

Doctor's Corner by Dr. Raymond Hubbard

1. STAR Patients

Happy Fall! The leaves are changing colors. The air is cooler (I think). The upper respiratory infections (colds and fevers) have hit early. The flu vaccine has arrived on schedule, a sure sign of fall at Reading Pediatrics. Please remember to get your child vaccinated.

Change is constant . Over the past 25 plus years, Reading Pediatrics has gone through many changes. The two-doctor office of Dr. DiRenzo and Dr. Reuben that many of the stalwart families began with has grown to 12 providers and 4 offices. As the practice has aged, so have our patients, including our STARS. This year we will “graduate” as many as 100 STARS. Who will be their doctors? Many people will ask that question. Should we transfer to our family doctor? How will the insurance work? Our children are legally adults now. As a parent, you have been anticipating these questions and have started your own search for answers to these and many other questions. Call Reading Pediatrics if you need a provider who will welcome you into their practice. Graduations are an emotional time, but with planning and support, new doors will open, and an adult STAR will go forth.

2. Sib Shops

I have always loved to read, and summers growing up were spent visiting the library to pick out a stack of books, devouring the stack, and returning for another. Times change, and my reading still involves stacks. But the stacks seem to just pile up at work and home and, if you have not met my briefcase, there as well. My most recent book is entitled Sib Shops: Workshops for Siblings of Children With Special Needs by Donald J. Meyer and Patricia F. Vadasy.

The siblings of children with special healthcare needs (CSHCN) often find themselves in the shadow of their brother or sister. These brothers and sisters of CSHCN carry a unique burden. They are part of the support network for their siblings, and, later in life, may be the sole caretaker for their now aged siblings. Their need for information about their less typical sibling permeates their lives. Siblings Workshops provide the opportunity for brothers and sisters of special needs kids to meet and share information, hopes, crises, and lighter moments with similar aged youths. Sib Shops by Meyer and Vadasy represents a “how-to” manual for creating Sib Shops. Sib Shops can take any structure, but a Sib Shop provides an outlet for typical siblings of CSHCN to share their experiences and have fun. Meyer and Vadasy share the factoid that as few as 20% of typical siblings have met another friend who has a brother or sister with a disability. The parent advisors, Mary, Jo, and the rest of our Family Advisor Group, have begun to plan our own Sib Shop. We will need a few volunteers to help plan and participate in our first group. Generally the siblings we will be focusing on are 8 to 13-year-olds. Please contact Mary Frebel if you or your child have an interest in participating in one of these Sib Shops. More information will be coming. We'll see you in the spring!

Inside this issue:

8JoAnn's Corner/ Mary's Corner	2
Parent Advisor Profiles	3
IMABLE FOUNDATION/ AARON'S ACRES	4
MAKE A WISH FOUNDATION	5
CHATTING WITH QUEEN T / DID YOU KNOW	6
LISTSERV/REQUEST A CASE MANAGER	7
FREE VIDEO RESOURCES	8



HAPPY HALLOWEEN



Mary's Corner By Mary Frebel, RN

610-374-7400 ext. 3150

We've listened to your concerns and are attempting to address them! Yes! There's been some work going on behind the scenes in the area of a 'Sibling Support Group'. We are very excited about its potential and are working hard to make it a go.

While understanding that a child with special healthcare needs many times is the main focus of parents, we also understand that the typical children in the same household have issues that need to be addressed. Reading Pediatrics has been working closely with professionals from Pennsylvania Counseling Services to provide a service to families addressing the siblings of special needs children. It is well known that these siblings have a need to discuss their feelings with professionals and with other children/young adults that have similar family situations. We are hopeful that once the group starts, your typical children will have an opportunity to have fun, make new friends, meet others kids experiencing many of the same feelings they have and understand more about their brother or sister's disability. If your child is between the ages of 8 and 13 please consider this exciting opportunity.

In an attempt to serve the families who would be interested in a Sibling Support group, we are asking you to call me at the office @ 610-374-7400 ext 3150 and be prepared to give the sibling's name, age, phone number and mailing address so we can begin planning this much needed support group for you children. We'd like to get started as soon as possible, so please call early.

We will keep you posted on the progress of this exciting opportunity. Please sign up for our special needs listserv so we can email you the information as it becomes available. To sign up for the listserv, simply log on to www.readingpediatrics.com, click on subscribe to the listserv and type in your email address.

