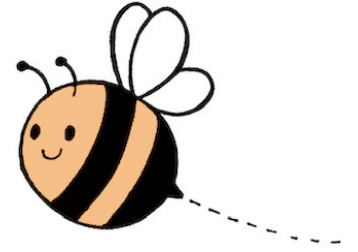


Pediatric Learning Center, Inc.  
Therapy, Education, & Support

# 2022-2023 Annual Report



**Prepared by:** Elizabeth McMahon Kraus, MA, CCC-SLP  
Executive Director, Pediatric Learning Center, Inc.





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# About PLC



The Pediatric Learning Center, Inc. (PLC) is a nonprofit organization serving children and their families throughout the Mid-South. The Pediatric Learning Center, Inc. was established in October 2022 with a desire to provide therapy, education, and support services utilizing a family-centered team approach. We also partner with local agencies, and local university undergraduate and graduate programs for training and clinical learning opportunities.



# Vision, Mission, Mascot



## Vision

The Pediatric Learning Center, Inc. (PLC) is a nonprofit organization serving children and their families throughout the Mid-South. The Pediatric Learning Center, Inc. was established in October 2022 with a desire to provide therapy, education, and support services utilizing a family-centered team approach. We also partner with local agencies, and local university undergraduate and graduate programs for training and clinical learning opportunities.

## Mission

The mission of the Pediatric Learning Center, Inc. is to provide a comprehensive, evidence-based team approach to education and intervention that allows for collaboration with community partners while focusing on services for children and their families in a family-centered environment.

## Mascot

Our mascot is the bumble bee. Why the bee? Bees work together as a team to help their community. Bees remind us that we need others in our life. When we work together, we can achieve great things.



# Board of Directors

Our dedicated Board of Directors bring leadership, knowledge, innovation, and a desire to grow pediatric therapy and education programs and services for children and families in our community.

Horace "Ronnie" Taylor  
Board Chair

Bowen Horton  
Board Treasurer

Julie Ariemma, MA, CCC-SLP  
Board Secretary

Amy Foster, MSPED  
Board Member

Elizabeth McMahon Kraus, MA, CCC-SLP  
Executive Director



# Services Provided



## **Speech & Language Therapy**

Helps children understand, communicate their wants and needs, interact with others, produce sounds correctly, and speak fluently.

## **Occupational Therapy**

Focuses on the ability to eat, interacting with others, and playing with a variety of toys to include reaching, grasping, and toy manipulation skills.



## **Feeding Therapy**

Addresses the coordination of oral motor movements, while also working on tolerating, and interacting with different food textures.

## **Screenings and Evaluations**

Gathers information from standardized assessments, clinical observation, play-based interactions, and caregiver's concerns to develop a personalized plan to address the child's individual needs.



# Family Stories



Alex



Ella

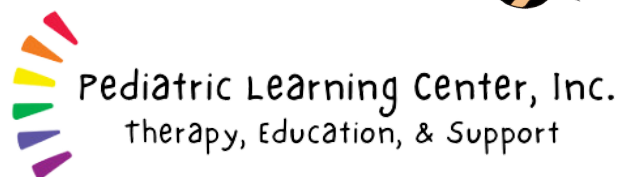


Kyngston



Jack

# Alex



Alex is a three-year-old boy described by his mother as a "silly and sweet kid." Born at 29 weeks, Alex spent most of his early years in the hospital. He has proven to be a strong and determined boy. His mom says "not even anesthesia can keep him down!"

After leaving the hospital, Alex was on eight different medications, but he is now down to three or four "simple" medications, which means no more high blood pressure for this little fighter! When he was born, his lungs did not work and he required a ventilator. He then had a trach placed, but he will soon have it removed! He now crawls all over the house and is working on learning how to stand.



Before receiving early intervention services from Pediatric Learning Center, Alex had extreme oral aversions, and he would become very upset and resistant when his face was touched. He also had limited vocalizations because of his trach. He did not tolerate food, brushing his teeth, or even kisses. However, after working with PLC, Alex is the one giving kisses and he is beginning to explore foods with his mouth. He has learned to vocalize using a special valve on his trach called a Passy-Muir valve and is saying a few words, with "MAMA" being his latest achievement. Alex once did not show any interest in playing with toys. After receiving intervention services with PLC, he is now a very playful guy! He loves to look at books, press buttons on toys, and pop bubbles. He especially enjoys dancing to the Firebuds theme song.

