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**March/April/May/June
2011 News**

Yummy Treats!

Enjoy this recipe from ITSJC
Dietitian & Family Service
Coordinator, Chrissy Stewart,
MS RD LD CNSD!

Jungle Monkey Smoothie!

Ingredients:

- 1 cup low fat vanilla or banana yogurt
- ¾ cup fat-free milk
- 1 medium banana, frozen
- 3 tablespoons sugar-free chocolate drink mix (such as Carnation Instant Breakfast)
- ¼ teaspoon vanilla extract

Instructions:

Combine all ingredients in blender until smooth. Pour into three glasses and enjoy immediately.

ITS BITS Infant Toddler Services of Johnson County Newsletter

From The Director's Chair...



It has been a busy past few months here at Infant Toddler Services! We have been incredibly lucky to have a group of friends to support us. Infant Toddler Services of Johnson County has a support system from their "Friends." Friends of Infant Toddler Services was created 9 years ago to provide funding for programs to support the families we serve. We have seen that support grow and expand especially in the last 2 years and in the past few months.

Friends of Infant Toddler Services recently hosted two of our fundraisers for the year! In April, the Stepping Stones Gala-Spring Toward Success raised over \$97,000 and just this month we participated as a Charity Partner in the Hospital Hill Run, which raised over \$13,000! We are so grateful for the immense amount of support we received for both of these events! We feel so fortunate to have such an amazing group of supporters! All proceeds from these events allows Friends of Infant Toddler Services to provide funding for many programs, including Playful Potentials, swim classes, community based playgroups, a bereavement fund and our newly established Special Assistance Fund. Playful Potentials is the equipment



**Friends of Infant Toddler
Services of Johnson
County
(FITS)**

**A word from Hillary
Guenther, President of
FITS Board of Directors...**

**Friends of Infant Toddler
Services is excited to
host our 2nd Annual
Family Fun Day for any
and all ITSJC families!**

**Past graduates, current
children of ITSJC and
their families are all
invited to enjoy the
morning at Deanna Rose
Farmstead!**

**Join us for Chris Cakes
pancakes and free
admission to the
farmstead on
Saturday, September 17,
2011 from
9am- 11am. (Free
admission for our
families and pancakes
will be served at this
time.)**

**This event is free of
charge for any families**

loaner program. Families are able to try equipment before they purchase it. The swim classes allow an opportunity for parents to learn how to play with their children in the pool and bathtub. The community based playgroups allow an opportunity for children to play at an area gym and work on their developmental skills during the colder months of the year. The bereavement fund assists families with final expenses if their child passes away while enrolled in our program. The Special Assistance Fund is used to assist families in purchasing equipment when all other funding sources have been exhausted. This fund has assisted families in purchasing an iPad and orthotics. All of these worthwhile programs would not be possible without the generous support of our donors. Please join us for our next important and FUN fundraiser....the 2nd Annual Helping Toddlers Make The Turn Golf Tournament on October 7, 2011 to continue to support these important programs and to help create new ways for us to support the children and families ITSJC serves.

I also wanted to share that in March, I had an opportunity to meet with Legislators to talk about Infant Toddler Services and the 1,300 families we serve. Prior to those meetings, we had families, therapists and teachers videotape their support of Infant Toddler Services and we were able to hand deliver DVDs to Legislators from their constituents. Their stories were able to make a huge impact on our representatives and senators.

We are so thankful for our Friends!

Sincerely,
Amy Owens
Executive Director



It's time for our

currently enrolled in ITSJC or who have received services from ITSJC in the past. This event is a special way for us to celebrate ALL of the amazing accomplishments the children of ITSJC achieve each and every day!

Make sure you mark your calendar and join us for our Family Fun Day!

Friends of Infant Toddler Services is funded solely on private donations and fundraising events. The need far exceeds the means. Donate today and help us continue these important programs and services.

Visit our website to make your tax-deductible contribution:

www.itsjc.org

AROUND TOWN!

July 16th
9:00-3:00
Happy First Birthday
Bash

Parenting Children
With Special Needs
Magazine!

Come celebrate PCWSN Magazine's 1st Birthday at Deanna Rose Farmstead in Overland Park! Check out their flyer [here](#). This is a free event.

~2nd Annual Helping Toddlers Make The Turn~ Golf Tournament!

REGISTRATION IS OPEN!

Friday, October 7th

1:00 pm Shot Gun Start
Lunch, Dinner, Awards Reception, Prizes, Raffle,
Silent Auction

Creekmoor Golf Course
~Home of the US Open Qualifying Tournament and
the LONGEST Par 5 in Kansas City!
A spectacular course!~

Sponsorship Opportunities Available

We hope you join us for a day in the sun and help benefit some very special children and their families! Register your team today by visiting www.itsjc.org or calling Katie Maupin at 913-432-2900 ext 124.

Teams are welcomed to play on behalf of a child currently being served or has been served by ITSJC!

Every Step You Took - Lent A Helping Hand!

CONGRATULATIONS to all of our runners, walkers and volunteers who participated in the 38th Annual Hospital Hill Run that took place on Saturday, June 4th! We had over 75 participants supporting our cause!

