



ACT Autism Community Together of Northeast Indiana

Volume 3, Issue 4

Fall 2005

Summer of 2005—Success Continues!!!

Despite wind, rain, sleet and snow on Saturday April 23rd, a record number of walkers turned out for the second annual Walk-To-Talk and raised \$54,261. This success enabled ACT to award 40 summer opportunities for individuals with Autism, a record number. Opportunities included speech and occupational therapy, tutoring, swimming, summer school at the Learning and Development Center.

2005 marked the beginning of Autism Week at Camp Red Cedar. The camp located on the Northern edge Allen County has a long history of serving a broad range of disabled individuals in the area. While there are times diversity is a benefit, there are also times for specificity. ACT felt that having a week of camp focused on the unique needs and challenges of Autism would benefit the community. We were pleased that Camp Red Cedar was open and flexible to make it a reality.

Nearly 20 individuals attended the week long

day camp at Red Cedar. Campers participated in Autism-specific activities such as music therapy provided by Julie Edgell of Behavior Consultations & Therapy Services, Inc., social skills training facilitated by Holly Rothenbush BcaB, sensory-based activities provided by the Pediatric Rehabilitation staff from Lutheran Hospital and therapeutic horseback riding for which Red Cedar is known. Of course typical camping activities like boating, swimming, singing and arts and crafts were incorporated. A key component of the camps success was the one-on-one ratio of campers to staff.

We look forward to another year of success in 2006. Autism Week at Camp Red Cedar is scheduled for July 17-21, 2006. If you would like to participate in the planning of Summer programs or the Walk-To-Talk which makes these programs possible, please call us at 260-609-7412.

Up and Coming Events:

- ♦ *November 14 Asperger's/High functioning Autism Meeting*
- ♦ *November 21 Northeast Indiana Autism Support Group Dupont Library*

Organizational Change within ACT

We are sad to announce that Marviene Honiotes has resigned from her current role within Autism Community Together of Northeast Indiana.

Marviene is one of the original founders of ACT. Marviene's service to the autism community is long and deep—starting with the diagnosis of her 10 year old daughter. Marviene was the Director for the Learning and Development Center, a Program Coordinator/Case Manager for AWS and is now serving the community as a Case Manager for Possibilities NorthEast.

Marviene's years of service serving children and adults with autism and other disabilities made her a critical part of ACT's Parent Mentoring Network. The success of ACT's annual Walk-To-Talk is in a large part due to Marviene. You

name it, she did it, from stuffing and stamping newsletters to programming to strategic planning. Marviene has always risen to the occasion, whatever it required.

The change in Marviene's Role is the result of her family's relocation to Hamilton Lake in Steuben County. While many of us cannot imagine uprooting and relocating our families and especially our child with autism, not Marviene. But, no challenge is too daunting for her. Please join us in wishing Marviene and her family all the best in their new adventure.

Luckily for us, Marviene will remain on ACT's board of directors to assist us in navigating our strategic future. Please join us in wishing Marviene and her family all the best in their new home.

The Future of ACT

With the organizational change, what is the future of ACT? Good Question, see page 5 for a survey of our services and needs to continue ACT's current level of service to the Autism Community in

Summer 2005—What worked, what didn't . . .

Summers with a child with Autism can be VERY long without proper planning. So with Summer 2005 still fresh in your mind, we thought you would appreciate some ideas—positive and not so.

Structure- “Structure is important for our sanity. We continued her Verbal Behavior Program with continued focus on math where she has had much success ~ which improves her self-esteem. We coupled the academic work with warm-weather activities to help her proprioceptive and vestibular needs, e.g., swimming, jumping rope, swinging, riding her bike.

Education- “We did a home program using ‘Language for Learning’ two times a day for 30 minutes each

session.” Language and communication has increased as a result.

My ten year old took a long time to get back into the swing of things last year. This summer with the help of his teacher and a wonderful babysitter, we set up different things he needed to stay up with. The sitter worked for an hour a day with him, including computer work. His teacher checked up on him periodically to tweak his program. An hour a day made a huge difference at the start of this school year.

Social- “We started a ‘play group’ with peers in the neighborhood facilitated by an adult.” The experience was positive for all. The peers

enjoyed helping and the child with Autism was able to find common ground when interacting with peers. Activities included lunch, games, and instructional time.”

