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Welcome

Welcome to the second addition of The Parents' Place sponsored by The Therapy Place staff. It is our hope to provide you with information regarding community events, helpful books and articles, clinic in-services, new equipment, home activities, creative parent ideas, and support for some of life's challenges. We welcome your input on topics you would like to see, strategies that have helped your child for things such as riding a bike or going to the dentist, recipes your kids love to eat or play with, or if you have information about upcoming events in your community, please pass them on so that we may share them with other parents. Our e-mail address is info@thetherapyplace.net. We look forward to hearing from you!

Editors: Brea Maday and Andrea Malecha

Gluten Free Casein Free Diets

Food allergies are becoming more and more common. Many children within the autism spectrum have food allergies, most often to gluten and casein. Gluten is the protein found in wheat, oats, barley, rye and triticale. Casein is the protein found cow's milk. Children with these types of allergies often crave foods that contain them. It is hypothesized that the allergic reaction to these proteins can cause inflammation of the stomach lining which increases its permeability. This reaction can cause behavioral and gastrointestinal problems.

Removing gluten and casein from your child's diet can be challenging, but is not impossible. There are many books and web sites available to help you get started and stay on the diet. Some books that are helpful include:

[Special Diets for Special Kids, Understanding and Implementing Special Diets to Aid in the Treatment of Autism and Related Developmental Disorders](#) by Lisa Lewis, Ph.D.

This book is written by a mother of a child with autism and food allergies. It is reader-friendly and included easy to make recipes. It also includes guides to help you learn different foods and additives gluten and casein can be "hidden" in. This book also describes the different types of symptoms your child may exhibit.

[Successful Diet Intervention For Autism and PDD, Gluten Free Casein Free](#)

This is a 3-ring binder filled with helpful information including basic information about gluten free casein free diets, shopping list help, sample menus, recipes, and tips from other gluten free casein free parents. It is available on gfcfdiet.com

[Is This Your Child? Discovering and Treating Unrecognized Allergies in Children and Adults](#), Doris Rapp, M.D.

This is an in depth book that looks at food allergies and behavioral manifestations of them. It provides helpful information on how to get started on a rotation diet and provides case studies of children with different allergies.

Children With Limited Diets

Another challenge that often presents itself in children with Autism is the fact that many of them have limited diets. Children with Autism often have very few foods in their diets and tend to eat the same foods and then "burn out" on them. They sometimes limit their diets to specific textures or colors and are resistive to trying new foods. Kay Toomey, Ph.D. from Colorado Pediatric Therapy and Feeding Specialists, has put together an approach to feeding called the "SOS approach".

The SOS (Sequential Oral Sensory) feeding strategy is a non-invasive, developmental approach to feeding. It focuses on increasing a child's comfort level exploring and learning about the different properties of food including texture, smell, taste and consistency. The SOS approach allows a child to interact with food in a playful, non-stressful way. It consists of around 32 steps of a hierarchy beginning with the basic ability to tolerate food in the room, in front of him/her, touching, and eventually tasting and eating foods. Parent education and involvement is an important part of this approach. A therapist works directly with the group of parents. They watch each feeding session to learn this approach to feeding, physical signs and "body language" to tell when the child may be over stimulated, and how to set up home programs. Feeding groups are done one time per week for 12 weeks.

Feeding groups using this approach are currently available at The Therapy Place. For more information, contact Lynn Kopfmann, OTR/L at (952)885-0418.

AUTUMN

School has started, the weather is getting cooler, and the holidays are fast approaching. What a better way to relax and warm up than drinking a nice cup of hot chocolate? The following is a gluten free casein free recipe from Special Diets for Special Kids by Lisa Lewis, Ph.D. for you to try:

Hot Chocolate Mix

4 cups DariFree, Better Than Milk or Rice Moo

3/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder

1 1/2 cups sugar (preferably vanilla sugar)

1/8 tsp. salt

Combine all ingredients and store in an airtight container. To use, place 3 tablespoons in a cup. Add a small amount of boiling water and stir to dissolve mix. Fill cup with boiling water

THE HOLIDAYS

The holiday season can be a stressful time for families. Following are some suggestions which may help ease the stress and make the time more enjoyable for both you and your child:

- 1) Use a calendar to show your child when the holiday falls. Cross off each day as it passes and tell your child "There are.... days left until Thanksgiving" so s/he has plenty of time to prepare. The web site preschoolprintables.com has calendars on it which you can print out and use.
- 2) Write a Social Story to explain the events you anticipate will happen on the holiday. Read the story to your child each day. If your child is old enough or has an interest, let him/her draw a picture to illustrate the story. A sample social story is included below.
- 3) If you are traveling for the holiday, allow your child to pack their own "special bag" which includes favorite toys/objects which may be comforting to him/her and ease the stress of being in a different setting.
- 4) If your child is on a special diet, bring a treat which he/she can share with everyone. Sharing their "special food" may help decrease the feeling of being different.
- 5) Let your host know that your child may need a "quiet spot" to take breaks in. Ask your host to tell you where the "quiet spot" is and show your child where it is right away so they know where they can go if they need some quiet time.
- 6) Make a paper chain to indicate the number of days until the upcoming holiday. Have your child rip off a link each morning until the holiday arrives.

Sample Holiday Social Story: Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is a holiday.

On Thanksgiving, I do not go to school.

I get to be with my family.

We will go to Grandma and Grandpa's house on Thanksgiving day.

I like to go to Grandma and Grandpa's.

When I go to Grandma's I can bring a toy with me.

I can share my toy with the other people.

