



A Message From Our Director

Welcome to the first edition of The Therapy Center for Children's Newsletter. Each month you will have the chance to learn about our group of very talented and caring professionals. You will have the opportunity to read some of the frequently asked questions received by parents and some from staff of the local preschools. You can also submit your own questions by visiting our website at www.therapycenterforchildren.com.

We are very excited to announce that we will be starting a group speech therapy session. Please contact us if you are interested in participating.

Christina M. Bellini-Zaher MS, OTR/L

Featured Article

Understanding Early Intervention

Initiating the process of Early Intervention can be a very daunting endeavor. We would like to give you some background information on how Early Intervention came to be and also some frequently asked questions that other parents have submitted.

The New York State Early Intervention Program (EIP) is part of the national Early Intervention Program for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. First created by Congress in 1986 under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the EIP is administered by the New York State Department of Health through the Bureau of Early Intervention. In New York State, the Early Intervention Program is established in Article 25 of the Public Health Law and has been in effect since July 1, 1993.

(See Frequently Asked Questions on page 3)



Spotlight on Our Therapists



Laura Acker

Laura Marie Acker, MA, CCC-SLP received her Masters in Speech Language Pathology from New York University. She has provided pediatric speech services at the Developmental Disabilities Institute Starting Early Program, New York University's Speech/Language/Hearing Clinic and home-based early intervention services for The Therapy Center for Children. Her families describe her as a caring and supportive individual, who takes the family's situation into consideration as she provides guidance and treatment. In a continued effort to meet the needs of her children and their families, Laura is excited to announce she will be leading group speech services.



Lisa Caliguri

Lisa Martinez-Caliguri MA/SLP-CCC;TSLD received her Masters as a Speech Language Pathologist with a concentration in Communication Sciences and Disorders from Long Island University, graduating with honors. Lisa has a diverse pediatric background working in Nassau and Suffolk Boces, the Ladge Speech and Hearing Center and the Marathon Pkwy School. Presently she provides home-based services for The Therapy Center for Children. Lisa is a very caring and patient therapist that is willing to go the extra mile to help a child be successful.

What is a Speech-Language Pathologist?

Speech-language pathologists, sometimes called speech therapists, assess, diagnose, treat, and help to prevent disorders related to speech, language, cognitive-communication, voice, swallowing, and fluency.

Speech-language pathologists work with people who cannot produce speech sounds or cannot produce them clearly; those with speech rhythm and fluency problems, such as stuttering; people with voice disorders, such as inappropriate pitch or harsh voice; those with problems understanding and producing language; those who wish to improve their communication skills by modifying an accent; and those with cognitive communication impairments, such as attention, memory, and problem solving disorders. They also work with people who have swallowing difficulties.

Speech Resources

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association <http://www.asha.org/>

Talk Tools <http://www.talktools.net/>

Apraxia-KIDS <http://www.apraxia-kids.org/>

Speechville Express <http://www.speechville.com/>

Children's Disabilities Information <http://www.childrensdisabilities.info/speech/>

Dr. James D. MacDonald <http://www.jamesdmacdonald.org/>

American Hyperlexia Association <http://www.hyperlexia.org/sp1.html>

Children's Disabilities Information <http://www.childrensdisabilities.info/speech/speechbooks.html>



Frequently Asked Questions About EI

Who is eligible?

Children who are eligible for an evaluation are between the ages of 0-3 years old, suspected of having a developmental delay or children who have a diagnosed condition which leads to a developmental delay.

How do I refer my child?

All referrals should be made to the Division of Services for Children with Special Needs by calling the referral line at (631) 853-3100.

Where can I get my child evaluated?

A Service Coordinator from the Suffolk County Department of Health will bring the family a list of approved evaluators.



The Therapy Center for Children has a contract with Suffolk County to provide these evaluations and services for Early Intervention (EI) and Preschool Special Education.

Key Terms



Each month we will include key terms that are related to Early Intervention (EI) and CPSE. These should help clarify the process for you.

PROMPT Therapy

PROMPT, is a multidimensional, multi-sensory therapeutic system that is holistic and dynamic. PROMPT has often been recognized singularly for its use of tactile-kinesthetic articulatory PROMPTs (cues) on the jaw, face and under the chin, that help to develop or restructure speech production output. In reality, PROMPT is about the dynamic way a child is viewed and treated. Depending on the nature of the delay or disorder this perspective may derive from normal child acquisition models of development or from models that stress maximizing the child's potential in spite of disordered or damaged systems. For more information on PROMPT, you can visit their website at www.promptinstitute.com. We have therapists that are trained in this specialized and elite program.



About Us

Founded by Christina Bellini-Zaher, The Therapy Center for Children, LLC is a company that provides early intervention and pre-school home-based services.

The Therapy Center for Children's philosophy is that by providing these early intervention services, we will assist children to attain their maximum level of independence. This will improve the quality of life of children and their families, and help them to actively participate in the meaningful and significant things that make their lives more purposeful.

Composed of licensed and certified pediatric occupational therapists, physical therapists, psychologists, speech therapists and special educators located in Suffolk County, The Therapy Center for Children has exceptional providers.

The company is NYS Department of Health approved to provide Early Intervention Services and Pre-School services in Suffolk County, New York. All therapist certifications require criminal background checks.

Funding for early intervention services is through Suffolk County and the NYS Department of Health. These services are of no out of pocket cost to families of eligible children. The Therapy Center for Children also provides private pay sessions.



156 North Ocean Avenue
Patchogue, New York 11772

Calendar of Events

February 17-23 - There will be no preschool services because schools are closed for Winter Break.

Contact Us

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Website: therapycenterforchildren.com