respond to abusive behavior, but also build friendships that can make a real difference.

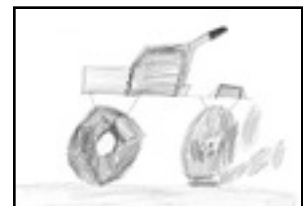
Help your child feel proud of who she is. Confidence is an important tool in your child's toolbox - it not only helps her better deal with bullying, it may also reduce her likelihood of being bullied in the first place.

Get together. Teachers, counselors, school administrators, and other parents should all be drafted into the effort to keep students safe.

Bullying can be serious, so if your child is experiencing it, don't hesitate - address the problem, and get help. Every child deserves to feel safe.



MY BIG BACKYARD



Winners from our 2011 Coloring Contest. More info on page 5.



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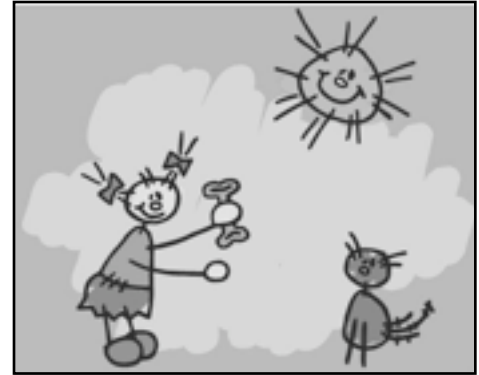
JOTTINGS FROM JEAN

Spring is always my favorite season. Not only is my greenhouse full, and my garden grows, but everyone around here is so busy.

While the school year is ending for some of our staff, we are gearing up for summer. This year we are partnering with Hope Network to have a second location for our older clients.

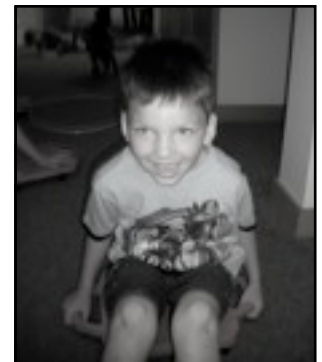
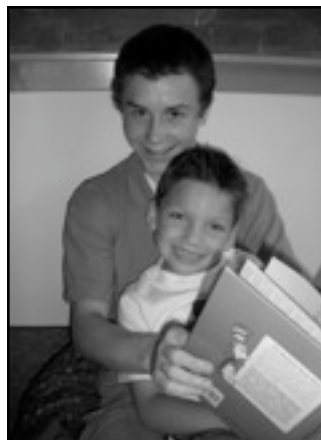
Coming soon to an e-mail near you will be information on who is joining the agency as staff and board members, exciting things that our volunteers do in the community. If we don't already have your e-mail, please log in to our website: <http://therapycenter.org>. On the right is a Subscribe area. Please join. I promise that you are not inundated with mail! Only occasional tidbits and suggestions.

I must say we have the best staff and Board of Directors anywhere! They are such an asset to our community. Please help me thank them for all they do.



Jean Silbar

MOMENTS FROM THERAPY & FUN



2010 COMMUNITY BENEFIT ANALYSIS

Comprehensive Therapy Center offers the West Michigan community speech-language, sensory and motor therapies along with academic tutoring and advisory programs to help people with special needs. Our programs help people with disabilities increase productivity and independence - so they can live life to the fullest extent.

We promise to support the community by:

- ✎ maintaining a qualified staff of therapists and educators.
- ✎ offering educational programming for teachers, caregivers, families, and the community-at-large.
- ✎ providing clinical practice for health care students.
- ✎ building community with our partners who are also helping people with special needs
- ✎ offering service learning to teen volunteers during our summer program Therapy and Fun and by
- ✎ working to improve the access to therapeutic programs for disadvantaged individuals with disabilities.

In order to fund these programs the agency will seek community support through grant requests, special events, fundraisers, and an annual appeal.

Through our unique combination of therapy, mentoring, and volunteerism we promote a culture dedicated to positively supporting people with disabilities.



