



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Carole Soricelli, MS, OTR, *Director*

There are many factors that play a role in one's ability to learn, some of which include maturation level, intellectual functioning, emotional attitude and overall health. Most of us tend to have a preferred learning style, even labeling ourselves as "visual," "auditory," or "hands-on" learners. Regardless of our style of learning, we can all relate to the fact that there are some days that we are better able to engage in learning than others. Exploring ways to improve readiness to engage, participate and learn is the focus of this edition of *Kidmatters*.

In "Ready, Set, Go," Trinitas Occupational Therapist Renee Powers, teams up with one of her Rahway school district child study team colleagues, Monica Schiffman, LCSW to utilize yoga strategies to tackle the sensory dysregulation factors that regularly occur around the many transition times during a school day.

Kellianne Martin, OTD, OTR, in her article "Improving Listening Skills," spells out tangible solutions to creating the optimal listening environment for learn-

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SCHOOL-BASED NEWS READY, SET, GO

By: Monica Schiffman, LCSW and Renee Powers, OTR

Ready, Set, Go, a movement-based program to promote learning readiness, was implemented at Roosevelt Elementary School in Rahway, during the 2015-2016 school year. When it became apparent that there was a need for a sensory regimen in our classrooms to support learning, a collaboration between Roosevelt's Elementary School counselors and Trinitas Occupational Therapists produced an answer to student overstimulation as a result of bus rides, lunch, and recess. These transitional activities, in turn, made it difficult for students to focus and interfered with their readiness to learn.

Teachers in our Multiple Disabilities classes had attempted various strategies for the challenges they faced with regards to students' attention and self-regulation throughout the school day. At the time, the Multiple Disabilities classes had been receiving weekly social skills to support learning. Over the course of several weeks, a Social Thinking lesson about whole body listening was presented with the goal of increasing attention and improving self-regulation by pointing out how each part of the body is involved in listening. However, this strategy did not completely address the issues.

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READY, SET, GO

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At Roosevelt School, we are fortunate to have occupational therapists in the building, and we consulted with the team to help resolve this problem. After discussing concerns with OT, it became clear that all students regardless of their abilities could benefit from movement throughout the day. The occupational therapists collaborated with the school counselors as well as the teachers to create a program promoting optimal attention and organization of the whole body, with learning readiness as the ultimate goal.

Ready, Set, Go is a three-minute series of movements adopted from the Get Ready to Learn: Yoga Therapy in the Classroom, as well as general sensory processing concepts. Designed to improve body awareness and self-regulation, the series provides students with tactile input, vestibular input, and proprioception. While integrating both sides of the body, the program also targets crossing midline, sequencing, upper extremity stability and strength, and motor planning. Although it is recommended that the routine be carried out at scheduled times during the day, it may also be used on an 'as needed' basis, either in a group or individually, while seated in a chair or standing,



without causing stress to those who are not able to sit. It can be facilitated by the teacher or initiated by the student, either in its entirety or in part, and monitored and adjusted as needed through consultation with an occupational therapist.

Ready, Set, Go has proved to be a valuable tool in all three of the Multiple Disabilities classrooms. It is now also used in our Autistic classroom as well as classes consisting of developmentally typical students who may require tools for self-regulation and organization.

Our general education students have learned to self-reflect on the program's impact on their learning by using a rating scale of 1-5.

Our long term goal for students who move through the Multiple Disabilities classrooms is that they are able to integrate strategies that work for them, leading to greater success in the classroom and in their everyday lives.

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ers. Her strategies may be helpful in reducing frustration for teachers, parents and coaches everywhere!

Finally, Therapy Center Manager, Kevin Nelson, MS, OTR explains in his article, "Spend Your Summer with TCTS!" why Camp Trinitas is THE place for children to have summer

fun while getting ready for school in the fall.

As always, this edition of *Kidmatters* also provides you with TCTS current events and upcoming programs and workshops. I hope you enjoy these valuable learning preparedness strategies.

SPEND YOUR SUMMER WITH TCTS!

As summertime approaches, parents have many of the same questions. What do I do with my child during the long summer days? How do I keep them active and moving? How do I keep them learning and doing? How do I help them work on their motor, cognitive, and social skills? How do I help them to maintain the valuable self-help and self-care skills they have learned this year? How do I help prepare them for pre-school, kindergarten, or their next grade level in school? In essence, how do I provide an enriching summer experience?

The answer to all of the above questions is Camp Trinitas, a seven-week summer program designed, directed by, and staffed with licensed and registered occupational (OT), physical (PT), and speech (ST) therapists. Camp is open to all children between the ages of 3 and 10. Children do not need an IEP to participate, and they do not need to be currently receiving services.

