



March Newsletter

In like a lion, out like a lamb. . .

They say March "comes in like a lion and out like a lamb" - that is so true! Not only have we seen this with the weather in Memphis, but as we've started providing services March 1, we have had a whirlwind of referrals! We are so honored to be a provider for families in Shelby and Tipton counties.



In this newsletter, you will find some fun activities you and your child can do outside to encourage language and motor skills. You'll also find more information about World Down Syndrome Day, which was March 21, and Autism Acceptance Month, which is April. We've listed some more information about autism and some community resources for your family.

We are looking forward to many wonderful things to come and we're so excited to share our journey with you! Please follow the "Pediatric Learning Center" on social media and visit our [website](#) to learn more and follow along for updates and announcements.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth "Liz" McMahon Kraus, MA, CCC-SLP
Executive Director & Speech-Language Pathologist

Spring is in the Air, Let's Get Out There!

by: Tori Fortner, Occupational Therapist

The weather is finally warming up and the birds are chirping outside. Now that spring is here, we can enjoy being outside with our families. Did you know there are so many benefits to playing outside?

- increased imagination and problem solving skills

- increased ability to pay attention,
- enriched observation skills

There are endless opportunities for outdoor play - which is how your child learns best!



1. Grab your bubbles to begin working on your child's eye-hand coordination and finger isolation. Have your child stomp or jump on the bubbles for added gross motor coordination. You can enhance your child's language skills by encouraging your child to request "more," label actions such as "pop," and even count the bubbles. Your child can be in control and blow the bubbles—this will work on those muscles in the mouth we use to eat, drink, and speak.
2. If your child is ready to move on to the next activity, try sidewalk chalk! Practice those drawing or handwriting skills by having your child draw lines, shapes, and even letters. Writing on bumpy surfaces (sidewalk) or vertical surfaces (fence) will also provide extra tactile and proprioceptive input! You can also target your child's vocabulary with chalk by identifying colors, shapes, or objects. If you don't have chalk nearby, don't worry! Just grab some water and a paintbrush and start "painting." It makes for easy clean up, too!
3. Work together to clean up the yard (this will target visual skills, strength, language, and coordination).
4. Have races (great for learning rules, encouraging language, and motor coordination).
5. Sit outside and enjoy the sun while you bird watch (this is a great visual and language activity).

Find this post on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#) and tell us - what is your child's favorite outdoor activity?



March 21, 2023

Celebrating World Down Syndrome Day

World Down Syndrome Day is a global awareness day which has been officially observed by the United Nations since 2012.

The date for WDS is 3/21 which represents the uniqueness of the triplication (trisomy) of the 21st chromosome which causes Down syndrome.

Down syndrome occurs in about 1 in every 800 births. To learn more about Down syndrome, here's a great video from ***Just Like You*** films.

[Just Like You: DS](#)

Resources for Down Syndrome

[**Down Syndrome Association of Memphis & the Mid-South**](#)

[**Global Down Syndrome Foundation**](#)

[**National Down Syndrome Congress**](#)

[**National Down Syndrome Society**](#)

Meet our Team

[**View More Information**](#)

Pediatric Learning Center, Inc.
Therapy, Education, & Support

MEET OUR TEAM



Education

Bachelor's of Science in Education – New Mexico State University 2001

Master's of Art in Speech-Language Pathology University of Memphis 2003

Family

Liz is married to Alex and stepmom to 2 teenagers

Specialties: early intervention, speech & language disorders, pediatric feeding, and play based learning.

Liz McMahon Kraus, MA, CCC-SLP
Speech-Language Pathologist

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Executive Director &
Speech-Language Pathologist

Pediatric Learning Center, Inc.
Therapy, Education, & Support

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Education

Jackson State Community College – Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA) in 2017.

Master's degree in Occupational Therapy from Belmont University in 2020.

Family

Tori is married to Josh and they have a daughter (Eliza Jane)

PETS

Two Dogs: Yogi and Gunny

Specialties: fine motor, pediatric feeding, handwriting, play based learning, & sensory processing

Tori Fortner, MOTR/L
Occupational Therapist

Tori Fortner, MOTR/L
Occupational Therapist

Celebrating Autism Acceptance Month

Every April we celebrate Autism Acceptance Month. Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a complex, lifelong developmental condition that typically appears during early childhood and can impact a person's social skills, communication, relationships, and self-regulation. The Autism experience is different for everyone. It is defined by a certain set of behaviors and is often referred to as a "spectrum condition" that affects people differently and to varying degrees during their life.



While there is currently no known single cause of Autism, early diagnosis helps a person receive resources, supports and services to help with relationships, communication, motor skills, self-regulation, feeding skills, and social interactions.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recently released a report revealing that 1 in every 36 children have been identified with autism spectrum disorder. ASD is reported to occur in all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups and is more than 4 times more common among boys than among girls.

To learn more about autism, here's a great video from ***Just Like You*** films.

Just Like You: ASD

Resources for Autism Spectrum Disorder

April 2 - Light it Up Blue

[All Aboard for Autism Support Group](#)

[Autism Resources of the Mid-South](#)

[Autism Tennessee](#)

[UT Boling Center for Developmental Disabilities](#)

[Vanderbilt Center for Developmental Disabilities](#)

Let's Be Friends



Website

Learn more about our programs and services.



Instagram

Follow for information and activities.



Facebook

Stay up-to-date on announcements.



YouTube

Videos for learning and sharing information.

Contact Us

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[Click here for a copy of our Parent's Guide to Pediatric Therapy](#)



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