2010 Community Benefit	
Community Health Education	\$ 12,085
Health Professionals Education	\$ 45,000
Community Building	\$ 27,713
Charity Care	\$ 140,850
Community Benefit Operations	\$ 44,965
Total Community Benefit	\$ 270,613
2010 Agency Income	
Program Service	\$ 531,538
Contributions & Fund Raising	\$ 73,305
Interest	\$ 370
Total Agency Income	\$ 605,212
2010 Agency Expenses	
Program Services	\$ 470,958
Management & General	\$ 90,162
Fund Raising	\$ 3,443
Total Agency Expenses	\$ 564,563

BOARD OF DIRECTORS OPENINGS

Are you looking for an opportunity to apply your professional skills and insights, engage in creative problem solving, learn leadership skills, and engage in local professional networking? With one hour a month of your time, you can help provide leadership and direction to Comprehensive Therapy Center.

We meet the second Tuesday of every month from 12:00 noon until 12:55 pm in the conference room of our office. Lunch is always provided. Why volunteer? Here are some great reasons:



- Your skills are needed.
- Our agency, and the people we serve, will benefit from your contributions.
- You will have the opportunity to collaborate with other local professionals who share your interests and values.
- You will learn new skills.
- You will widen your professional network and improve your resume.
- You will have an impact.
- You will have fun!

For more information, or to set up a time to meet about joining our board, please send an e-mail to jsilbar@therapycenter.org.



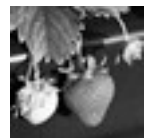
ACTIVITY: A CHILD'S SENSORY GARDEN

A sensory garden is a collection of plants that delight all of a child's senses - seeing, smelling, tasting, touching, and hearing. Playing in the dirt, eating homegrown plants, and plucking flowers are all already favorite childhood activities; guiding your child through selection, planting, growing, and harvesting all provide learning opportunities for you and your child.

Whether you have a small apartment balcony or large backyard, these plants are easy to grow and hard to kill. These all grow equally well in a container or in a traditional garden. Add objects like statues, wind chimes, and wind spinners to add fun and more sensory opportunities.

Seeing

- Four O'Clocks:** Daylight savings aside, these open reliably at 4:00 pm everyday - your child can sit and watch. Easy to grow from seed.
- Mimosa:** Also called Sensitive Plant or TickleMe Plant. The leaves curl up at being touched. Easy to grow from seed.
- Venus Fly Trap:** Brushing the tines of the carnivorous flower will cause it to shut. Keep in a terrarium. A fun bonus is that you can occasionally feed it bugs!



Smelling

- Lemon Balm:** A quick to grow, wonderfully smelling plant that makes a tasty tea. Best grown from a plant.
- Mint:** A child's favorite, available in over a dozen varieties from chocolate to pineapple to spearmint. Spreads quickly, so best kept in a container.
- Thyme:** A delicate looking but hardy plant that can be used as an herb or as a walkway plant, releasing its lovely smell whenever it is walked on.



Tasting

- Radishes:** A childhood favorite because it grows so fast, it is so colorful, and they are both spicy and crunchy. Grow from seed in cooler temperatures.
- Strawberries:** Easily grown in the ground or in a container, and a clear favorite of most children. Buy plants - you can often get them with berries already growing.
- Nasturtiums:** A beautiful edible flower with a peppery taste easily grown from seed. Great for containers.



Touching

- Aloe:** Not only are the leaves spiky and squishy, break the tip off one to feel the gooey, healing inside. Grow indoors in a sunny spot, move outside in the summer.
- Hens and Chicks:** Available in a variety of plants, including those that grow cobwebs or have thick, spiny leaves. Many plants come pre-potted in a container.
- Lamb's Ear:** An herb with thick soft leaves the look and feel like lamb or rabbit ears. Children love petting them, using them as doll blankets, etc.



Hearing

- Chives:** These tasty herbs rustle when they grow large and start to dry out. Do not choose the garlic variety because their leaves are flat and don't make as much noise.
- Palm Plant:** A very noisy indoor plant the rustles whenever the wind blows it or your child brushes against it. A palm does not like light, so keep it out of direct sun.
- Money Plant:** An unimpressive plant until it develops its translucent seed pods. The pods are a favorite for making home made wind chimes!