Weekly theme-specific activities provide a structured daily routine, including morning circle, fine and gross motor activities, academics, sensory-motor enrichment, lunch and social time, self-help practice, sports/recreation, and closing circle. Each therapist strives to help build a solid foundation for children, to promote growth in their own self-esteem, and to maintain and/or improve their skills and their abilities in the following areas:

- **Social Skills:** verbal and nonverbal interaction, taking turns, asking and answering questions, and following directions.



- **Motor Planning:** proposing an idea/activity, setting up/creating the steps, and carrying out the idea/activity.
- **Cognitive Skills:** sequencing, letter/color/number/shape identification, classifying by various types, counting.
- **Pre-Writing/Graphomotor Skills:** drawing and replicating/copying/tracing/writing shapes/letters/numbers/designs.
- **Fine Motor Skills:** strengthening the small muscles of the hands and fingers to manipulate, play with, and handle small objects and items, as well as cutting, coloring, gluing, assembling, and disassembling.
- **Gross Motor Skills:** strengthening the use of the large muscles of the legs and arms to complete gross motor tasks.
- **Balance:** maintaining postures in various positions – high knee, low knee, static and dynamic standing.
- **Coordination:** fine motor, gross motor, eye-hand, and eye-foot coordination.
- **Body Awareness:** distinguishing between right and left, improving awareness of body in space, tolerating movement and having feet off the ground (gravitational security).
- **Sensory Processing/Self-Regulation:** transitioning between activities, tolerating changes to the routine, and participating in challenging, novel activities while maintaining an even frustration tolerance.
- **Visual-Motor Skills:** completing puzzles, mazes, dot-to-dots, etc.; skills necessary for eventual pre-writing/graphomotor skills.

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SUMMER 2018 PROGRAMS

SCRIBBLES TO SCRIPT

Children from preschool (prewriting) through elementary (cursive) school have the opportunity to use the Handwriting Without Tears® program to learn pre-writing skills, proper letter formation, and writing within the given lines. Multi-sensory fine motor, visual-motor, and visual-perceptual activities help to reinforce learning and make writing fun! 45-minute classes held twice weekly. \$425



LEARN TO RIDE BIKE RIDING LESSONS

Children will learn this vital childhood skill in a non-competitive environment with a highly trained therapist. Sessions are run in 60-minute periods of time. Dates and times are individually scheduled according to client's availability. Children typically require between 1 and 3 sessions. \$115 per session

CAMP TRINITAS SCHOOL READINESS

Camp Trinitas is the perfect opportunity to have children gain new skills or maintain recently-learned motor and academic skills. Children will participate in gross motor, fine motor, sensory motor, and recreational activities, and academic time during our 8th annual Camp Trinitas program. Sign up for a ½ day (AM or PM) or a full day. Allow your child to participate in a camp directly organized and supervised by skilled clinicians in their respective fields. Camp Trinitas is run by OT's, PT's, speech therapists, ABA clinicians, and teachers, and addresses each child's specific needs. \$30 for ½ day, \$70 for full day

Scholarships: Please inquire about scholarship opportunities.

- Deadline to register is June 1st.
- All programs run Monday July 2nd to Friday August 17th.
- **Trinitas Children's Therapy Services** 899 Mountain Avenue, Suite 1A, Springfield, NJ 07081
Phone # 973-218-6394, ext. 1300 Fax # 973-218-6351, knelson@trinitas.org, www.childtherapynj.com

SPEND YOUR SUMMER WITH TCTS!

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- **Self-Help Skills:** completing daily tasks with more independence – clothing fasteners, washing and drying hands, dressing and undressing, bathroom hygiene, eating, and using eating utensils.

Camp Trinitas incorporates parent interviews, pre-camp screenings, weekly written progress reports, and post-camp screenings to assess, monitor, evaluate and/or modify tasks and activities as

needed. Staff members also review and analyze weekly parent evaluations of the program in order to make any necessary changes.

Please call for more information on camp registration, fees, schedules, and scholarship opportunities, as Camp Trinitas has been granted four full scholarships for summer 2018.



IMPROVING LISTENING SKILLS

By: Kellianne K. Martin, OTD, OTR

Listening is a necessary skill for all school-age children. For some students, it comes naturally and they tend not to miss given directions. Yet for others, the act of listening can be quite challenging. You might find yourself repeating a question or set of directions, or more importantly asking out loud, “Why aren’t you listening to me?” No matter the circumstances, all children can improve their listening skills by implementing these simple strategies into their daily routine.



