



# Kids Korner Connection

A newsletter from the Children's Division of ARC

## The September Newsletter is Dedicated in Honor and Memory of Nicholas

It is with the deepest of sorrow that we mourn the loss of our beloved student, Nicholas. We have all been so touched by Nicholas over the past few years and it has been such a joy to share wonderful moments with him! We have compiled excerpts from words written by those who had the privilege of knowing Nicholas. We celebrate his life and his accomplishments and keep his memory alive in our hearts.

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*"Nicholas was a tall, beautiful boy who had dark curly hair and soft grayish-green eyes; his expression could be angelic. Nicholas loved to play and lived for enjoying things that he wanted to do. He was a physical, active boy, who loved to ride a tricycle, run with the pack of fellow students, act silly, and especially be chased. He enjoyed Art Time activities like snipping, painting, and gluing; he was adept at his work and was proud of what he made. Nicholas was beginning to show more independence in self-help skills; he wanted to be a big boy who could do things by himself and he also expressed his need for affection. Nicholas lived and "worked" for hugs or lap time. We will never forget him, and will miss him dearly." Miss Marlo*

*"One of the most memorable moments I have of Nicholas was when I saw Nicholas smile at me after spending many weeks of trying to get him to smile. Nicholas also enjoyed playing with my watch; he would try to tell me that he wanted to wear it, and I would work with him to communicate more clearly." Miss Ada*

*"Nicholas, I will never forget you. I will always remember your smile, your curly hair, and those gorgeous grey eyes. I miss you in Circle Time and chasing you all over the playground. I miss you in Before Care. I think about you everywhere I look in school. I never thought I would get so attached to you so soon, so my promise to you is to look for you in the stars and moon. I love you, Nicholas." Love, Miss Shandrika.*

*"Nicholas, my little angel... your beautiful eyes and your smile were like sunshine, your sweetness stole my heart at the first sight. I will love you forever!" Miss Mar.*

*Tiny Angel can you tell me, Why you have gone away?*

*You weren't here for very long....*

*Why is it, you couldn't stay? Tiny Angel shook his head,*

*"These things I do not know...."*

*But I do know that you love me, And that I love you so".*

**Author Unknown**

*The entire staff at ARC Broward feels very sad about Nicholas' passing; he was a special child who touched our hearts.*



## Articles

- ☺ Many Ways We Can Help pg 2
- ☺ Planning for Kindergarten pg 3
- ☺ Parent Corner pg 3
- ☺ Feature Program: PAT pg 4
- ☺ PAT Puzzle Play pg 4
- ☺ Preschool PLC News pg 5

## Upcoming Special Events

- ◀ 9/29/09 10am — 2pm Special Needs Resource Fair at Signature Grand
- ◀ 10/6/09 3pm—5pm ABLE to participate in Dolphins Huddle Day
- ◀ 10/17/09 10am—4 pm Disabilities Expo at Nova Southeastern University

## Many Ways We Can Help...

By Shawn Preston, Director of Children's Services

I am thrilled to share with you that ARC Broward has several different service and support programs that you may be eligible for and interested in enrolling in! These programs have funding sources (so that the cost to your family will be minimal, if at all). Below are the services and supports offered through the Children's Division:

**Respite Care:** Our trained staff can provide care and supervision to your child in your home and at our campus so that you can get a well-deserved (and needed) break. (contact Tonya Ricker at 954-577-4109)

**In-home Behavior Analysis Services:** If your child is engaging in some behaviors that you are concerned about, our Behavior Specialists can come to your home and work with you to help you learn to how to change your child's behaviors (reduce or eliminate the problem behavior and replace with more appropriate behaviors). (contact Patty Eberhardt at 954-577-4171)

**Parents as Teachers (PAT):** Our Nationally Certified Parent Educators provide in home parent education and support by implementing the award winning PAT curriculum that teaches parents simple and easy activities to improve child development and parent knowledge and skills. The program also includes family group meetings (to meet other families and have fun together) and linkage to community resources to meet family needs (i.e. housing, food, employment, etc.). Please see page 3 for more information about PAT.