THE FUTURE LOOKS BRIGHT FOR ABNEY ACADEMY STUDENTS

“Families send their children to William C. Abney Academy for the individualized instruction given in a safe, family atmosphere just as the late Bishop William C. Abney envisioned our public charter school,” says Principal Gary Fant. “Our staff is building relationships with the students and with the community. The staff works hard year to year and is doing what it takes to allow students to be successful.” Indeed, student test scores have steadily improved over the last years and Abney student scores outperform other nearby public schools, according to greatschools.org.

For the last 13 years, Comprehensive Therapy Center has proudly helped students who have special needs achieve by providing speech-language, sensory, and motor therapies along with school psychologists and teacher consultants. William C. Abney Academy provides high quality special education services to allow every student to reach their potential.

Student achievement is fostering growth for the school. A middle school building will open in the fall of 2011. Five classrooms are being added to a former school located on Alger Avenue east of Division. It will house sixth through eighth grades.

Also under development is an individualized program where the student is mentored by the same teachers throughout middle school. “Working with the same math or English teacher allows a relationship to be built on trust, knowledge and on encouraging success. We’ll be in a position to improve students’ lives by providing education that fits the student,” explains Fant. The academy currently serves 471 students with a goal of enrolling 550 in grades K-8.



CONGRATULATIONS CTC GRADUATES

- Zach Derezinski - City High School
- Rebecca Pitts - Forest Hills Eastern High School
- Christopher VerHoef - South Christian High School
- Allison Pitts - Michigan State University



WELCOME NEW STAFF

- Jessica Brink CCC-SLP - Speech Pathologist
- Lauren Nykamp CFY-SLP - Speech Pathologist
- Michele Thomson CCC-SLP - Speech-Language Pathologist
- Linda Weaver - Teacher
- Janice Wilks M.Ed. - Teacher

A PARENT'S PERSPECTIVE OF THERAPY AND FUN

The Terpstra family has two children with special needs and is very familiar with the benefits of speech-language therapy. "My boys enjoy the Therapy and Fun summer clinic because the therapy is surrounded with fun. Therapy is based on the child's interest rather than in a boring therapy room in a clinic. Therapy and Fun also fills the summer so they keep progressing," says mom Jenni Terpstra. "They just think they are playing while they are getting the therapy they need."

"We knew something was up when it was taking an hour for baby Ethan (now age 4) to drink a bottle," comments Terpstra. "Feeding therapy has built stronger mouth muscles...blowing bubbles, chewy tubes and exercises have all helped. Ethan had to learn how to chew and grind his food. With proper posture, stronger muscles, and tiny pieces of food the intestinal and choking problems are much better. He is still a mouth stuffer but we are better at identifying what makes him choke.

"Our son Tristan (age 6) gets eight sessions of speech-language therapy a week from school and at a university clinic. He has a birth defect that affects the pathway from his brain to his speech. He is a smart boy, already reading and doing really well in school...except for his speech, which people struggle to understand. He has the patience of Job because he will repeat himself 10 times to allow understanding. Tristan likes Therapy and Fun. He gets lots of practice with therapists and volunteers."

Terpstra's advice to parents is, "You understand your child better than anyone else so you need to fight for what will work for your child. Find a better school, see different doctors, or use a variety of therapists. Keep trying to find all the pieces of the puzzle. We go back to Therapy and Fun because therapy in a relaxed atmosphere works for my son."



6TH ANNUAL COLORING CONTEST WINNERS: "MY BIG BACKYARD"

Every March, April, and May, we celebrate the extraordinary impact Social Workers, Occupational Therapists, and Speech-Language Pathologists have on children who need help speaking, understanding, or moving. Thanks to their work, children are learning to walk, talk, learn, and play.

This year's Social Worker's Month, Occupational Therapy Month and Better Hearing and Speech Month Drawing Contest was called "My Big Backyard". Students used their markers, crayons, and creativity to show us what backyard activities they



love the best. Chasing butterflies, looking at rainbows, and playing with trucks were all favorites.

The winners, their parents, their teachers, and the principals of their schools were invited to our annual "Read to Me Tea." School principals and other guests read stories out loud to the children while enjoying cookies, juice, and free books.

Visit our website at <http://www.therapycenter.org> to see all the winning entries in full color.