Alex's mom highly recommends early intervention services, especially from Pediatric Learning Center. She says the therapy sessions are fun for the kids and provide parents with a sense of direction. She says: "You guys care about the kids and want them to progress. You can also come up with almost anything on the spot! You want them to grow. You can be sitting there and just come up with a kid specific idea."

At the Pediatric Learning Center, children like Alex are our top priority. Our goal is to provide a nurturing environment where every child can learn and grow. We strive to empower caregivers to become advocates for their children. Our therapists use play-based therapy to address specific goals and objectives for social interactions, motor skills, self-help, cognitive and language development.



# Ella



Pediatric Learning Center, Inc.  
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Ella is a spunky and fun-loving girl of three and a half years old. Her family first noticed that she wasn't hitting her developmental milestones at around four months. Despite encouragement to wait and see if she would improve, Ella still wasn't rolling or reaching for toys. As time went on, her family became increasingly concerned and sought medical testing, including genetic testing and MRIs. However, all results came back normal, leaving her medical team puzzled.

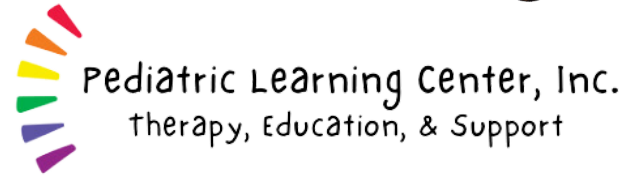
Eventually, Ella began occupational and physical therapy to improve her abilities. It was during this time that she was referred for a second opinion with a neurogeneticist, which led to her diagnosis of FOXP1 – a rare genetic mutation that only affects 800 people. While the diagnosis didn't change the support Ella required, it gave her family answers and helped guide the intervention process.



Despite mobility difficulties, Ella is independent in many areas of play, adapting and overcoming obstacles with the help of her supportive family and therapists. With early intervention, she has learned more about sensory and emotional regulation, allowing her to better manage her emotions. She has also begun eating solid foods after relying on bottle feeding for some time, thanks to the oral motor skills she learned with the help of her therapists.

Ella's mom would encourage any other family to go ahead and take that leap, emphasizing the importance of early intervention while the brain is still developing. She says: "if you have concerns about your child's development, don't be hesitant to reach out. Start sooner rather than later." She praises the close-knit community at the Pediatric Learning Center - where everyone takes the time to know and care for Ella's unique needs. Ella has been an inspiration to her family, teaching them "with time, patience, and practice in therapy you can improve tremendously and can do things on your own time."

# Kyngston



Kyngston is a delightful two-year-old boy who loves to have fun. When he was born, he had a prolapsed umbilical cord and he needed help breathing during the first few days of his life. As a result, he has developmental delays that affect his communication and sensory processing skills. His family first noticed that he was not reaching developmental milestones around six months of age. Kyngston was refusing to eat solid foods and would gag or vomit after bottles. The family turned to TEIS, and they have never looked back.

Before receiving early intervention services, Kyngston's family struggled to understand what was going on. He couldn't effectively communicate his needs and he was constantly gagging and vomiting during or after mealtimes; it was frustrating for all involved. Since starting early intervention services, Kyngston has shown significant improvement in speech, the willingness to try new foods, and his gagging has almost completely vanished.

Kyngston's family recommends early intervention services to other families who feel like their child may need help. His mother emphasizes that it's crucial to seek help for your child if they require it. "It's about building a connection and bond to improve skills. It's about getting an overall better outcome and decreasing everyone's frustration. The therapists are helping me help my child." Kyngston has made remarkable progress in therapy, and his entire family has benefited from the support and help provided by Pediatric Learning Center.

At PLC, we strive to collaborate with families and other professionals to meet the child where they are and help them acquire new skills in a safe and inclusive environment. We are incredibly proud of Kyngston's growth and accomplishments!