Practice Manager's Corner by Jo Ann Steinmetz

610-374-7400 ext. 3103

TRANSITION

Many of our older star patients (age 20 and older) have received a letter from me to start the transition process from Pediatrics to an adult physician. The physicians at Reading Pediatrics feel it is in the best interest of your child to be followed by an adult practitioner rather than by a pediatrician. Reading Medical Group, which has offices around the county, will assist you in finding an appropriate physician. Our timeline for the transition process is with the next few months. We encourage you to call us for any assistance you may need.

Family Advisor Profiles and Contact Information

WE WOULD LIKE TO INTRODUCE OUR FAMILY ADVISORS TO YOU AND PROVIDE YOU WITH A CONTACT NUMBER IF YOU ARE IN NEED OF PEER SUPPORT OR SIMPLY HAVE A QUESTION THAT YOU THINK THEY MAY BE ABLE TO ANSWER.

(Listed in alphabetical order)

CHRIS FLAMM

Chris is the mother of Amy, her daughter with Down Syndrome, born 1-26-97. She and her husband also have three typical sons, James, Cooper and Steven. Chris can be reached by calling 610-779-8446.

NOE GATTONE

Noe is the mother of Greg, her son with Down Syndrome, born 10-17-89. She and her husband also have a typical younger daughter, Nikki. Noe has been actively involved working with daycare centers in the area of inclusion of special needs children. Noe is active in the Down Syndrome Parents Network and can be reached by calling 610-929-8189 or by email: gregnoe1psu@comcast.net. For more information, you may also visit the network's web site www.dspn.org

MARIAN GEHMAN

Marian is the mother of Julia, born 5-7-02; her daughter who has profound mental retardation, cortical vision impairment and intractable epilepsy. Julia is wheelchair bound and G-tube fed. Marian and her husband, Tim, have three other typical children, Jenny, Jared and Jessica. Marian is a former Special Education teacher and can be reached by calling 610-777-3809 or by email: mariangehman@juno.com

ANN MILLER

Ann is the mother of Olivia, her daughter with a preliminary diagnosis of Sotos Syndrome and Agenesis of the Corpus Collosum, born 7-31-00. Olivia has global delays including gross motor, fine motor, speech and cognitive that are greater than 25%. Olivia's specialists along with her parents are continuing to search for answers in an attempt to attain an actual diagnosis. Ann and her husband also have two typical children, Michael, and Hannah. Ann can be reached by calling 610-385-0933 or by email: annmiller@dejazzed.com

LINDA PALM

Linda is the mother of Christopher Starke, her son with Cerebral Palsy and severe, profound mental retardation, born 7-21-80. Linda has years of experience with medical assistance and can provide you with a wealth of knowledge in that area. Linda can be reached by calling 610-678-8995 or by email: LindaP53@comcast.net

MELISSA SOWERS

Melissa is the mother of Stephanie, her daughter with Cystic Fibrosis, born 8-7-97. Stephanie is an active elementary school student in the Wilson School District. Melissa and her husband also have a younger son, Eric, who is not affected by CF. Melissa can be reached by calling 610-678-8816 or by email: msowers12@hotmail.com

AMY SNYDER, RN

Amy is the mother of Nicholas, son with Autism, born 8-7-97. Amy and her husband also have a typical older son, Jacob. Amy is a nurse in the Emergency Room at the Reading Hospital and can be reached by calling 610-796-1860 or by email: amysnest@msn.com

CAROL WENRICH

Carol is the mother of Adam, born 6-14-01, with complex congenital heart defects and without a spleen. Adam also suffered a stroke before he was 3 months old leaving him with a mild form of Cerebral Palsy. Adam wears a leg brace and has received Botox injections. Carol and her husband, Darrell, also have an older daughter, Emily. Carol can be reached by calling 610-693-9607 or by email: brspri@aol.com

DONNA WOLF

Donna is the mother of Kyle, her son with Down Syndrome, born 6-23-97. She and her husband, Mike, also have a typical younger daughter, Taylor. Kyle attends elementary school in the Wilson School District. Donna is actively involved with the Eastern PA Down Syndrome Center and can be reached by calling 610-777-0758 or by email: wolfgsx@verizon.net

IMABLE FOUNDATION

Individuals Molding Attitudes that Become Life's Essentials

Our Mission: The IM ABLE Foundation enriches lives through raising awareness about physical fitness possibilities for disabled people and encouraging and enabling disabled children to be more active.

