

Wee Speech /Timber Ridge News

October 2011

Upcoming Presentation

Please join us on **November 10, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.** for an evening of important and timely information. Jill Calian, Special Education Attorney, will speak to us about ensuring the performance of a child's IEP and Dr. Shana Erenberg, Psychoeducational Diagnostician and Remediation Specialist, will address the need for and use of outside educational evaluations. Please see the attached flyer for additional details.

Winter Party

Save the date for our annual Winter Party December 8th from 6:30p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Watch this space for details about our special guest!

Julie Levin, Laura Drower, Wee Speech, P.C.
Lisa Barich, PT
Laura Goltz, Timber Ridge

October Birthdays!

Lelia P.	10/3
Henry L.	10/5
Will B.	10/13
Tova K.	10/17
Gretchen S.	10/20
Jack M.	10/22
JJ B.	10/28



Web Site

Guess How Many?

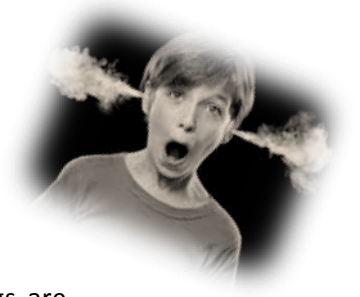
Calvin E. is the winner of our September Guess How Many? Congratulations Calvin. Each month we fill our Guess How Many Jar with some fun items and children are encouraged to fill out a slip with their guess (**Don't forget your last name or initial.**). The envelope for guesses is on the bulletin board in the Clinic waiting room. The drawing is at the end of the month and a special prize awaits the winner!!

<http://dyslexia.yale.edu/aboutdyslexia.html>

The Yale Center for Dyslexia & Creativity serves as a nexus for research on dyslexia, and is as well a leading source of advocacy and information to better the lives of people with dyslexia.

TARGETING GUIDANCE FOR EFFECTIVE OUTCOMES

Dr. Mark Melton, LCSW



When children display challenging behaviors, many reactions occur that may compromise the effectiveness of the adult's role in supporting them. Often, parents report feeling frustrated, angry, embarrassed, and personally attacked when their children do not perform according to their direction. These feelings are honest and should not be discounted or ignored. Parents are people, too. As simple as that sounds, I talk with many parents who hold themselves hostage to challenging behavior and begin to question their skills and abilities for parenting their children, especially if one of those children has special needs.

While all children are unique, children with special needs tend to share some characteristics:

- ❖ A tendency toward rigidity and difficulty shifting away from their own ideas to join with others' ideas or plans.
- ❖ Difficulty generalizing information from one setting to another.
- ❖ Failure to read the cues of others.
- ❖ Problems with auditory processing.
- ❖ The need for ongoing, consistent patterning to learn concepts that usually "assumed" by their peers through observation and experience.

These characteristics predispose parents to fail when using "typical parenting" skills to guide their children. And, let's be honest, most people only know how to "typically parent." This is not a failure on the parents' part. Rather, it indicates the need for parents to assume strategies that will be equally as comfortable for them while targeting the behavioral challenges that warrant attention.

When children engage in challenging behaviors, we typically escalate our responses to "get things under control." Numerous studies suggest that this response leads to increased blood pressure, decreased flexibility in thinking, and reactive strategies that tend to punish rather than teach. For children with special needs, teaching (patterning) is a necessary component for learning, even in the behavioral domain. My goal in supporting parents is to help them take on strategies that they can feel comfortable in using and modifying for greater ease, while promoting relationships with their children, particularly in difficult times. What follows are some basic approaches to support that effort.

- ❖ When children begin to escalate their behavior, find a "calm space" and assume an authoritative stance so that they can view your apparent change in behavior. This helps them notice that you are in charge and gives you the opportunity to "find your thinking" before intervening.
- ❖ Reduce your explanations and reasoning and simply state what you would like your child to say or do. For example, "Show a quiet side now." or "Change your mind to my idea." By providing simple direction, you remain focused on your specific goal and your child is more able to process the information and organize a response. I call this "building their GPS" so they will begin to self-manage within your parameters.
- ❖ Positively comment on those things you like to see as often as possible. For example, "Oh my! You're already at the table. I just called you. Wow!" or "That's a nice outfit. You are really good at picking out clothes for a 4th grader." Noting the positive things about your child when you are not engaged in conflict will promote their alliance with you and give you another focus than intervening around negative behaviors. We all like positive attention and tend to "perform" for those people who admire us!

Unfortunately, there are no "quick fixes" for addressing the numerous developmental issues that impact behavioral performance. However, parents can adopt approaches for use in these difficult moments to teach, pattern, and provide corrective experiences that provide greater comfort while promoting change.
