

ITS Bits

March/ April 2008

Infant- Toddler Services of Johnson County



OUR FEATURED LOGO

Our feature this month is our new logo. We would like to thank Kristin Keller for donating her time and creativity to this project. We are very grateful. We asked for a design that was bright with colors. We also wanted one that represents all of the children and families that Infant Toddler serves. The child is the center of all that we do, the logo represents that well.

OUR FEATURED KIDDO

Would you like your child to be the "Featured Kid" in future issues of ITS BITS? Contact Erica at ericaf70@everestkc.net and your child could have his or her 15 minutes of fame.

Making it work

How to make therapy "work" for every family? Parenting comes with so many unknowns. When is the right time to start solid food? How should I discipline my child? What toy helps with development? When you have a child with special needs, there are so many questions. What do I do if he will not put anything in his mouth to eat? What can I do to make my child behave better when we are at Target? What can I do while we are playing to help my child talk?

Infant Toddler Services is here to assist parents with activities during day to day routines to stimulate development. Routines include things like bath time, meal time, play dates and time spent in the community. Parents are their child's first teachers and know their child better than anyone else. The therapists and teachers with Infant Toddler Services are here to support parents as they learn about development and ways to incorporate developmental activities into everyday life. There are many ways to do this. Here are just a few examples. If your child enjoys bath time, use that time to work on naming objects, saying animal sounds or identifying body parts. If meal time is a nightmare, problem solving with your therapist in how to incorporate choices of food, favorite utensils or asking his/her sibling to encourage tasting new foods. It is our honor to assist families in exploring ways to make "therapy" easy to do

Letters from our families

My son Corbin has been working with Mrs. Laurie since early this year, 2007. Our time with her will soon be ending and we are working on transitioning to the Olathe School District. However I didn't want our past year with Mrs. Laurie to be over looked. Laurie has made a huge impact on our family. Without her and her expertise, Corbin would not be as far as he is today. Laurie is excellent with Corbin, she has been able to adapt her training to his likes and dislikes. She is Exceptional in her abilities to get Corbin to open up. She is Highly skilled in her profession. To not tell you how fortunate you are in having her on your team would be very wrong of me.

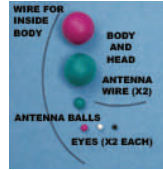
Corbin LOVES her, he just lights up when he sees her. Even when Corbin is having an off day, and is just a little moody, she is able to get him to work with her. I can't put into words just how special Laurie is, she truly is one in a million. Laurie is part of our family, it will be hard and sad to no longer see her or have her here. Even our one year old daughter, Kira is totally in love with her.

If there is some type of "Speech Therapist of the Year" award, she deserves it!

KIDDOS AT PLAY- SMILEY CATERPILLAR



Craft Materials- Polymer clay in purple, white, and black.
22 gauge, permanent-colored copper wire
Toothpicks



1. Roll 6 or more balls of clay for the caterpillar body and head. String them onto a piece of wire that's long enough to hold them all in place, then bend the body into the shape you want.
2. Insert the antennae wires into the head and add the antennae balls to the other ends of the wires.
3. For eyes, press the small purple balls into the head. Press the white balls onto the purple ones, then add the tiny black balls onto the white circles for pupils.
4. Use a toothpick to shape the mouth.



FRIENDS OF INFANT- TODDLER SERVICES OF JOHNSON COUNTY PRESENTS THE 6TH ANNUAL STEPPING STONES GALA

Saturday, April 12, 2008

Sheraton Overland Park
6100 College Boulevard

6:00pm Silent Auction
7:00pm Dinner and Live Auction
9:00pm Live Band

Cash Bar * Seating is limited *
Cocktail attire

*Proceeds benefit Infant Toddler Services
of Johnson County*

Register online at www.itsje.org by April
1st, 2008

Legislature

Let your legislators know what kind of impact ITS has on your family and child. The final vote on the budget is coming in a few weeks. Please look up your legislator at www.kslegislature.org. Click on House and Senate to find your representative and senator by zip code. We ask that you send a quick email to them with the following message: Please support state funding for tiny-k networks that is comparable to funds appropriated to serve similar children after their 3rd birthday. If this were to occur, the current state funding would increase by more than \$2.1 million. A personal story always helps to make the connection. Make it short and to the point for a strong impact. The increase in the final budget will become effective FY 2009, which begins in July.

THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR

The grass in my yard is beginning to turn green and the crocus are starting to work their way from the ground showing me that spring has begun. I love Spring. It is finally time to get back out in the garden and start to plant new flowers. Spring also mean that Friends of Infant Toddler Services 6th Annual Stepping Stones Gala is fast approaching. The Gala is April 12th at the Overland Park Sheraton. Volunteers involved in this organization are running around town persuading merchants to donate items for the auction. They also met on a Saturday morning to assemble and stamp invitations. They are meeting weekly to firm up last minute details to make the night a success.



This year's Fund A Need will benefit the equipment program, Playful Potentials, that was started last year. Infant Toddler Services has been able to assist over 150 families with equipment that was recommended by therapists and teachers. Switches that encourage communication have been helpful for children and parents to use during play time or meal time. Various textured spoons or adaptive cups are available to decrease the aversion some children have with eating. Reverse walkers and standers have improved children's mobility and standing. They are able to move in their environment or see family members face to face.

I hope that you are able to join me for an enjoyable evening and support Infant Toddler Services' families at the same time.

Sincerely,

Amy Owens, Executive Director

Community Partners

The Board of Director's of Johnson County Infant Toddler Services has a subcommittee called the Early Childhood Family Supports Advisory Committee. This group meets quarterly to discuss issues that affect children that are served by various agencies in the area. The group is currently working on the issue of infant mental health. There is such a huge need and few resources available to children. We have met with key players at the state level to see what is being accomplished. Information about that can be found at www.kaimh.org. Nurturing Families in Leavenworth is sponsoring a conference on the Ages and Stages-SE. This screening tool assists families and the professionals in determining red flags concerning mental health issues.

This committee is currently discussing ways this region can pool resources together to assist this underserved population. This will be a collaborative effect with people from Atchison County to Anderson County in the eastern part of the state. If you are interested in joining the group, please contact Teresa Gahagan at tcalvert@kc.rr.com.

Infant Toddler Services is making exciting additions to its website. Log onto www.itsjc.org. click on the new "Parents" tab. Information will be posted about legislative issues that impact early intervention, classes or seminars offered to parents and various resources that can be downloaded or that are available on the internet. The website will be updated shortly after the Gala ends.



CALLING ALL PARENTS

Above and Beyond

We want to pass on a story that has inspired us and hope it does the same for you.

One of our mom's appeared to be in labor when the therapist and the interpreter arrived. She was scheduled for a C- section but not for 3-4 more days. The

therapist were encouraging her to go to the hospital but she was scared they would just send her home. They made phone calls to KU Med for her and then Irene Findley, spanish interpreter, personally escorted the family to the hospital.

Once there, Irene stood firm with the front desk that the mother needed to see a doctor. Of course, once the doctor examined her it was obvious she was dialated to 5 and birth was eminent. They admitted her and she delivered a healthy baby girl by C- section at 5:00 that evening. Without Irene's help we are sure mom would have went into full labor and possible

Infant-Toddler Services of Johnson County

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ITS Mission Statement:

Through a working partnership between families and the community, Infant- Toddler Services of Johnson County fosters and coordinates the delivery of timely, comprehensive, quality service for children aged birth to thirty-six months who have developmental delays or disabilities.

INFANT- TODDLER BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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ITS Bits is a bi-monthly publication of Infant Toddler Services of Johnson County. Please contact the office at (913) 432-2900 if you have any questions about the contents of this newsletter or would like to contribute an article.

AROUND TOWN

Johnson County Library

Toddler Storytime:

Date: April 2, 9, 16 23, 30

Time: 10:15am

Place: Blue Valley Library

Family Fun Night:

Date: April 4, 11, 18, 25

Time: 7:00 pm

Place: Oak Park Library

Bilingual Storytime:

Date: April 24th

Time: 10:30 am

Place: Cedar Roe Library

Blocks, Puzzles and Pretty Flowers:

April 29th at 6:00pm, April 30th at

10:00am and 1:00 pm

Place: Cedar Roe Library