- Listening ideally requires a child to be actively involved and engaged: both EARS are ready to hear; EYES are looking at the person speaking; a quiet MOUTH; still HANDS and FEET; the BODY faces the speaker; and the BRAIN is thinking and processing what is being said.
- Not all children can process both auditory and visual stimuli input, so they may tune one out in order to focus on the sense most important in that moment. To determine if a child is actually listening, ask a question about the story being read or to repeat the directions that were given.
- When giving directions try to eliminate external distractions so that the child has only one job—to listen.
- Younger children should typically be able to listen for approximately the number of minutes that match their age, up to age 5.
- Ensure that you have the child’s attention: either by calling the child’s name or saying something such as, “listen up,” “the direction is,” or “this is important.” Wait about 5 to 10 seconds before continuing with what you were about to say. Some children need those extra seconds to process that they need to stop what they are doing and listen.
- Allow for sufficient processing time—for all ages. If you give directions in a rapid fire manner, it is quite possible that you will hear, “what...wha...wh.” This will lead to frustration on both sides.
- Ensure that you are using developmentally appropriate phrases when speaking, for instance, short sentences for younger children.
- Children with receptive language delays (the inability to understand what is being said to them) sometimes need more processing time—sometimes a lot more time.
- Consider rephrasing the directions ONLY after allowing for processing time.
- Break down the directions into simple steps. Start with single-step directions and then progress to two-step directions, etc. Always think developmentally appropriate when providing single or multi-step directions and remove the “fluff” from the directions.
- If a child has difficulty following through on auditory directions, consider providing a visual cue so that he or she can better understand what is expected. Directions provided in a visual cue format allows for the child to recall the directions at a later point in time.
- Model good listening skills with the following tactics: Eliminate distractions. Demonstrate a “listening body.” Repeat and rephrase what the child

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IMPROVING LISTENING SKILLS *Continued from page 5*

is saying. Ask questions related to what is being discussed, and either follow through with the child's requests, or explain why you are not going to do so.

The act of listening is a skill that must be taught to many children in some form or another. Teach the little ones the parts of a "listening body," use developmentally appropriate language, and allow time to process what has been said. Perhaps it is most effective to model good listening skills. So, the next time a child is noticeably struggling to follow directions or answer a question, be patient and try one or several of these suggestions. All children want to be good listeners and positive contributors in their many roles, however, some require a little more nurturing than others.



A FEW IMPORTANT QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN SELECTING AN OT, PT AND ST PROVIDER

Trinitas CTS		Trinitas CTS	
1. Is the provider a well established company?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	11. Are the therapists up to date on current legislation that impacts their work in the schools?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. Is the provider a state approved clinic & agency?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	12. Does the provider have therapists who have co-authored important professional publications related to school-based practice?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3. Are the therapists specialists in pediatric and school based therapy services?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	13. Does the provider maintain your documentation in accordance with NJ Licensure laws, NJDOE regulations, SEMI and individual school district standards?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4. Do the therapists receive continuing education and mentorship on a regular basis?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	14. Does the provider cover Extended School Year services?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5. Is the provider a 501c 3 not for profit organization?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	15. Does the provider offer competitive market rates for services?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6. Do the therapists receive regular supervision?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	16. Does the provider assist in reducing district costs associated with lost work time (due to illness, holiday or professional development), benefits packages and advertising for staff?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7. Does the provider give administrative oversight of therapy services?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	17. Does the provider supply assessment tools & forms and other resources for students, teachers and parents at no cost to your district/school?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8. Does the provider maintain continuity of service within your district/school?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	18. Is the provider considered to be one of the best places to work for by NJBIZ and Becker's Hospital Review?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9. Is coverage provided if a therapist becomes unavailable due to sickness, family leave or other medical issues?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
10. Is the provider actively involved with local and national organizations and governing bodies such as NJOTA, AOTA, NJPTA, or APTA, and the NJ Advisory Council?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS



Ten Tips for Promoting Fun and Functional Summer Activities

Wednesday, May 16, 2018

6:00 to 7:30 pm

Trinitas Children's Therapy Services
Therapy Center
899 Mountain Avenue, Suite 1A,
Springfield, NJ 07081

\$15.00

Are you looking for fun activities to keep the kids busy throughout the summer months? Would you like for your child to practice skills that are challenging, but still want them to have fun? This workshop will provide easy activities to help address these concerns while your child has fun playing.