# Jack



Meet Jack – a high-spirited 2.5 year old young boy full of energy and fun! Recently, he began his journey with early intervention to enhance his speech and communication abilities. Jack, along with his team of therapists, is working (and playing) tirelessly to overcome any obstacles and achieve developmental milestones.

Before starting therapy services, Jack had a limited vocabulary and struggled to communicate his wants and needs. However, with the help of early intervention, he has gained a wealth of tools and strategies to enhance his emotional and linguistic development.

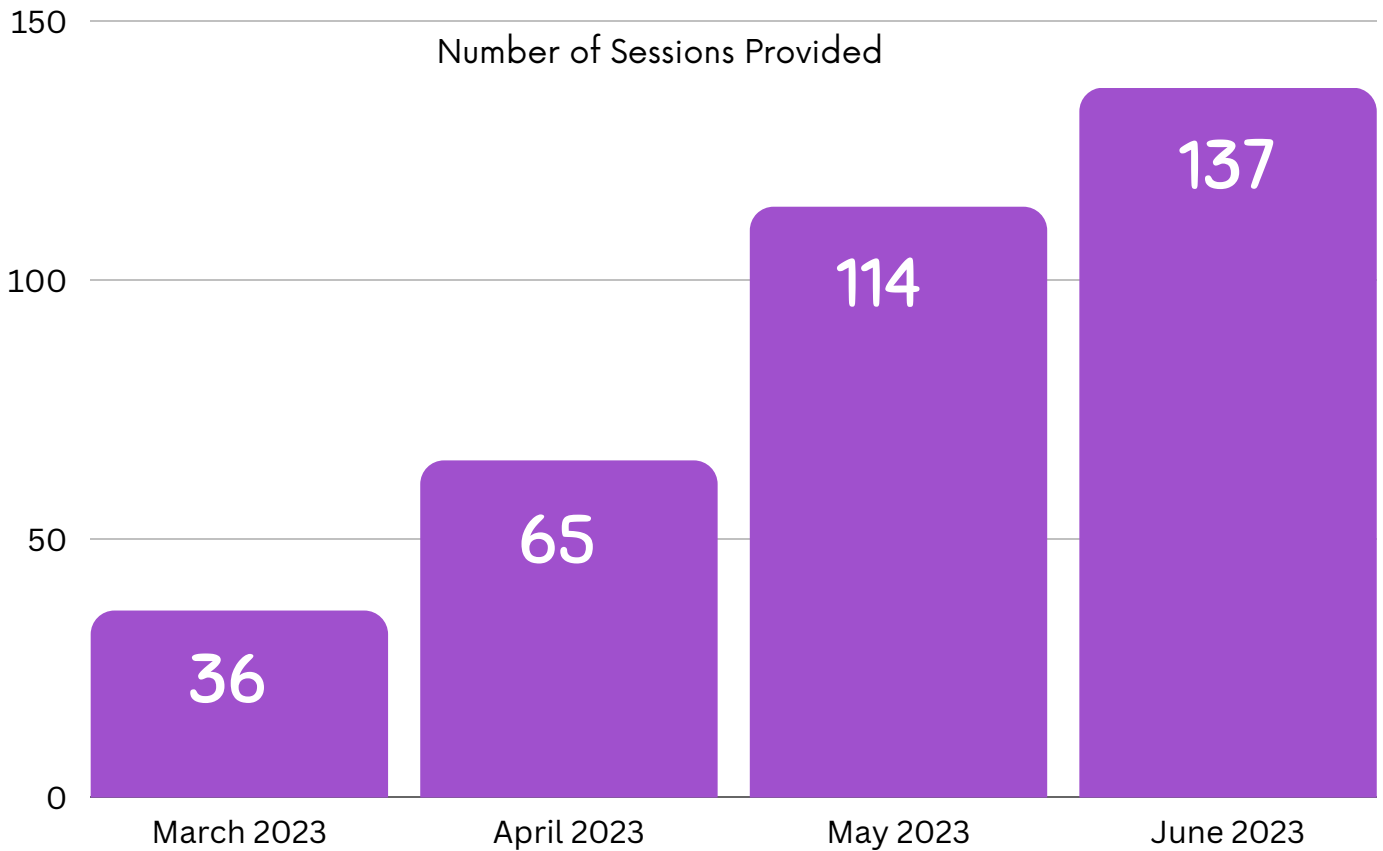
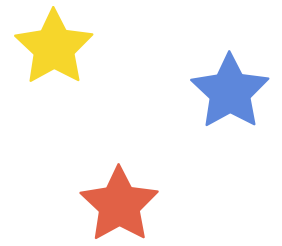
Jack's mother encourages other parents to seek early intervention services, stating that "it's a low-risk choice with high potential for reward."