SPEECH THERAPY WORKSHOP: TONGUE TWISTERS

More than just silly rhymes, tongue twisters are useful tools for helping a child exercise the muscles of the tongue and mouth, improving control and speaking ability. At first, don't worry about speed - just practice saying the tongue twister correctly. Practice 2 or 3 every day for 10 minutes if your child is up for it, but keep it fun. The best thing about tongue twisters as speech therapy is that your child will love it as a game!

- Does he know that we know that he knows?
- Five fat peas in a pod pressed.
- The blue bluebird blinks.
- Fat frogs flying fast past.
- Bad money, bad bunny.
- Is there a pleasant peasant present?
- Around the rugged rocks the ragged rascal ran.
- Big Billy, who had a big belly, was also a big bully.
- Double bubble gum bubbles double.
- An ape hates grape cakes!
- Freshly fried flying fish.
- Six slimy snails sailed silently.
- A big black bear sat on a big black bug.
- Running Reindeer romp round red wreathes.
- The bleak breeze blights the bright blue blossom.
- A tidy tiger tied a tie tighter to tidy her tiny tail.



OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY WORKSHOP: PLAY DOUGH AS A THERAPY TOOL

Dough has been one of America's favorite craft toys since its introduction in the 1950s. But it is not just for making pretend food and snowmen. Play dough can be a very helpful therapy tool, improving fine motor skills. Here are a few activities you and your child can do together:



Dig for Treasure: "Bury" pennies, pony beads, or other small objects in a ball of play dough. Ask your child to dig them out, pulling them out with a thumb and index finger. If using pony beads, your child can make a necklace from the buried treasure by stringing them on a shoelace or yarn.

PLAY DOUGH RECIPE

Ingredients:

- 1 cup flour 1/2 cup salt
- 1 cup water 1 TBS oil
- 2 TSP cream of tartar
- food coloring

For an extra sensory experiences, add sand, oatmeal, or glitter for texture or vanilla, cocoa, or extracts for scent.

Directions:

1. Mix all ingredients in a saucepan.
2. Cook on medium heat until thick.
3. Store in an airtight container.

Roll a Ball: Ask your child to use his or her thumb, index and middle fingers to roll out small balls of clay. The child can use the balls to create art or line them up to form letters and numbers. When creating the balls, make sure the child's last two fingers are curled into his or her palm. If not, have the child hold a cotton ball or sponge (cut the size of a sugar cube) down with the ring and pinky fingers.

Snip and Squish: Many children have trouble learning how to use scissors, not just because of the hand dexterity required, but also because paper is so light and floppy. Using children's scissors on dough can be a good place to start. Roll out a 1/2" thick sheet and watch your child go!

Note: Some children might be unwilling to touch the dough due to sensory issues. A good introduction might be to seal it in a plastic bag first, letting your child play with it in the bag first.

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March 2010 – February 2011

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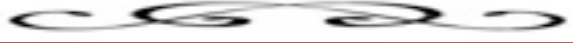
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In Honor of the Koperski Family
 Kate Dernocoeur

**In Honor of Rabbi Michael
 Schadick**
 Silbar-Voorhees Family

SUMMER FUN IDEAS TO KEEP LEARNING!

- ★ Learn about money by charging children for breakfast or lunch. Place a jar of money on the table and your written menu will list the prices. Children will need to select the correct amount of money to “buy” lunch. Remember to tip mom!
- ★ At the park play “ball tag”. Play the normal way but throw a soft ball to tag people building fitness and visual tracking (reading).
- ★ Plan a family board game night. All those small pieces to the games build hand strength for writing. Children also learn problem solving and social skills while having fun!
- ★ For those long car rides, play bingo with cards you create listing things you will see along the way like; green car, scenic turn out, different road signs, a Target store, etc.
- ★ In the kitchen, bake cookies mixing the dough with clean hands builds hand strength, offers several textures and sensory experiences. Older children can read recipes, measure, follow directions and then eat the rewards!
- ★ Join the library’s reading program. Find time to read each day. Do or create something from the story to make reading fun. Have a hat parade after reading Caps for Sale or construct a paper ladybug after reading The Grouchy Ladybug. Older children can create comic strips to change the ending of the story, construct a diorama, or build a character puppet.
- ★ Infuse your day with counting: count the silverware as you do the dishes, count the socks as you match them, or count the stairs as you climb.
- ★ If you are going to practice math problems, remember to use positive reinforcement: beat the clock earns a reward!