The Arc of New Jersey 29th Annual Conference Medical Care for Persons with Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities Promoting Quality Healthcare

Friday, June 1, 2018

Princeton, NJ

Three Convenient Ways
to Register Online at

www.mainstreamingmedicalcare.org

Registration Deadline:

Friday, May 18, 2018

Among the many workshops offered at this conference, Carolyn Driscoll, MS, OTR, Trinitas Children's Therapy Services will join John Nevins, DO, Chatham Family Medicine, Atlantic Health System and Evan Spivack, DDA, FAGD, Special Care Treatment Center, Rutgers School of Dental Medicine to present *Treating the Individual with Oral Self-Injurious Behaviors: An Inter-disciplinary Approach to Patient Care*.



Ten Tips for Preparing for a Successful School Year

Wednesday, August 8, 2018

6:00 to 7:30 pm

Trinitas Children's Therapy Services
Therapy Center
899 Mountain Avenue, Suite 1A,
Springfield, NJ 07081

\$15.00

Did you intend to make this the best school year ever, and by the middle of October the routine has fallen by the wayside? Perhaps your child cannot find his or her homework folder and the daily homework arguments have begun. This workshop will provide suggestions for implementing a routine that works best for your family, including methods to keep school materials organized and end the daily struggle to complete homework.



How to register for the Ten Tips workshops:

Email your name and which workshops you would like to attend (include dates) to Kellianne K. Martin at Kmartin@trinitas.org, or by calling (973) 218-6394, ext. 4135.

HONOR ROLL:

The Staff of Therapy Services

(includes employees and contractors)

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Sherone Lewis	Operations Specialist
Agnes Siracusa	Administrative Assistant

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Sherri Brandthill	
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Stacie Carroll	Sr. Occupational Therapist
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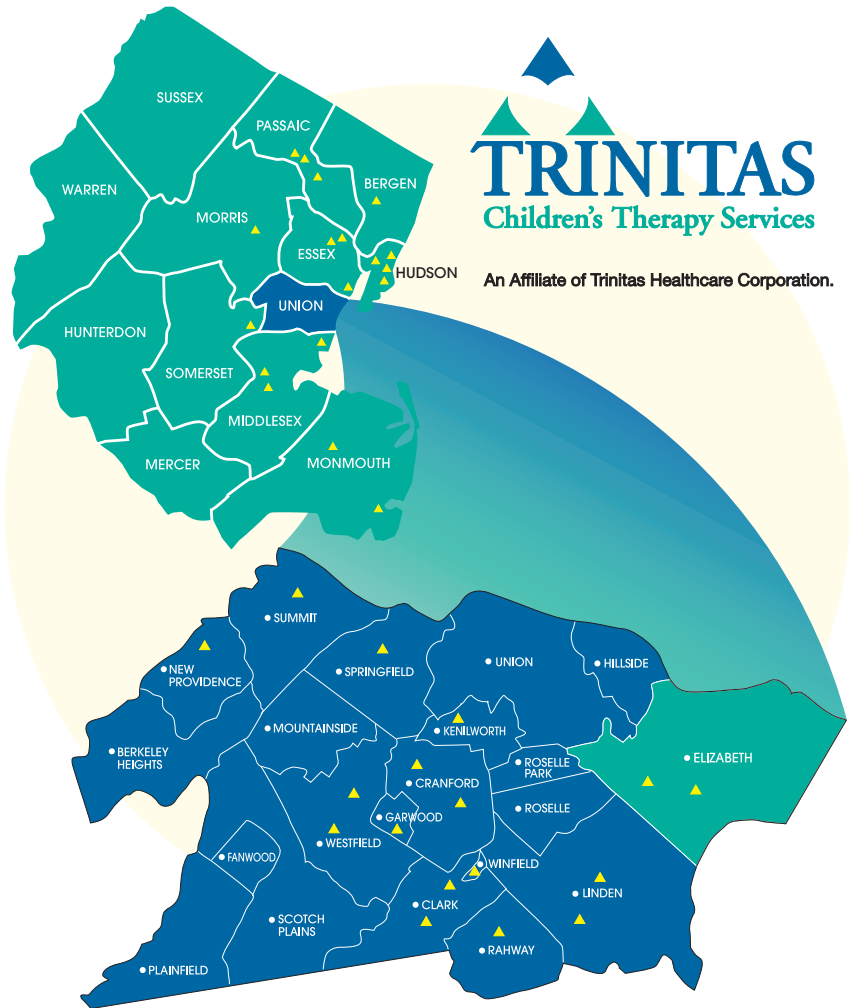
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Jennie Zemel

Where We Are



▲ Trinitas Children's Therapy Services School, District, Educational Services Commission & Community Programs Affiliations

Kidmatters

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Visit us at www.ChildTherapyNJ.com or www.TrinitasRMC.org

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