Because of the generosity of all of our donors and participants, we were able to raise over \$13,000! The proceeds will benefit programs and expanded services for the ITS children that are provided by Friends of Infant Toddler Services!

Check out some of the photos below!



A Special Thank You!

We would like to sincerely thank the Junior League of Kansas City, MO for awarding us a grant that helped us purchase 8 new laptop computers for our Family Service Coordinators! Our Coordinators were jumping for joy (literally!) the day they received their new laptops! We are so grateful for this special group of women who help so many amazing organizations in our community! Thank you again Junior League of Kansas City!



Our Family Service Coordinators and their new laptops!



Make sure you join our group on Facebook!



**Our Featured Kiddo - Brynn!
Written by proud mom, Heather**

For those who have met my 2 year old daughter, Brynn, you know that it doesn't take long before her infectious smile, easy-going personality, and affectionate nature have you wrapped around her little finger. She smiles constantly, loves to explore anything new, and has taught me more than I ever thought possible.

Simply log into your Facebook account, search for "Friends of Infant Toddler Services of Johnson County" and click "Like."

We will be sending out lots of tips, tidbits, news and helpful information that you won't want to miss!

Thanks for joining us on Facebook and make sure to spread the word about our organization to your friends and family!

Join Our Mailing List!



Brynn was born without any complications or problems during pregnancy, and was a very easy-going, happy baby. We didn't realize anything was amiss until we had our Parents As Teachers coordinator evaluate her at 12 months. Brynn scored a "0" on gross motor skills, with fine motor skills not far behind. At this point we contacted ITSJC for help. Brynn started working with occupational and physical therapists and we began implementing changes in our routine that would challenge her motor skills. We discovered that Brynn's feet were over-pronated and needed to be fitted for orthotics to assist in her balance and muscle growth. We also began to discover that Brynn has quite a few sensory issues. She seeks proprioceptive input, which explained some of her odd behaviors (like needing to press the top of her head into the floor, and trying to balance her full weight on the top sides of her toes.) She doesn't want to touch or eat any foods that are mushy, wet, or cold. All of these issues were addressed by ITSJC and we were given things to try to help.

Brynn did start to make progress, but it was slow. When she turned 18 months old and still wasn't walking, our pediatrician referred us to a neurologist. A month later we received the results of her blood work-up and were told that Brynn has a rare chromosome disorder - her particular deletion and duplication have never been documented. The same week we were given this information, Brynn's wellness checkup showed that her head circumference had not grown in 6 months, which concerned her doctor greatly. We had several terrifying weeks as we waited for an MRI worrying that her brain had started to atrophy or that there was a tumor. Brynn's PT, Jeannine, received several desperate phone calls from me during those weeks! She was such a comfort to us, and so full of hope. Brynn had recently started to talk and walk and was making such strides in her progress it didn't seem possible that her brain could be starting to atrophy. Jeannine was always available to calm my fears and help me understand what was going on. I was so, so grateful to have ITS by my side that month!

Brynn's MRI showed some scar tissue, but no atrophy, so the doctors concluded that her head size would most likely be small due to her chromosome disorder. Our next step was to visit a Genetics doctor to find out "what to expect" for Brynn. The best news we could have received was that her disorder is not degenerative in any way - what she has, she has. (Yes, I cried with relief!) The fact that Brynn's particular disorder hasn't been documented before has its good and bad sides. We really don't know what to expect, so planning for the future is vague. We joined an online support group for families with kids having chromosome disorders (*Unique*) and through them we received all

Too HOT to go outside!

Check out some of these fun things to do with your kids when the weather is just too hot to handle!

- Break out the playdough!
- Fill a tupperware tote with sand and have fun creating your own indoor sandcastles!
- Play hide and seek
- Break out the boardgames
- Color, finger paint or create your own art center!
- Help mommy or daddy add some ice cream to chocolate chip cookies and enjoy a tasty ice cream cookie sandwich!
- Head to your local library and read some books to your little one!
- Blow bubbles ... in the bathtub!
- Set up your own bowling alley! Stack plastic cups in a pyramid and roll a ball in the hallway to knock them down!

-Let your child help you with the dishes! Select some plastic bowls, wooden spoons, plastic cups, etc and let your child help you wash the dishes with cool, soapy bubbles!

kind of information. There have been many studies on people with Brynn's deletion, as well as studies on people with her duplication.

There is no way to know how Brynn's combination of the two will turn out, but we did learn that 94% of the kids with her deletion have heart defects. And a large percentage of those studied also have vision issues.

A little bit ago, Brynn had an echocardiogram and EKG of her heart, and seems to have fallen into the 6% that does *not* have a defect! We also had her vision checked last week with a Children's Mercy Ophthalmologist and discovered her vision is also normal. We are very, very fortunate so far that Brynn's disorder is leaning toward the mild side, and have the deepest sympathy for the families who get the opposite kind of news. Through all this, Brynn has continued to receive therapy through ITS. We have been teaching Brynn basic sign language, which she loves, and has finally been able to start communicating some of her desires. The first time she signed that she wanted milk, I thought I might burst from happiness!