Recreation- “Summer was a struggle. I needed to stay home with him or be available to him quickly if need be. This summer he had a basketball tutor for an hour twice a week, participated in the support group play group, took horse lessons and volunteered cleaning stalls. He also attended two camps. At one he met a girl, now girlfriend. This made the summer of 2005 go much faster and gave me some time off.”

2005 Walk-To-Talk WAS All About the Teams!

We raised \$54,261 for Autism!!! And here are the teams that did it!!!

Team

Lafayette Meadows

Team Stephen

Team 42

Tyler's Team

Team Jake

Tim-Buck-Two's

Team Mason

Team Alexa

JIS

Team Butler Indiana

Walkie Talkies

Team Trent

Team Kosciusko

Team Calista

Team Wyneken

Team Jacob

Turtle Town Talkers

Team Bailey

Dunn Associates

Captain

Gaby Meissner

Marsha Bormann

Cathy Zwick

Cindy Weirick

Pam Meissner

Cami

Charity Gudakunst

Carla Mohamedali

David Ripple

Carla Mohamedali

Jan Patterson

Sherril Lowder

Tina Pressnall

Marviene Honiotes

Rae Fuhrmann

Misty Peters

Jenny Markley

Dawn Ulfing

Holly Rothenbush

The Dee Team

AWS

Team Noah

Fighting Angles

Puzzle Pieces

Harlan Elementary T.O.E.S.

Learning & Development Center

Team James

Grayson's Way

The DMB Team

Oakview Elementary

Bartlett Bunch

The Incredibles

Team Jerr-Jerr

Action Jackson

Hands R Us

Team Dillon

Team Wes

Team Nan

Team Sara

GBA Folks

Yolanda Austin

Tera Hogan

Kelly Parks

Kelly Rumrill

Lawrence Davis

Vicki Schaber

Kimberly McCoy

Joe Ostrowski

RitaMarie Meyer

Stacey Beights

Amanda Lange

Susan Bartlett

Cathy German

Sarah Carter

Heather Ostrowski

Mark Handerson

Michael Worrell

Bobbie Manns

Kathy Golliff

Kay Cozad

Angela Wilson

The Horse as a Valuable Resource for the Individual with Autism

By Rita Spears, PT

I am a physical therapist who utilizes hippotherapy as one of my treatment tools. My goal in writing this article is to help you understand; what the benefits of Hippotherapy are, what the benefits of Therapeutic Riding are, and how to find information to get better educated about both.

Let's start with some definitions. Hippotherapy literally means "treatment with the help of the horse".

"Hippus" is the greek word for horse. The American Hippotherapy Association (AHA) developed this definition "a term that refers to the use of the movement of the horse as a tool by Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapists and Speech-Language pathologists to address impairments, functional limitations and disabilities in patients with neuromusculoskeletal dysfunction. This tool is used as a part of an integrated treatment program to achieve functional outcomes." (AHA, 2000).

Therapeutic Riding is described on the Indiana Horse Council website as "Equine Assisted Activities, including therapeutic riding, driving and vaulting which are not therapy but sport and recreational activities that have therapeutic value. Riding skills are taught along with games and activities incorporated into the lessons to enhance skills, balance, coordination, communication, strength and problem solving. Therapeutic Riding could include driving (a horse pulls a cart), vaulting (balancing in a variety of positions on horseback), Equine Assisted Learning, and Equine Facilitated Mental Health.

What does this mean in plain English?

Hippotherapy is a therapy treatment, performed by a licensed therapist (PT, OT or SLP). The horse is used as a treatment tool to achieve therapy

goals, specifically improving function. Therapeutic Riding is recreational with the goal being having the rider learn to control the horse as much as they are able. According to the AHA website "Therapeutic Riding is supervised recreational riding for people with disabilities".

The North American Riding for the Handicapped Association (NARHA) has an instructor training program. After completing course work and testing instructors can be Registered, Intermediate or Advanced instructors. CHA also has a certification for the Therapeutic Riding Instructor. The American Hippotherapy Association has a system for therapists being registered once they have completed certain coursework and experience. They also have an exam to become a Hippotherapy Clinical Specialist which only about 50 people have passed.



