

EPICENTER NEWS

MAY/JUNE 2008



Happy Spring from the staff at Epicenter!



Lucy Galarus watching Cara Larsen performing a jumping rubber band magic trick

MAGIC THERAPY



Rehabracadabra

“Magic wands don’t always belong with black hats and rabbits...sometimes they belong in hospitals and clinics, where frail hands learn tricks and the magic is in the healing....”

Cody Fisher, BA, PM



Magic therapy is becoming more commonly used in therapy all over the world. Magic therapy is the modification, performance, and instruction of magic tricks for the purpose of enhancing functional outcomes and targeting such areas as: fine and gross motor skills, communication, problem solving, attention to tasks, and socialization. Not only is magic being used in hospitals and clinics, but now it is also being incorporated into the offices at Microsoft. They are using magic to encourage breaks from looking at computer screens, encouraging better posture at their desks, and offering different positions for their employees throughout the day.

In the pediatric rehabilitation world, children sometimes get tired of doing the same exercises or activities week after week, so therapists are teaching the kids magic tricks as a way to make progress towards achieving their goals and independence. Magic therapy also proves to be self-empowering, increases self-esteem and self-confidence due to the accomplishment of personal goals! For more information on Magic Therapy please visit the following websites: www.CodyFisher.com (magician) or www.DebbieFisher.org (Occupational Therapist) OR speak to our very own Holly Kassner COTA/L who has taken a course on the use of magic therapy!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Private sessions will be offered using the **Brain Gym** philosophies at Epicenter June 20-July 2.

Sensory Motor Group starts Monday, June 2nd at 10:15.

Gross Motor Group starts again Wednesday June 18th at 2:30.

For more info call the Epicenter at: 522- 3722

VITAL STIM THERAPY



What is vital stim? Vital stim therapy is a new medical breakthrough used in the treatment of swallowing disorders (dysphagia). It is an active rehabilitation program, combining the benefits of neuromuscular electrical stimulation and volitional therapeutic programming. It uses electrodes, placed on the front of the neck, to stimulate inactive swallowing musculature commonly found in patients with dysphagia. Using this procedure allows the therapist to implement an active therapy to relearn functional muscle use patterns necessary to initiate or re-establish swallowing. Vital stim for dysphagia has been used in the adult population after injuries to the central nervous system, such as following a stroke, traumatic brain injury or excision of a brain tumor. Some speech therapists have been trying vital stim with children with dysphagia.

The purpose of vital stim is re-training a muscle, not training it to begin with. Therefore, children who have never had a swallow as a skill (or swallowed safely) do not see remarkable gains with e-stim. Adult stroke victims are demonstrating good success again because they are re-training a previously trained muscle.

VITAL STIM THERAPY CONT.

People with peripheral sensory and or motor impairments are not candidates for the use of vital stim. Evidence on whether or not e-stim is beneficial for treatment of dysphagia in children is not yet conclusive, and overall studies have been inconsistent with questionable validity.

Candidates for using vital stim must have had a video swallow study completed first in order to determine the correct placement of electrodes on the patient's throat. Course treatment usually consists of 2-5 sessions per week at 2-3 times per week for 60 minutes at a time.

Vital stim can only be administered by a specialty certificated speech-language pathologist.

Information on vital stim taken from the article entitled, "Electrical Stimulation and Dysphagia: What We Do and Don't Know," by Christy L. Ludlow out of The ASHA LEADER Journal (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association), as well as information from the SPOT Rehabilitation (Speech Physical Occupational Therapy) web site, <http://spot-rehab.com/>.



CONTINUING EDUCATION COURSES ATTENDED

Claire Adam DPT, Nancy Harris DPT, Amy Hogen, OTRL, Christa Drab MS CCC-SLP and Holly Kassner COTA/L erapists attended the course entitled "**Practical Strategies and Interventions for Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD) in Children and Adolescents,**" presented by Dr. John F. Taylor, Ph.D., Clinical Psychologist in Bozeman April 22. Participation in this course has given them a deeper understanding of sensory processing disorder and they have gained many new treatment ideas to use in the clinic, at home and at school to help our kids!

Sheri Simkins, PT, PCS is participating in the **NDTA (Neuro-Developmental Treatment Association) National Conference** in Anaheim, CA May 28-June 1.

All of our therapists will be taking the **Brain Gym** course in Bozeman June 27-29.

OUR GOAL IS TO PROVIDE THE BEST FOR THE CHILDREN WHO NEED THE MOST