



Hill & Saks News

Behavior Therapy Providers for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities

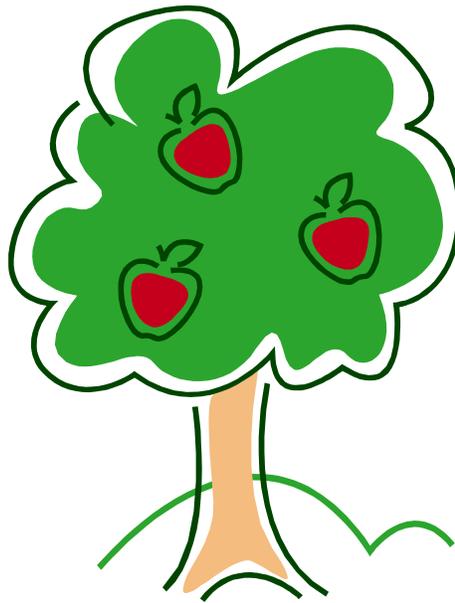


Agency News

Fall 2009

Hill & Saks, BTS welcomes Cheryl Sciacca, MA, LMHC to our agency. She comes to us with a background working with individuals with developmental disabilities as well as youth and families. In addition to traditional cognitive and behavioral approaches, Cheryl uses art, music, play therapy, sand tray as well as other creative approaches.

At the same time we would like to celebrate our therapists who have been with us for over five years! Thank you to Margo Churchill and Anika Carrasco-Trujillo for your years of dedication, good work and professional development.

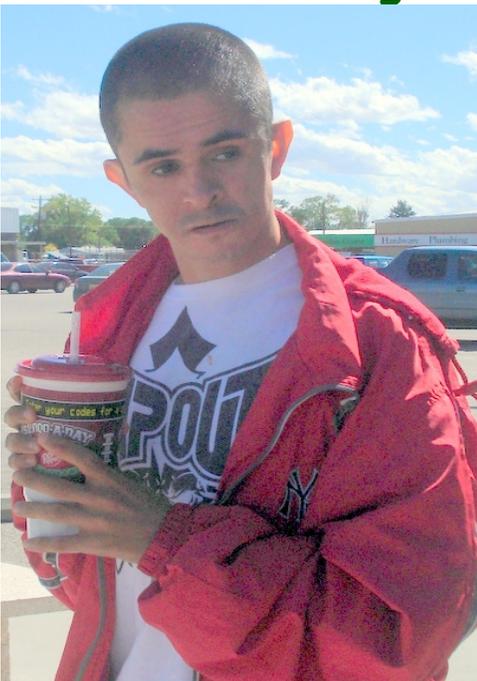


Delicious and Healthy Autumn Treat: Homemade Applesauce

Applesauce is healthy and easy to make. It is a great time of year for it; you may even end up picking your own apples.

1. Peel and cut 6-8 apples
2. Boil in water (1 cup)
3. Mash with potato masher
4. Add brown sugar and cinnamon to taste
5. Serve hot or cold
6. Serve with vanilla yogurt for an extra treat.

Profile of Courage: Robbie Carr



Robbie has worked hard to overcome some of his fears. He is an inspiration to those trying to find the courage for new and fun experiences. He was interviewed with his sister Cindy.

Q: What achievements in your life are you proud of?

A: I now ride a four wheeler with my family and am not afraid! I also take pictures of my family and Northern New Mexico scenery . I pick out the best ones and frame them. I have some framed photos for sale at Northern New Mexico Quality Care.

Q: What achievement are you the most proud of ?

A:I used to be terrified to be near

water. Now I go boating, and I wade in the water! I also have gotten used to loud noises, and I go to parades and play bingo. I often yell out "BINGO!" even if I haven't won. (That is a funny joke I like to play on everyone.)

Q: How did you do it?

A: With help and encouragement from my family. My sister, Cindy is always near me so that if I am afraid , she will comfort and reassure me

Q: What would you like to achieve in the future?

A: To continue trying new activities and exploring new places with my family.

Recognizing Signs of Alzheimer's Disease and Changing Attitudes about Care

Alzheimer's Disease is a progressive disease characterized by dementia. It is associated with aging and can affect about 5% of individuals over the age of 60. Individuals with intellectual disabilities are at the same risk as the general population for developing Alzheimer's Disease. However, adults may be at greater risk if they have Down Syndrome or have had some form of severe or multiple head injury. Individuals with Down Syndrome may experience premature aging and a more rapid progression of Alzheimer's Disease.

Symptoms of Alzheimer's Disease generally involve memory loss, personality changes, difficulty maintaining skills acquired, difficulty remembering new learning, and decreasing self-care abilities.

As individuals age it is important to be aware of early signs

of Alzheimer's Disease. Medication can slow progression of the disease but is generally more effective the earlier it is used.

Some signs to look for include:

- Irritability - personality changes
- Changes in appetite because body is not effectively registering hunger or thirst
- Increase in urinary tract infections because of diminished abilities for self-care and incontinence issues
- Long periods of apathy or no motivation
- Disorientation- not knowing who you are
- Memory loss- thinking a lost loved one is still alive
- Seizure activity increases or present in individuals without a

previous history

If concerns are identified, it is important to have a doctor evaluate an individual for Alzheimer's Disease. Approaches to care may be different if irreversible dementia is identified. For example, it is comforting and helpful to accept what an individual with memory loss is saying. Trying to make the person remember all the current facts like the death of a loved one they are referring to can bring on repeated shock and grief. It would also be important to recognize that returning to a previous level of functioning would not be possible. Caregivers are faced with the reality that the individual's participation in self-care is diminishing, new learning is not likely and more support is needed.



Hill & Saks

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