We aim to help disabled children become more active by exposing them to fitness equipment such as handcycles that they can operate regardless of their limitations. In addition, the foundation wants to create more understanding and acceptance from able-bodied children so they feel more comfortable dealing with their disabled counterparts. Showing able-bodied children that disabled children can be as active as them will help the bond between the two groups. We will be holding demonstrations with the newly purchased hand cycles and will be showcasing the abilities of all the kids at our November 17th Inaugural Gala Kickoff. If you are interested in getting your disabled or able-bodied child on a handcycle or would like to join us at the Gala please email Chris at chris@gotthenerve.org.

Christopher T. Kaag

Founder / President

chris@gotthenerve.org

610.413.9795



www.gotthenerve.org • www.corpsfitness.net

AARON'S ACRES RESPITE PROGRAM

FALL 2007-SPRING 2008

Where: Ephrata, Lancaster and Reading

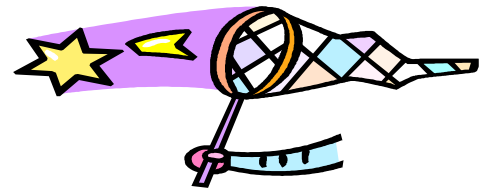
When: On a monthly basis for 2 ½ hours

These programs enable children and adolescents who have developmental disabilities to have the opportunity to interact with their peers in a supervised, recreational, structured setting. With a low staff to child ratio, children have the opportunity to participate at their comfort level while being supported and encouraged to socialize and communicate with others through a variety of activities. A nurse is present at each respite site.

For more information: call Risa Paskoff, MSW, ACSW, Director, at 717-917-6101 or e-mail at paskoffj@aol.com

Note: This is a fee-based program
Call Risa for rates





Make a Wish

Want To Be A Hero In A Child's Life?

Refer a Child to the Make-A-Wish Foundation® Today

For children diagnosed with life-threatening medical conditions, life can be an emotional rollercoaster ride. The child and his or her family may feel that the future is dark and uncertain. But to a family going through such an ordeal, a wish can be an island of hope in a sea of despair.

The Make-A-Wish Foundation of Greater Pennsylvania & Southern West Virginia fulfills wishes for children between the ages of 2½ and under 18 who have a diagnosed life-threatening medical condition. Life-threatening conditions that generally qualify include, but are not limited to, various forms of cancer, Duchenne muscular dystrophy and transplants. The Foundation relies solely on the child's specialist to determine whether the child's illness is life threatening and would therefore qualify for our services. Generally, children with chronic conditions such as diabetes or developmental delays do not qualify.

The age of the child and life-threatening condition of the illness are the only factors in the qualifying process. Other issues, such as economic background, are not considered in qualification.

A referral can come from anyone, even the children themselves. Referrals can be submitted by mailing, phoning, faxing or e-mailing the referral to the Make-A-Wish office.

One who is referring a child is asked to provide some basic information: name, address, phone number, age, parents' names, sibling names, doctor's name and phone number, illness, and the referrer's name and phone number. The Foundation asks anyone making a referral to check with the child's family first to make sure they are comfortable with it.

Dr. Vincent Albo, a retired pediatric oncologist at Children's Hospital, has stated, "By granting a wish, the Make A Wish Foundation cannot cure the disease but can help immeasurably in supporting and encouraging the child and the family to take a positive attitude toward the treatment and the outcome. There are people out there who want to get well. Maybe granting the wish will help to make the treatment more tolerable and make it possible to get through the bad times. Attitude toward cure is very important to attaining that cure and anything done to build and sustain the positive attitude will have a significant impact on disease control and cure."

Referring a child takes only a few minutes, but the memories of a wish last a lifetime. If you know of a child who may qualify, please contact the Pottsville Make-A-Wish Office at the numbers below:

Toll Free: (888) 545-9474

Phone: (570) 622-6962

Fax: (570) 622-3644

Email: greaterpa@wishworld.org

Visit our Web site at www.wishgreaterpa.org

Chatting with Queen T

I would like to say Thank You to JoAnn Steinmetz, our Practice Manager, for participating in the 60 mile breast cancer walk. She made it with only a couple of blisters and sore joints. I am sure it was very rewarding for her.

