WHY READING IS IMPORTANT
(The reading clinic)

Reading Develops Important Language Skills
Whether it is books, magazines, or E-books, reading can help cement a child’s language skills. Exposure to language helps a child to further develop their vocabulary in a way that every day conversation cannot. Even at early ages when a child does not understand everything they read, they are able to come to conclusions about new words from the context of material.

Reading is Especially Necessary with Today’s Technology
Where some thought that the advent of computers would make the reading less important, the exact opposite is true; it has made reading even more important. Gathering information on the web or even communicating via email and social media all require reading and writing. Even texting requires reading and writing skills!

Reading Opens Up the World
Very few of us are world travelers and even those who are can only see so many places in one’s lifetime. Being able to read opens the world up to a child. They can learn about different cultures, histories, and societies. It shows life in a different way, both real and imagined. It can inform about the past, present, and future. In short, reading can take a child to the stars and back without ever leaving their home.

Reading Can Enhance Social Skills
This may sound like a contradiction since much of a person’s reading is done in solitary. Consider this; early in life a child’s reading consists of being read to or going to “story time”. This makes books and reading something to be shared. It builds a relationship with reading. As time goes on and a person does more individual reading it can become a conversation piece much like a popular television show. A person who has just read a great book wants desperately to share the story with someone else. How many times have you read a book and couldn’t wait to lend it to someone else? In addition, being someone who is “well read” is still a positive attribute in society as it often implies increased intelligence, being better cultured, and having a more interesting background for debates and conversations.

Reading is Fun!
Like a good movie, a book can be loads of fun. You can get whisked off to a world of wizards or trek through the galaxy on a spacecraft. Regardless of your child’s interests, reading can be a great past time.
Parent Spotlight:
LaKingna Simmons

LaKingna Simmons has two children, both with autism, who receive services from The Children’s Center. Her son, age 13, is diagnosed with autism at the age of 18 months and after she moved back to Michigan from Georgia, he began receiving services at age 3. When her daughter, age 8, was also diagnosed with autism complicated by a diagnosis of ADHD, she was totally caught off guard because the condition is four times greater for boys than girls.

LaKingna acknowledges that her son is on the higher functioning end of the autism spectrum, while her daughter has difficulties with eating and sensory processing that require medication. In addition to being in school full-time, both children have rigorous regimens which include clinical services that complement their individual treatment plans, group therapy to enhance social skills, as well as speech, and occupational therapies which are navigated through supports coordination.

LaKingna is a graduate of Henry Ford College, a member of Phi Theta Kappa Honors Society Fraternity, and attends The University of Michigan-Dearborn in which she studies psychology and social work. She is a Wayne County Systems of Care Parent Resource Trainer, Department of Human Services Community Representative, serves on The Wayne County Parent Advisory Board, and a member of The Wayne County Trauma Advisory Committee. She is currently serving her 2nd 3 year term on the agency’s Board of Directors, is Chairperson of The Consumer Council, serves on the agency’s Head Start Governing Board, Sustainable Funds Committee, as well as their Programs Committee.

As Chair of the Consumer Council, she and other adults, whose children are clients at The Children’s Center, help new clients and parents understand services and resources provided by The Children’s Center, and improve community awareness of the services and resources offered.
Across the Spectrum

What can your Supports Coordinator do for you?

Support Coordinators can help you with; school, housing, utility, food, clothing, finding resources for legal advice, community services, etc. They would even meet with you at your house, school, or community. Be proactive, and contact them for help with all this needs.

ASSESSING the needs, wishes, and desired outcomes of each individual

DEVELOPING an Individual Support Plan (ISP) with the assistance of the individual, their family, and those identified as part of the team

LOCATING the supports and services identified in the ISP so as to meet the needs of the individual and their family

LINKING the consumer and family with service providers and generic community resources

COORDINATING the identified supports and services as requested by the individual and their family

MAINTAINING eligibility information and assisting individuals to apply for assistance for which they are eligible

ADVOCATING for needed supports and services not readily available to the individual

Focus on Safety

Let us get a plan going to keep our children safe. Please make sure your kid has an ID on them all the times, with the following information; name, picture, I’m autistic, who’s their caregiver, emergency contact information. If your child is a runner or a wanderer… check out the GPS Trackers found at:

- Autism Alliance 1-877-463-1166
- Walmart
- www.angelsense.com

Some devices may have a cost.

ABC’s of Special Needs

IEP = Individualized Education Program
EI = Emotional Impairment
CI = Cognitive Impairment
ASD = Autism Spectrum Disorder
D-B = Deaf/Blind
SLD = Specific Learning Disability
SLI = Speech Language Impairment
TBI = Traumatic Brain Injury

Autism Parent Group

Did you know that the Autism parent support group is new to The Children’s Center? The group facilitator, Jasmyne Burbridge, a Supports Coordinator in the Developmental Disabilities Services

The group met on Wednesdays at 4 p.m. in building 101 while social skills group is in session. Let your Supports Coordinator know if you are interested, so they can include you in the next cycle of groups.
Holiday Shop Program

All families that completed an application for Holiday Shop will be notified of their acceptance status via mail by the end of November. Families meeting qualification requirements will receive a letter containing a scheduled shopping date and time.

Distribution days are December 7-10th for pre-qualified families

BY APPOINTMENT ONLY

If you have a story or suggestions for future articles, we’d like to hear from you.

Contact Susan Thomas at (313) 262-1175 or sthomas@thechildrenscenter.com

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