Brynn's Speech Therapist, Becky, has become another champion along the way. She's gotten us involved in a research study with Juniper Gardens to give us even more tools to help Brynn learn to communicate. We are seeing new signs and hearing new words every week!

Brynn will be 2 and ½ soon, and I hate to think of our time with ITS being over in a few months. They have been such an incredible resource and support team, and have become great friends along the way. I am constantly inspired by Brynn, and although I know the future holds challenges for us as a family with a special needs child, it is wonderful to know that we are not alone.

Calling All Families....

Spring Toward Success was a SUCCESS!

The Board of Directors of Friends of Infant

Toddler Services would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all of our sponsors, supporters and attendees for their support at the 9th Annual Stepping Stones Gala! We are proud to announce that we raised over \$97,000! All proceeds will benefit new and extended services for the children of ITSJC! All of our "extra" programs are funded through Friends

SPRING TOWARD SUCCESS

EVENT PHOTOS!

Enjoy these photos from Friends of Infant Toddler Services of Johnson County's 9th Annual Stepping Stones Gala Live & Silent Auction!



Silent Auction



Balloon Arch courtesy of Carol Miner with Balloon Garden. Thank you, Carol!



Sweet Treats table! Decor by Ashley Hutteger. Thank you, Ashley!

of Infant Toddler Services, such as Adapted Aquatics, Community Based Playgroups, Special Assistance Fund, Playful Potentials, Funeral Assistance Fund and more!

Our theme this year was "Spring Toward Success" and after all the snowy weather this winter, the bright colors, beautiful flowers and spring decor were a breath of fresh air!

A very special thank you to this year's Honorary Chairs, Joe & Marla Hildebrand and our Event Chairs, Samuel & Hillary Guenther! We are sincerely grateful for their hard work and support and could not have had such a successful event without them!

We also would like to thank our 2011 Stepping Stones Gala Sponsors. A heartfelt thank you to...

Presenting Sponsor:

Andrea Costley with MaryKay

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Friends of Friends of Infant Toddler Services
Joe & Marla Hildebrand
JE Dunn Family and The Conley Family
Johnson County Anesthesia
Lansing Trade Group
Lee Jeans
Marathon Solutions*



Our surprise guest, Mamie the Monkey from Savannahland Educational Park!



Heads or Tails!



And the Heads or Tails winner received...an iPad2!



Our fabulous Emcee, Matt Stewart, KCTV5. Thank you, Matt!

iPad Apps!

For those families who have iPads, check out these applications that you can download to help stimulate your child's development:

*Metcalf Bank
RE Pedrotti Company
The Sorg Family
Westport Anesthesia of Kansas, PA*

Supporting Sponsors:

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Olathe Medical Center
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And many many thanks to all of the companies, businesses and individuals who donated literally hundreds of items for our live and silent auction, to all of the FITS Board Members, volunteers, parents, families and/or individuals who contributed their time, talent, energy and generosity to our cause!

Introducing ITSJC New Assistant Director...

Infant Toddler Services of Johnson County is proud to announce Kristin Wertz as Assistant Director. Kristin has worked for ITSJC since 1993 as an occupational therapist and most recently as a family service coordinator. She has served on the ITS board of directors for two years. Kristin and her husband Todd have been married 23 years and have 2 daughters in college and a daughter and a son in high school. Kristin states "I am very excited and honored to be serving such a wonderful organization with such amazing families and providers". One of Kristin's favorite quotes is "You will always be your child's favorite toy" ~Vicky Lansky

Taken from "Ten Emotions- How to recognize and value emotions beginning at birth." Written by Parenting Counts

Recognizing Emotions: Happiness, Distress, Interest, Sadness, Anger, Surprise, Disgust, Fear, Embarrassment, Shame

Children can giggle with joy one moment and cry in sadness the next. Children feel these emotions strongly. Just because they have these feelings doesn't mean they know how to cope with them. Children need you to teach them about feelings.

Emotions start at birth, and every child feels emotions in unique ways. Helping your child learn about feelings is an important part of parenting. When you share emotional moments with your child, you grow closer together.

Drawstars- This app lets you draw with your finger- great for fine motor skills!

Talking Tom, Talking Hippo, Talking Ben- In these apps, the fun and cute characters repeat everything the child says to it.

Itsy Bitsy Spider- Is an interactive application your child will love to play with!

<http://www.handeholder.com/> & <http://modulrcase.com/>

- Are websites that includes adaptive ways to hold your iPad.

One child may show every emotion, while another may be more withdrawn and quiet. Your job is to recognize your child's feelings and to respond when needed. During emotional moments, here are some helpful steps to consider:

Listen: A caring ear can work wonders, especially when your child knows that feelings are normal and that you understand them.

Name the emotion: Help your child learn about emotions by naming them. Naming emotions can have a calming effect, and it helps your child discover more about what emotions are and how they work.

Find solutions: When emotions are strong, talk with your child about feelings and about appropriate behavior.

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