At PLC, we're dedicated to supporting all of our families. We aim to empower them to advocate for their children and provide support where it's needed most. Jack's experience with early intervention and PLC has resulted in a well-rounded, happy child with a strong support system. As Jack's mom says: "therapists at Pediatric Learning Center truly have a passion for helping to unlock each child's full potential while coming alongside parents to establish routines rooted in consistency throughout these foundational years."



# Data

## FY 2022-2023



The Pediatric Learning Center, Inc. started providing pediatric speech, language, occupational, and feeding therapy and education services for children from birth to 6 years of age in March 2023. All of our services have been provided in the child's home, childcare center, community, and/or via telehealth. Between March - June 2023, we have provided 352 individual therapy sessions, and have served 151 families across 5 different counties - Shelby, Tipton, Madison, Henderson, and McNairy.

352

151

5



# Highlights FY 2022-2023

First Board Meeting  
November 4, 2022



Registered  
as a nonprofit  
organization with  
State of Tennessee  
October 2022

Launched Website  
& social media sites  
December 2022

In-network with  
Blue Cross Blue  
Shield and  
United Healthcare  
January 2023

Approved Vendor  
Tennessee Early  
Intervention System  
February 2023





# Highlights FY 2022-2023

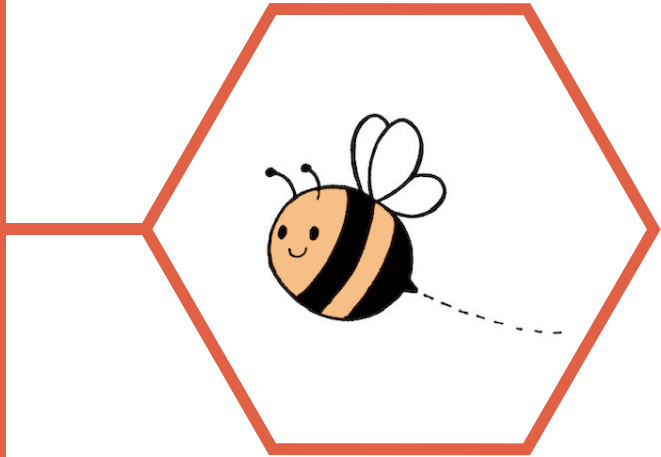


Started providing  
therapy services in  
Tipton County  
April 2023

Started providing  
therapy services in  
Shelby County  
March 2023

Received 501(c)(3)  
status from IRS  
May 2023

Expanded to  
Madison, Henderson,  
Chester, & McNairy  
Counties  
June 2023



# Community Impact

The need for therapy and education services is continuing to grow. More children have been referred to the Tennessee Early Intervention System (TEIS) than ever before. As the referrals continue to increase and the program extends to offer services for children up to five (5) years of age, more service providers are needed - especially in the Memphis-Delta District and the rural counties of Tipton, Chester, Henderson, and McNairy.

However, under-enrollment in early intervention services is a chronic problem. Approximately 16% to 18% of children have developmental disabilities, however, less than a third of these children are detected prior to kindergarten entry (Glascoe & Shapiro, 2007). Recent studies show that 1 in 44 children are diagnosed with autism (CDC, 2021), and Down syndrome occurs in 1 in 700 births in the United States (CDC, 2021). Due to medical advancements, the number of premature infants surviving is increasing. Prematurity occurs in 1 in every 10 births (CDC, 2021). These children and others with developmental disabilities will require individual therapy and education services in order to meet their developmental milestones. The Pediatric Learning Center, Inc. is here to offer therapy, education, and support for these children and families throughout the Mid-South!





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

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