See Page 4 for Advice on Selecting a Program

Hippotherapy is used as one part of the patient's treatment plan. The treatment program is designed based on the therapist's evaluation and functional goals for the patient.

In Hippotherapy the therapist modifies the horse's movement and then carefully grades sensory input. A variety of positions of the patient are used to achieve the desired results.

Facing, forwards, sideways, backwards, on the stomach, and lying back are some of the positions used.

Positive effects from the movement of the horse can be seen in motor coordination, muscle tone, postural alignment, flexibility and strength. Changes can also be seen in respiratory, cognitive, sensory processing, balance, affective, arousal and speech/language functions. (taken from PT Advance – summer 2000 – Jaoann Benjamin, PT, HPCS). The movement of the horse provides a sensorimotor experience that causes a repetitive movement that is very similar to the pattern of a person's pelvis during walking. It promotes the development of postural responses and mid-line awareness. Active problem solving and motivation are other valuable benefits.

A little history – in 1952 Liz Hartel won a medal and told the world how riding had helped her recover from polio. In the 1960s Therapeutic Riding Centers developed throughout Europe, Canada and the US. In 1969 NARHA was established. In 1987 a group of Canadian and American therapists went to Germany to study Hippotherapy. In 1992 the American Hippotherapy Association was formed.

The following websites could prove helpful:

NARHA (North American Riding for the Handicapped) www.narha@narha.org

AHA

www.americanhippotherapyassociation.org

Indiana Horse Council -

www.indianahorsecouncil.org (under Equine Assisted Programs Committee)

Area programs that I am aware of include

1. **Dream Big Therapy, LLC** – 6235 E 1100 N, North Manchester, IN 46962 (260)982-0711

Offers Hippotherapy

Oak Hill Farms – 4982 E. Station Rd., Roanoke, IN 46783 – (260)672-8199 Offers Therapeutic Riding and Hippotherapy

East Fork Ranch – 5500 W 600 S, Huntington, IN 46750 (260)468-2249 – Therapeutic Riding

Red Cedar - - 3900 Hursh Road, Ft. Wayne, 46845 (260)637-3808 Therapeutic Riding

Dusty Dreams 0247N 600E, Avilla, IN 46710

(260)897-2042 – Therapeutic Riding and Recreational

New at the Library

The Allen County Library continues to expand its collection of Autism-specific titles. Recently ACT donated:

The Verbal Behavior Approach to Teaching Children with Autism by Vincent J. Carbone and Thomas Caffrey. This 7 CD set contains:

- Introduction to Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and Verbal Behavior
- Teaching Learner Cooperation Part I

- Teaching Learner Cooperation: Part II
- Instructional Variables and Teaching Procedures
- B.F. Skinner's Analysis of Verbal Behavior
- Selecting an Augmentative/Alternative Method of Communication
- Teaching Non-Vocal Learners

This item can be checked out directly from the Allen County Public Library or indirectly via the inter-library loan program.

If there are additional titles you believe essential to the local collection, please contact us at info@Actpositive.org and we will work with the library to acquire them.

The Non-verbal Child

Are you living with or caring for a non-verbal child? Do you wonder what the future holds for a non-verbal individual? Do you feel prepared for such a future? Are you interested in networking with other families impacted by and professionals focused on serving the non-

verbal child? If so, please contact ACT at (260)609-7412, info@Actpositive.org or P.O. Box 8203, Fort Wayne, IN 46898-8203 and let us know what is on your mind.



We have moved, or at least our PO Box did.

ACT's new address is:

**P.O. Box 8203
Fort Wayne, IN 46898-8203**

Selecting and Setting Goals for a Horse Program

In selecting the appropriate program for your child you may want to consider what your goals are, the expertise and credentials of the staff, the horses and facilities used for the program, what existing customers think of the services, fees, distance, availability and training of sidewalkers and horse handlers. The horse provides strong input and Hippotherapy is not recommended until a child is 2 years old and therapeutic riding until a child is 3 years old. The staff should be well aware of contraindications and precautions and the child's physician should clear the child to do riding.