On another note, the March Of Dimes is having their annual Blue Jeans For Babies. This will be held on Monday, November 5th. We at Reading Pediatrics are participating by buying buttons, which may be purchased from me. We are showing our support by wearing blue jeans every Friday through November and on November 5th. Thanks to all who participate in helping our babies!

Did You Know?

Sears Portrait Studio is offering a FREE 8X10 and sitting fee for those families that schedule a photo session. Just mention that your child is in the Special Needs Program @ Reading Pediatrics.

If your child has a diagnosis of Juvenile Diabetes you are eligible for secondary Medical Assistance to help defray medical expenses. Please contact our office for an application.

Another local dentist, Dr. Blackburn, has a hygienist who has a son with Autism and is very knowledgeable working with special needs children. Please contact their office for more information: 610-375-3366

You may contact our parent advisors if you have specific questions regarding your child and issues you may need another parent's advice on. Please read their profiles in this issue.

If your child has a developmental disability, is over 3 years of age and not potty trained, that child qualifies for diapers through medical assistance. Please call our office for a prescription to take to your pharmacy.

Parent Education Network (PEN) can answer many of your questions regarding education law. They can provide you with literature, IEP information and much, much more. Please call them with your questions @ 800-522-5827

Please Join Our Special Needs Listserv

We are asking all of you to sign up for our 'special needs listserv' so that we can communicate important information to you in a timely fashion. There are many things that we do not get a chance to communicate to you since they occur between newsletter publications. We have decided to add the option of a listserv for our special needs families to address that issue. This will also be our way of inviting you to read our most recent newsletter issue. The color copy is very enjoyable to read on-line.

Please consider joining by logging on to our website, www.readingpediatrics.com and click on subscribe to the listserv and type in your email address.

It's that simple!



REQUEST A CASE MANAGER

By Melissa Sowers



Over the past eleven years of dealing with insurance on a regular basis, due to my daughter's medical condition, the best advice I can give to other parents regarding insurance is to request a case manager for your child through your primary insurance provider. The case manager usually has a medical background and is actually there to help you! This individual becomes your primary contact for your insurance needs and will expedite many processes. I also encourage you to give this person's contact information to your pharmacist, nurses, medical equipment company and of course, the doctors that care for your child. They will often contact the case manager themselves, which is a huge help to you. The case manager is someone who will become familiar with your child and his or her needs. There is no need to explain and re-explain your child's medical background to a different claims representative each time you call. Your child's case manager is your contact. All you need to do is call your insurance carrier and request a case manager due to

Bureau of Autism Services, PA Dept of Public Welfare: free video resources

The Bureau of Autism Services announces the Department of Public Welfare's sponsored sessions at the 2007 National Autism Conference at Penn State are now available online. Those sessions may be viewed free in video (Broadband and Quicktime or Windows Media Player Required) and audio (.mp3) formats.

Session 28: Innovative Models of Collaboration: Pilot Programs I-IV

Presented by Philhaven, Keystone, Watson Institute, Western Psychiatric Institute

Session 42: Innovative Models of Collaboration: Pilot Programs V-VIII

Presented by the Center for Autism, SPIN, ABOARD, Gertrude Barber National Institute

Session 66: A Personal Perspective on ASD: Parent and Sibling Panels

Parent Panel: David R. Fine, Roy Diamond, Jillian Duhl, Patty Harvan, Sabra Townsend

Sibling Panel: Karen Azarian, Catherine Cristinzio, S. Paul Prior, Emily R. Harvan

Session 87: PBS (Positive Behavior Support) and Behavior Assessment for Home and School

Presented by Claire Maher Choutka, M.Ed., BCBA, BAS Clinical Director,

Stacy Nonnemacher, M.Ed., BAS Clinical Consultant

[For these sessions, please visit <http://pspb.org/live/autism/>

Session 86: The Law of Generalization: Taking Education Beyond the Classroom Setting

Presented by Ira M. Fingles, Esq.; Hinkle, Fingles, & Prior

[For this session, please visit <http://streams.wpsx.psu.edu/index2.html>

Amber Mintz

Bureau of Autism Services

Department of Public Welfare

7th and Forster Sts.

Harrisburg, PA 17120

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