Volunteer Opportunities

Team CTC



Parents are our first teachers. Volunteer to help parents to teach their

children about reading! More info on page 11.

Therapy & Fun

June 20 - August 4, 2011



Children ages 11 and up are welcome to apply to become therapy aides.

Their summer will be filled with learning and service.

CTC Board Openings



Looking for board members. We are strong proponents of having a board

that reflects the rich diversity of our community. Meetings are the second Tuesday of every month at noon.

MOMENTS FROM THERAPY & FUN 2010



HELP WANTED: BOOMERS AND BEYOND PARENTING WORKSHOP INSTRUCTORS



Parents are our first teachers. Volunteer to help parents to teach their children about reading. After training, you will help parents understand how to play literacy

games and activities that stimulate their young child's senses so they can read!

Volunteers, age 50+, are wanted to conduct workshops for parents in schools in low income and diverse neighborhoods. New books go home with families. Volunteer training is provided during July. Champion Reader workshops happen in the fall. Everything is wrapped up by November.

Qualifications:

- ✓ Interest or experience in education, healthcare, social work, communications is preferred.
- ✓ Enjoys diversity and working with families and children.
- ✓ To volunteer in schools, volunteers must submit to a background check.
- ✓ Availability from June to November, about ten hours a month.

To apply: send letter of interest to Jean Silbar, jsilbar@therapycenter.org or 2505 Ardmore SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506. More information at <http://therapycenter.org>.

GRAND RAPIDS COMMUNITY FOUNDATION'S



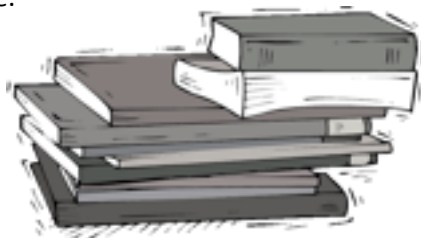
Funded by Grand Rapids Community Foundation's Encore Team, leading the movement to engage people age 50+ for civic good.

CLASSES FOR PARENTS, CAREGIVERS, AND TEACHERS

Teaching Handwriting Basics: Learn how to improve student handwriting with these lesson plans written and taught by an occupational therapist. Cost is \$100 for two 90 minute classes. SB-CEUs may be available.

Learn How to Brush Your Child: Our therapist will teach you how to use this technique at home. Brushing helps children to improve attention, to accept changes in routines, and to tolerate stressful situations. Cost is \$80 for two 45 minute classes.

How to Interact with Students with Special Needs: Learn ways to keep your general education classroom or home productive for all students. Cost is \$120 for three one-hour classes. SB-CEUs may be available.



Educational Workshops: Hands-on workshops give you BIG Ideas for activities and SB-CEUs (pending approval).

Classroom Centers

- Learn to use Literacy Centers to enhance your program in the classroom or daycare center.
- Nifty Nutrition Centers incorporates story time with creating healthy snacks.

Bring Books to Life

- Awesome Authors teaches how to use manipulatives with popular children's stories.
- What's up Jack? Uses interactive charts with Mother Goose rhymes: Jack 'n Jill, Jack Be Nimble, Little Jack Horner.

Winning Writers

- Wee Writers develops the writing process for our youngest authors.
- Poet Tree creates weekly rhymes paired with artwork that is posted on a Poet Tree.

Give us a call at 616-559-1054 or check out our contact information.



Comprehensive Therapy Center

2505 Ardmore SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506

For 29 years, we have helped West Michigan children with disabilities walk, talk, learn, and play so they can read and write. Let our experience and award-winning programs make a difference in your child's life.



Tutoring for All:

-Specializing in Head Injury

Speech-Language Pathology:

-Articulation and Language
-Swallowing
-Voice Problems
-Fluency

Occupational Therapy:

-Handwriting Clinic
-Fine and Gross Motor
-Sensory Processing

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