Sample goals for therapeutic riding could include :

1. Susie will be able to steer the horse around the arena with only verbal instruction.
2. Susie will be able to stop the horse on command.
3. Susie will ride with good posture.
4. Susie will be able to groom and tack the horse with minimal assistance.

Sample goals of Hippotherapy could include:

1. Trunk symmetry will be improved as evidenced by:
 - a. Susie will sit on bench with good posture for 5 minutes.
 - b. Susie will walk with increased symmetry and balance as evidenced by equal step lengths and decreased falling.
2. Balance and coordination will improve as evidenced by:
 - a. Susie will alternate feet going up and down steps.
 - b. Susie will be able to jump consecutively 3 times 4 of 5 trials.
3. Following proprioceptive and vestibular input Susie will complete a task, not of her choosing with minimal prompts and assistance.

The Future of ACT depends on YOU!



ACT is a 100% volunteer organization whose mission is to engage and support those surrounding the individual with Autism Spectrum Disorders in Northeast Indiana. Since its founding in March 2003, ACT has provided a variety of services to the community. While updating its 2003-5 Strategic Plan, ACT identified a critical barrier to this ability to achieve its objectives—manpower. Upon evaluating this barrier further, ACT considered hiring staff to execute these goals; however, the Board of Directors dismissed this alternative as unacceptable. The ACT Board of Directors believes the money raised in the name of Autism should be used for Autism programs, not payroll. Accordingly, ACT is in the process of:

1. Prioritizing services
2. Recruiting volunteers



Accordingly, we have designed the short questionnaire below. This questionnaire can be completed and mailed to ACT at P.O. Box 8203, Fort Wayne, IN 46898-8203 or completed online at www.ACTpositive.org/survey. We appreciate your time in completing the questionnaire.

If we don't pitch in
and move Autism
forward in NE
Indiana, who will?

ACT Service	Importance		
	<u>Very</u>	<u>Medium</u>	<u>Not</u>
Summer Programming			
Autism Camp at Red Cedar			
Community Website			
FYI E-mails			
Parent Mentoring Network			
Lectures (free programs)			
Seminars (nominal fee programs)			
Awareness Activities			
Quarterly Newsletters			
Walk-To-Talk			
Awareness materials (e.g., wristbands and magnets)			
Special Projects			
Other _____			



P.O. Box 8203
Fort Wayne, IN 46898-8203

Email: info@ACTpositive.org
www.ACTpositive.org



Engaging and Supporting those
surrounding those impacted by
Autism Spectrum Disorder.



ACT's role is to engage and support individuals, families, medical professionals, therapists and educators on effective methods to improve the lives of individuals with autism and their families in Northeast Indiana. By focusing on the front-line service providers and high-tech solutions, we will be able to build communities of providers and promulgate best practices for enhancing the lives of people with autism. ACT's key programming consists of:

- Parent Mentor Network
- Lecture Series
- Community website
- Summer Programming for individuals with Autism
- Training Sponsorship for professionals

In addition to these initiatives, ACT is working on community development projects with educators and medical professionals.

Employment Opportunity

Students needed to work with our 3-year old son with Autism. We are setting up an intensive home program. Students who are dependable, motivated and (most importantly) caring are needed to work as teaching assistants with our child.

You will receive training and regular supervision as you work in a structured, research-based approach helping our son. The program is based on the work of Dr. O. Ivar Lovass of UCLA and features positive behavioral techniques carefully sequenced and structured for our child.

Flexible hours: Mornings, afternoons, and/or weekends. Maximum 10 hours per week. We are located on the South Side of Fort Wayne, near Foster Park.

Please call Hugh or Julie Baldus at 456-8989 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m.

Asperger's Support Group Forming

Monday November 14th at 7PM in Lutheran Hospital ACT is facilitating a meeting of those impacted by Asperger's Syndrome and High Functioning Autism. As a result of inquiries on our Parent Mentoring Network, we decided to sponsor a night where people impacted by this end of the Autism Spectrum could network. Often individuals and their families feel much targets mainstream autism. The information and support for which doesn't apply to them or address the equally challenging behavioral and social aspects of these verbal individuals. The evening will focus on the size, needs, leadership, education, etc. that this group is interested. Please join us in the conference room adjacent to the cafeteria in the basement of Lutheran Hospital.



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