

SONNENBERG CONSULTANTS NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2009

Company News

- ❖ The new year is coming sooner than we think! Please let your Senior know if your availability will change asap.
- ❖ If you are sick, please do not come into work that day as we do not want the child to become sick as well or pass it along to anyone else.
- ❖ If you do have to call in, call both the family and your Senior.
- ❖ Set up a make-up time with the family when you call in.

Fundraiser

Senior, Char Geissman has started a fundraiser at Mariah's Bar in Kenosha.

During preset times, any tips Char receives are matched by the bar's owner and are donated to Every Child's Place.

Every Child's Place is the only daycare in the Kenosha area that will accept ANY child!

Every Child's Place is an invaluable asset to so many families.

Char raised \$550 in the month of November!

Upcoming Times: Fri. Dec. 11th

7—11p.m.



Family Groups

Starting in January 2010!

- ❖ **Parent Support Group**
 - This will be a meeting for parents to get together and converse about anything that is on their mind. Some meetings may have local speakers come in.
- ❖ **Sibling Support Group**
 - This will be a time for all of the siblings to come together and have a place where other children understand exactly what they are each going through!
 - There will be round tables, numerous different activities, and, most of all, fun!
- ❖ **Volunteers**
 - Paid volunteers are needed for each group.
 - Can volunteer for one, a few, or all groups!
- ❖ **Contact Information**
 - Dates and times of meetings are TBA.
 - If you are interested please contact Char Geissman:
262-496-8735
cgeissman@hotmail.com

December 2009

Autism treatment works in kids as young as 18 mos.

Published - Nov 30 2009 02:12AM CST

By LINDSEY TANNER - AP Medical Writer

CHICAGO- The first rigorous study of behavior treatment in autistic children as young as 18 months found two years of therapy can vastly improve symptoms, often resulting in a milder diagnosis.

The study was small _ just 48 children evaluated at the University of Washington _ but the results were so encouraging it has been expanded to several other sites, said Geraldine Dawson, chief science officer of the advocacy group Autism Speaks. Dawson, a former University of Washington professor, led the research team.

Early autism treatment has been getting more attention, but it remains controversial because there's scant rigorous evidence showing it really works. The study is thus "a landmark of great import," said Tony Charman, an autism education specialist at the Institute of Education in London.

There's also a growing emphasis on diagnosing autism at the earliest possible age, and the study shows that can pay off with early, effective treatment, said Laura Schreibman, an autism researcher at the University of California at San Diego.

The National Institute of Mental Health funded the study, which was published online Monday in Pediatrics.

Children aged 18 months to 30 months were randomly assigned to receive behavior treatment called the Early Start Denver model from therapists and parents, or they were referred to others for less comprehensive care.

The therapy is similar to other types of autism behavior treatment. It focused on social interaction and communication _ which are both difficult for many autistic children. For example, therapists or parents would repeatedly hold a toy near a child's face to encourage the child to have eye contact _ a common problem in autism. Or they'd reward children when they used words to ask for toys.

Children in the specialized group had four hours of therapist-led treatment five days a week, plus at least five hours weekly from parents.

After two years, IQ increased an average of almost 18 points in the specialized group, versus seven points in the others. Language skills also improved more in the specialized group. Almost 30 percent in the specialized group were re-diagnosed with a less severe form of autism after two years, versus 5 percent of the others. No children were considered "cured."

Ashton Faller of Everett, Wash., got specialized treatment, starting at age 2.

"He had no verbal speech whatsoever, no eye contact, he was very withdrawn," recalled his mother, Lisa Faller.

Within two years, Ashton had made "amazing" gains, she said. Now almost 6, he's in a normal kindergarten class, and though he still has mild delays in social skills, people have a hard time believing he is autistic, Faller said.

The treatment is expensive; participants didn't pay, but it can cost \$50,000 a year, Dawson said. Some states require insurers to cover such costs, and Autism Speaks is working to expand those laws.

On the Net: Pediatrics: <http://www.pediatrics.org>

Walk Now for Autism

We know winter has definitely arrived! So, while you're inside warming up with some hot cocoa and thinking of those New Year's resolutions, make one to walk or volunteer for autism this spring or summer.

Walks are held in both Milwaukee and Chicago.

If you are interested you can register on your own or contact your Senior as some therapists have already started registering!

If enough people from our company want to participate we can set up a company group and carpool!

Milwaukee- May 1, 2010

Chicago- May 15, 2010

Congrats Ericka and Lee on baby Fiona!