**Preschool:** The ARC Broward Early Intervention Preschool Program provides critical education and therapy services to children ages 18 months through five years by a team of Licensed Physical and Occupational Therapists, Licensed Speech Language Pathologists, Board Certified Associate Behavior Analysts and Certified Teachers. The school day begins at 9am and ends at 3pm (early and late care available). (contact Jane Moreno at 954-746-9400 ext 1681)

**Rehab Services:** Our licensed pediatric therapists assess each child's developmental needs, set appropriate goals, and create an individualized intervention plan. Working together, the team coordinates care for children with multiple needs among their physical, occupational, and speech therapies (contact Ellen Garrett at 954-746-9400 ext 1241)

**ABLE (after school program):** The *Alternative Behavioral Learning Environment (ABLE)* is a specialized, therapeutic program that provides behavior intervention for children between the ages of 3 and 21 who are unable to stay at home after school and on non-school days (i.e. teacher workdays, winter and spring break) without significant family disruption and who have Developmental Disabilities and behavior issues. (contact Francine White at 954-577-4127)

**Community Mental Health Center:** Our therapists provide individual, group and family counseling. We also provide Psychiatric Assessments and Medication Management. Our Psychiatrist and Therapists specialize in provision of these services to individuals with Developmental Disabilities and their family members. (contact Desire Hill at 954-577-4113)

It is our goal to provide you and your family with services and supports that meet your needs and your expectations for excellence! Please contact me for more information or assistance at 954-577-4109.

## Planning for Kindergarten

From the desk of Jane Moreno, Coordinator of Preschool Services

Believe it or not, we are already beginning the process to enable our matriculating to kindergarten students (five years of age by September 1, 2010) to seamlessly begin their kindergarten year. Here are some of the steps we will be taking.

Some of the children will be re-evaluated in order to provide us with the most up-to-date information that is needed to consider appropriate placement options.

ARC staff will meet with Broward School Board staff to find out "what is out there" in each area for each child.

Parents will be sent a letter listing placement options to go out and visit. Since the parent is an important part of the team that will meet to consider which placement is the most appropriate for each child, it is strongly suggested that the parent visit the school (s) listed, meet school personnel, and ask questions.

Each parent will be invited to a meeting, probably in the spring, to discuss the placement options and help decide which one is best for their child. It is important for parents to remember that these meetings are scheduled well in advance with very busy Broward School Board staff who travel all around the county. It is usually difficult or impossible to reschedule these meetings once they are set up so we ask our parents to be very flexible when these meeting dates are sent home.

Transition activities will be done with the children to help them transition to their new school.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's matriculation to kindergarten, please feel free to stop in or call Dawn Terlizzese, ESE Specialist (954-577-4102) or me (954-746-9400 ext. 1681)

### Parent Corner

By Jessica Crecco (Scotty's mom)

We are so, so blessed...and I'm afraid we may be getting spoiled. Our transition to K-5 is going to be tough when we are used to such caring, personalized attention. I wish that there was some other way to thank you all for your support. If I can ever be an advocate for the school, certainly don't hesitate to contact me.

It's been eye opening, even if everything I heard was what I already knew in my heart. I really cannot express how blessed we are to have your help and guidance. Scotty's speech is getting better with each day and the tools you gave me...have already helped me immensely. Scotty flipped through the key ring on the ride home saying the names of the items he knew and asking 'what's that?' for those he didn't. We used the tri-fold thing with my set of PECS to dictate our schedule last night and Scotty enjoyed flipping the cards after we finished each task. And...he is doing good talking...I started writing down the words he can say or approximate and the list is much longer than I thought. I had to flip the page! No doubt your diligence and structure is to credit. Surely there is lots of hard work ahead, but I'm looking forward to our continued progress and sharing the good news with you.

ARC Broward is absolutely wonderful! I really cannot say enough about the hard work and dedication from everyone. I just think you should know how great [Scotty's teacher, Jennifer, and his therapist, Ricci, have] been. Ricci and Jennifer have been so helpful to me this week as I've look for ways to help move Scotty's speech forward.

## Feature Program: Parents as Teachers (PAT)

By Shawn Preston

The *Parents as Teachers (PAT) Program* supports parents in their role as their child's first and most influential teacher, since the first few years in a child's life are crucial to his or her development. PAT is a best-practice curriculum which was designed by a team of neuro-scientists, therapists, teachers, and parents to increase parent knowledge of child development and appropriate ways to stimulate their children's intellectual, language, social and motor development, increase parent feelings of competence and confidence, enhance parent-child interaction, strengthen family relationships, communication, supervision and discipline skills, and provide early detection and intervention for developmental problems. **ARC Broward** is the first organization in the country to adapt the PAT curriculum to children with special needs? The ARC Broward PAT program is a replication of the Missouri-based Parents as Teachers Program, a national award winning non-profit parent support and education organization. ARC's PAT program serves Broward County families who have children, from birth through seven years of age, with an established condition, developmental disability, developmental delay/high risk factors for developmental disability/delay, behavioral disorder, emotional disturbance and/or a learning disability.