(continued on the next page)

Sample Holiday Social Story: Thanksgiving
(continued from page 3)

If I get tired of playing, I can tell my mom or dad that I need a break.
My mom and dad will tell me it is 'OK' to take a break for a few minutes.
When my break is over, I can play with other people again.
Thanksgiving is fun!

Thanksgiving Activity

To make a Thanksgiving turkey, have your child place his/her hand on a piece of paper and then trace around it with a marker or a crayon. You can use the marker to then draw other parts of the turkey such as its face and legs. Here's ways the activity can be used to work on therapy goals.

For Children with Expressive Language needs:

- 1) Before you sit down to do the activity, have your child tell you all of the supplies that you need. If he forgets something, don't tell him what it is. Start working on the activity and see if he can figure out what is missing. If he doesn't figure it out on his own, provide him with cues to help him.
- 2) This is also a good time to work on categorizing. For example since a Turkey can fly, ask your child to tell you other things that can fly. You can have your child name other animals, other things that remind him of holidays, etc. as well.
- 3) Word association games are fun as well. Start of by using the word "Turkey" and then tell your child "When I think of turkey, I think of the word 'bird' because a 'turkey' is a 'bird'". After you provide the initial association, you can tell your child "Now you tell me what you think of when you hear the word 'bird'". Providing your child with a visual cue may also be helpful

turkey ---- bird----- fly-----airplane-----vacation-----suitcase ----etc.

Accept any association your child comes up with as long as he can provide an explanation.
Creativity is a good thing!

For Children with Receptive Language needs:

1) Making a turkey can be a good direction following activity. For example, you can have your child get the necessary supplies by providing directions such as "First get the paper, then get the crayons".

To incorporate fine motor skills and tactile exploration:

1) Use the "just right challenge" when cutting out the turkey. For children who are just learning to cut, draw thick straight lines above and below the turkey for your child to cut on or allow them to roughly cut around the turkey.

2) Get creative decorating your turkey!! Paper punches are available that make different shapes such as stars, balloons, and squiggles. Glue different punched shapes onto each feather of the turkey.

3) Buy or make colored sand or use glitter. (To make colored "sand" simply sprinkle table salt onto a piece of paper and rub over it using sidewalk chalk!) Place the different colors into small cups or spaces of an ice cube tray. Have your child use his/her thumb and index finger to pinch the sand or glitter and sprinkle it onto glue on the turkey!

4) Glue raisins, Cheerios, etc. to make eyes and nose on the turkey.

5) Mix shaving cream, glue, and food coloring together to create a gooey paint. Use your fingers to paint the turkey

Christmas Activity

No-Bake Cinnamon Shapes

You will need: 1 cup ground cinnamon
 3/4 cup apple sauce
 Cookie cutters

Mix the cinnamon and apple sauce together to make the dough. You can either flatten dough out with your hands or using a rolling pin. Use the cookie cutters to make different holiday shapes. Poke a hole at the top of the shape so you can lace a string through it and hang it as an ornament.

BOOKS

Sensory Secrets: How to Jump-Start Learning in Children: By: Catherine Chemin Schneider, O.T.R

The author is an occupational therapist with over 30 years of experience. She has written a very parent and teacher friendly book to help explain the connection between sensory motor processing/sensory integration and learning. The author explains the need for movement and sensory stimulation in order to facilitate the learning process and provides several strategies for accomplishing this at home and in school.

This is Asperger Syndrome by: Elisa Gagnon and Brenda Smith Myles.

Through brief vignettes, accompanied by cartoon-like drawings, This Is Asperger Syndrome introduces siblings, peers and other children to the everyday challenges faced by children with Asperger Syndrome at home or at school. Written for children ages 6-12, the book may be read independently by older children and serves as an excellent springboard for further discussion led by parents and teachers. A special section, "Notes on Asperger Syndrome," at the end of the book summarizes the major characteristics of Asperger Syndrome.

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

Conferences sponsored by the Autism Society of Minnesota

All Skillshop conferences are \$20 for AuSM members and \$35 for nonmembers

The workshops are held at 2380 Wycliff St. Suite 102, St. Paul, MN

Contact the AuSM at (651) 647-1083 or www.ausm.org for information or to register

Successful Strategies at Home with the ASD Child October 22, 2003

Gluten Free Casein Free Diets November 5, 2003

Having a Brother or Sister with Autism November 9, 2003

Toilet Training November 12, 2003

Recognizing and Responding to Sensory Needs January 7, 2004

Introduction to Relationship Development Training January 14, 2004

(More conferences on next page)

When Children Won't Eat: The SOS Approach to Feeding

When: January 8-10, 2004 All day Thursday and Friday, Half day on Saturday

Where: Chanhassen Country Inn and Suites

Cost: \$325 Before November 1, 2003

\$350 After November 1, 2003

For more information, contact Megan Taylor at (952) 403-3979

Conferences sponsored by the Pacer Center

Please contact the Pacer Center at www.pacer.org or (952) 838-9000 for more information

Understanding The Special Education Process

When: October 14, 2003 Lakeville Arts Center

October 23, 2003 Elk River

November 16, 2003 Minneapolis

Time: 6:30-9:00 p.m.

Positive Behavior Interventions for Home and School

When: October 28, 2003, Minneapolis

Time: 1-4:00 p.m.

Positive Supports = Positive Results

When: October 9, 2003, Pacer Center, Bloomington

Time: 6:30-9:00 p.m.

Understanding the Early Intervention Process

When: November 22, 2003, Pacer Center, Bloomington

Time: 9-11:30 a.m.

How to Effectively Communicate with IEP Team

When: December 8 2003, Chanhassen

Time: 7-9:00 p.m.