The PAT Program receives funding through the Children's Services Council of Broward County and the United Way of Broward County. Parents are charged a nominal fee based upon a sliding scale. This year our PAT program had the privilege of providing services to families of 370 children! Through a very impressive expansion award by the Children's Services Council, ARC will service families of 430 children this coming year!

For more information about the **ARC Broward PAT program**, please contact Tonya Ricker at (954) 577-4107.

## Feature Program: Parents as Teachers (PAT)

### Puzzle Play

Simple puzzles offer opportunities for your child to develop skills and pathways in her brain that will lay a foundation for math and language learning to come. When playing with a commercial (store-bought) puzzle or one made from items around your home, your child is learning important thinking skills.

#### Your Child is learning

- That a whole is made up of parts
- To solve simple problems
- To see and feel differences in shape, size, and color.
- To match or pair objects. She will need to understand that only one puzzle piece can fit into one matching hole before she can begin to pair one number with one object (counting)
- To control the small muscles in her hands
- To be successful and complete a task

#### Ways to help

- Cut a cereal box or a foam placement into 2 or 3 parts for them to put together
- Ask open-ended questions such as "Where could you put this piece?"
- Point out "clues" using words such as small, bumpy, round, blue, etc.
- Offer inset puzzles with simple shapes that are purchased or made from shoebox lids and containers
- Consider gluing knobs such as thread spools, Furniture handles or game pieces. Onto flat puzzle pieces to encourage your child to use her Fingers.
- Notice when your children struggle and simplify the task by giving her puzzles with less complicated shapes or fewer pieces. Praise all efforts!

Remember, as with any new items, your child needs to explore a puzzle in many ways to learn about it. Let her dump, stack, and rearrange the pieces any way she wants to. She may need to watch you put the puzzle together a few times. Later she will be ready to try fitting pieces into the matching spaces themselves.

**PRESCHOOL PARENT LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE NEWS**  
**BY Jane Moreno, Coordinator of Preschool Services**

The Preschool Parent Leadership Committee (PLC) held its first meeting of the school year on Thursday, September 10, 2009. We were happy to welcome back past parent participants as well as to welcome some wonderful new parents!

We are thrilled to announce that our past President, Amy K., will continue in that role this year. Stephanie W. and Jessica C. will fill the offices of Vice President and Secretary, guaranteeing a strong team to work for our children!

Planning for the year was immediately begun. The year will start with a raffle basket fundraiser, a "Pamper Me" basket containing wonderful self-indulgent goodies such as a gift certificate to a Spa, a thick, soft robe, lotions, creams and everything else needed to pamper!

Fundraisers will be held throughout the school year with the proceeds going directly to benefit the children through special events, graduation gifts and other activities. We hope to bring back the petting zoo, one of the activities the children loved last year as well as a visit from Santa, Thanksgiving lunch and Precious Ponies. We are also excited to plan new and wonderful activities and events for our children this year!

The PLC welcomes all parents to attend our monthly meetings, suggest ideas and be a part of this group of parents who work together for our children. If you cannot attend meetings but would like to participate, please feel free to stop by or call me with your ideas or suggestions.

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**Children's Services**

Preschool  
ABLE After-School Program  
Respite Care  
Behavioral Analysis  
Summer 'Kamp Krayola'  
'PAT' Parent Training  
Rehab Therapy (OT, PT, SLP)  
Mental Health Counseling

**Adult Habilitation**

Supported and Community Living  
Day programs  
Individualized Supports  
Transportation Services

**Workforce Development**

Community and Self Employment  
Culinary Arts  
Electronics Recycling  
Youth Links Transition Program

**Advocacy & Social Services**

Nursing Services  
Information and Referral  
Human Services Learning Institute  
Building Generations



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*At ARC Broward, we take **PRIDE** in all that we do...  
"We have a Passion for what we do, Respect for all of our stakeholders, Integrity for how we do our jobs, a Drive for excellence and an Entrepreneurial spirit."*

